

World Minded

A PUBLICATION OF THE REVES CENTER
FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES AT
WILLIAM & MARY

VOL. 16, NO. 2, WINTER 2024

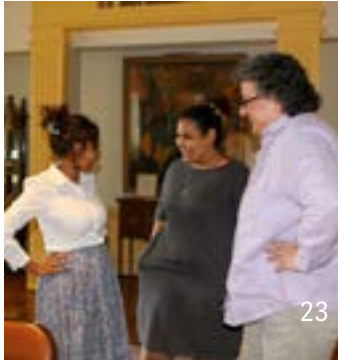
The Art of Discovery: Finding a Career with Global Impact



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The Reves Center for International Studies advances the internationalization of teaching, learning and research at William & Mary, ensuring an international dimension is present in the university's priorities. Global education, support for international students and scholars, and the enrichment of our global community are at the heart of the Reves Center's work. Established in 1989, the Reves Center is today one of the premier international centers in higher education.

William & Mary is the number one public university for undergraduate study abroad participation, with more than 55 percent of the university's undergraduates studying outside the U.S. before graduation. In a typical year, approximately 800 international students, scholars, and their families from more than 60 countries come to William & Mary. The Reves global engagement team builds and supports international initiatives across the university.

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FROM THE DIRECTOR

In January 2024, Professor, Tyler Meldrum led his second cohort of W&M students to the German Cancer Research Institute in Heidelberg. Their study abroad experience in Germany opened up exciting pathways for those twenty students. It also unleashed an impulse that will serve them well in careers still to be discovered. They were already intellectually curious, and familiar with a science lab. However, as Meldrum explains the leap of faith he took in creating this new program in Heidelberg, the students also needed to be just a little bit brave. They needed to move away from the familiar, be willing to get lost, willing to step into the unknown.

This edition of World Minded is full of stories about people who have taken many such steps. Shakia Taylor works in the Reves Center's Office of International Students, Scholars and Programs (ISSP) where she designs and delivers new and inclusive cultural programming. Taylor's goal is to help international students thrive at William & Mary. Araba Andrews is a graduate student from Ghana. With support from Taylor, ISSP and the School of Education, Andrews is indeed thriving. More than a little bit willing to step into the unknown, she already sees her next steps-- a Ph.D, a return to Ghana, and establishing a new school.

Stephanie Frankel Szostak '94—actor, author, mental health advocate and entrepreneur—spent her early years in France before coming to William & Mary. Educated in the European system, Szostak's first year on campus was not an easy one. So she sought faculty support, joined the golf team, lived in Reves Hall and the French House, and ultimately, flourished by getting a little bit lost. Laimis



Teresa Longo

*Associate Provost for International Affairs
Executive Director, Reves Center for
International Studies*

Kisielius ('08)-- investment advisor and professional athlete-- came to William & Mary from Lithuania to play basketball and study. Years later, in summer 2023, when our study abroad students stepped into his world in Lithuania, Kisielius also stepped into theirs, as their unofficial country director and guide.

Benedito Ferrão is among the dozens of William & Mary faculty with a recently published book on global affairs. *The Uninvited Host: Goa and the Parties not Meant for its People* tells the story of the effects of tourism on local communities and the environment. Ferrão's collaborators in Goa are the satirical cartoonist, Angela Ferrão, and the designer and artist, Maria Vanessa de Sa. Their combined talents led to the launch of an art exhibit at the Gallery Gitanjali in Goa and a decision to publish *The Uninvited Host* in comic book form. The intended audience for

their work includes students preparing for their next step, study abroad in Goa.

In Fall 2023 and Spring 2024 professors Holmes, Kitamura and Manna spearheaded a symposium on U.S. - Japanese baseball diplomacy, where Historian Sayuri Guthrie Shimizu from Rice University noted that baseball has been key to the relationship between the two countries since 1872. Shimizu said she looks forward to the positive impact of baseball diplomacy for future generations. Stay tuned. That impact is already taking shape. In summer 2024, as part of the diplomacy initiative, a team of 11- and 12-year-olds from Williamsburg will visit Japan, meet Japanese players their age, and take a hopeful step, perhaps the first of many, into the unfamiliar.

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Teresa Longo". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

WORLD MINDED STAFF

Editor: Kate Hoving, Associate Director of International Communications, Reves Center for International Studies

Contributing Writers: Claire De Lisle MBA '21, Director of Advancement Communications; Emma Henry, The Charles Center; Ethan Qin '26 and Agavni Mehrabi '26, The Flat Hat; and Breegan O'Hearn '25.

ON THE COVER

At the German Cancer Research Institute [Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum] dipeptide analysis lab.. (Photo credit: Sam Rubin)

Shakia Taylor & Araba Andrews

A shared passion for global education with a personal touch



Shakia Taylor (Left) is International Programs Coordinator & Advisor in the International Students, Scholars & Programs Office (ISSP) at Reves. She holds a B.A. in History and an M.S.Ed. in Educational Leadership (with a concentration in International Higher Education Leadership). Prior to joining the Reves Center, she worked as an International Student Advisor in Austin, Texas.

Araba Andrews is an international graduate student from Ghana. She matriculated in January 2023 and is currently working towards her M.Ed. in Educational Policy, Planning & Leadership (with a concentration on Higher Education Administration) at the School of Education. She is also a graduate assistant working in the Office of Career Development & Professional Engagement.

Q: What brought you to William & Mary?

Araba Andrews: I went to a very large institution in Ghana--with about 80,000 students--for my undergraduate studies at the University of Cape Coast. So for my graduate degree, I was looking for an institution that was smaller, and where I could go to class and get to know everybody's name. I also wanted to have the chance to interact personally with my professor and work with them on my research.

asked questions of a lot of different schools, but it was the approach and the response I got from the people at William & Mary that made the difference. The School of Education kept checking in with me: How is your application going? Do you need any help? And I decided, this is the place I wanted to be. I wanted to be in a place where people wanted me to be there. So I just dropped everything else I was doing with every other school and only applied to William & Mary.

Q: Were you looking at other schools in the U.S.?

Andrews: I knew I wanted to study in the U.S. I looked at a couple of schools, but the information on William & Mary's website really stood out to me. So I decided to reach out to a few people at the School of Education and just ask some questions. I

Q: Had you traveled to the U.S. before?

Andrews: No. I had traveled to other regions within Ghana, but this was my first time outside of Ghana and outside of Africa, and it was a new place -- new experiences, new food, new weather, new everything. I traveled all by myself. It was really a big adjustment for me.

Q: Did you connect with the Office of International Students, Scholars & Programs (ISSP) at Reves when you arrived in Williamsburg?

Andrews: Araba Andrews: I connected with them before I came, because I had some issues with my visa. This was a new process for me; I'm a first-generation student. Nobody in my family had pursued a master's degree, and nobody had travelled outside of the U.S. So I was doing the process all by myself. It was very overwhelming, very confusing. I spent a lot of time reading all the information provided on the ISSP website. I kept sending emails, asking a lot of questions.

And then my visa was denied.

So I reached out to Elizabeth Cavallari [Associate Director of Recruitment & Admission at the School of Education], and she told me that on immigration issues I had to speak with ISSP, so I reached out to Shakia and Zabrina Williams [Immigration Services Associate Manager], and they were really helpful. I even sent emails to Eva Wong [Director of ISSP]. Eva also reached out to me, and everyone was so helpful from the time my visa was refused, all the way through to the time I got visa. I got the chance to get a second interview and then get my visa, and finally came to the U.S.

Q: Are you in touch with friends and former classmates back in Ghana? Do you tell them about your experiences at William & Mary?

Andrews: I honestly fell in love with William & Mary before I came, and then, when I came here, I fell in love with it even more, so I kept posting pictures on Snapchat. I'd post, "You need to come to my school! It's the second oldest school in the U.S., and it's so cool. Everyone here is so nice!"

A lot of people ask me about William & Mary, and I've told them, "It's a great place to be. It's amazing. If you get the chance to, you should come here. It will be worth it." I have a friend who is applying to the School

of Education, but because the School of Education doesn't offer full funding for some of its programs, I don't know if they will be able to come.

Q: Shakia, when did you come to William & Mary? What was your path here?

Shakia Taylor: It's really a funny twist of fate, because I actually did a similar graduate program as Araba at Old Dominion University. And I remember when I was a grad student, I would come to William & Mary just to be here and see the space, and I'd say to my friends that I'd love to work here. But there were no job openings at the time, so I went off to Texas and got some experience. But William & Mary was still in the back of my mind, and I knew if there were a job opening, I'd apply.

I think it was early 2021 when I saw the job opening for this position, and I thought, "Well, I did say, if a job opened up in their international office, I would apply..." That was the only job I had applied for, and it was a case of just giving it a shot and seeing what happened. And here I am, two years later.

Q: What do you think are the kinds of activities and resources that are important to make sure international students coming to W&M are supported?

Andrews: One of the greatest needs of international students is help adjusting to a new place, and ISSP does a great job with that. If you can't adjust properly, then you can't fit in well in your social life or in class.

Williamsburg is very different, especially coming from a place like Ghana.

Also, I came in the middle of the academic year. And because everyone else in my cohort had started in the fall, it really felt as if I were new in a place everyone had already adjusted to. It's very easy to feel lost.

But the ISSP office has really helped me to adjust, and they have so many resources. I met Brownie [Hamilton,

One of the greatest needs of international students is help adjusting to a new place, and ISSP does a great job with that. If you can't adjust properly, then you can't fit in well in your social life or in class.

a Williamsburg community member and volunteer in ISSP's Global Friend Network] through ISSP. I remember being so nervous at first, so I reached out to Shakia and asked, "Can you please connect me with some other students from Africa? I need to see people like me because this is such an unfamiliar place." Shakia sent out an email with my contact information, and a lot of people reached out to me. We now have a WhatsApp group, and if there's an event on campus, somebody will post it, and then we can all meet up.

Even before I came, I used to spend so much time on the ISSP website reading about everything that I was supposed to do - from the visa application process, to when you arrive, to things that you could do in the U.S. So being here almost feels familiar because you're given so much preparation. I don't know what it's like at other institutions, but my experience here is something that I would recommend strongly to other international students.

Taylor: It was always an important goal when I got into this position to make sure that I was taking steps to provide programming that is supportive and inclusive to our international community. As Araba said, there are a lot of adjustments when it comes to visiting the U.S. but also moving here and studying



here. We want to make sure that we're covering all the bases. So that means immigration resources and pre-arrival. Then, once you're here, it involves anything from getting a bank account to meeting people and managing the social aspects of living and studying here. We focus on an all-inclusive experience for students; we want to make sure we're not leaving anything out. And if there is anything we're missing. I always encourage students to let us know if they have any recommendations, ideas for improvement, or maybe things we haven't considered yet. I don't want them to see us just as the immigration office—the people you go to only when you have a visa issue. I like to let students know that if they're experiencing any concerns -- whether it's academic social or cultural -- we are all more than happy to help and will reach out to our partners to make sure that we're doing all we can to support the international community here. Just as Araba said, Williamsburg can take some getting used to, especially if you've never been to the area or to the U.S. We want to make sure that they feel welcome and supported, and we're always happy to provide any sort of support that we can.

Q: You're at different stages in your careers and in different roles, but you're both in positions to counsel current students to think about what comes next

for them. Do you enjoy that part of your job? What have you learned?

Andrews: Helping students work towards their next step in life is something that I really enjoy doing. Back home I used to volunteer with the Mastercard Foundation. They had a program called the Transitions Training Program, which helps high school students transition into higher ed. That was when I decided I wanted to go on in higher education and help students to do this.

I think the name "Career Center" can intimidate some students. I'm currently the only graduate assistant in the building, and I think when they book an appointment with me and come to the office, it helps that they can see someone like them who is also a student. They are more relaxed and ask me how I got into grad school. Was it hard? How is it going? It's a way for me to connect with them, and I enjoy that, especially when I help someone write a resume or application, and they get back to me and say, "I got the internship!" or, "I got an interview!" It's always so nice to hear that. It's also a learning opportunity for me, because I'm currently a student, and I'm trying to look for a full-time position. This is an opportunity for me to learn and apply it in my next step in life as well.

My supervisor, Andrew Martin [Assistant Director, Public Service Careers], asked me to work on something for International Careers Week last November. So I sat back and thought to myself, "What do I need as an international student here in the U.S.?" I don't know what the U.S. workforce looks like, and I imagine there are other international students who are also asking themselves, "What does the U.S. workforce look like? What do employees in the U.S. want from me? How do I present myself in a way that I will find a job here in the U.S.?"

So I decided to build a workshop around answering questions that students are probably asking. I designed and led the NACE Competencies Workshop. A lot of people have told me they found it helpful. In fact, we are presenting it to students when they come back after winter break. It's really a great thing, because employers are always asking students to come with these skills, but it's not something taught in class. Employers think "I need you to be professional. I need you to know how to communicate." But most students think, "Oh, I have a 4-point GPA. I'll be okay."

It's really been a learning opportunity for me. And it's helped me. I'm sure

Top left: Anarbek Yelshibayev, doctoral student at the school of Education, from Kazakhstan, with Sabrina Vasquez Ruiz, Peer Assistant for International Events and Shakia at the holiday reception at Reves. Top right: The annual pumpkin carve for the international community, including children and Global Friends, is one of the most popular events. (Photos by Kate Hoving)

I like to let students know that if they're experiencing any concerns—whether it's academic social or cultural—we are all more than happy to help and will reach out to our partners to make sure that we're doing all we can to support the international community here.



it's going to help me to transition into a full-time job as well.

Q: Shakia, you're in a unique role, because you have an administrative part of your job, but you're also a counselor, helping students find their way.

Taylor: Yes. Because there are two sides to my job. There's the immigration piece – “Okay, here's how you can do what you want to do to come here” -- and then once they're here, they're looking for internships and employment post-graduation. At ISSP we provide some basic resources, refer them to career counselors, try to open some doors and show them what's available to them.

I love that Araba did that session during International Careers Week, and I was really excited to see that it was coming back for spring as well. We're definitely going to be promoting that, too, because we want international students to know that they can take advantage of these resources, too. There can be a misconception that these resources are only for U.S. citizens, that there's nothing for international students. But in reality, they can take advantage of these resources, even if it doesn't explicitly say, “this is for international students.” Things can look a little bit different, but they can still take advantage of a lot of good resources at William & Mary.

Q: Speaking of career paths, you both were drawn to international education. What were your journeys?

Taylor: In my master's program, there were three different concentrations (student affairs, leadership and administration, and international education). The majority of the students in my cohort were doing student affairs, which is very popular in higher education, and there were a few who were doing actual leadership concentration. I was the only U.S. citizen doing the international concentration in my cohort. All the other people doing that concentration were international students. But I had always been interested in the international side of things, so it was a pretty straightforward choice for me.

There was no other option for me.

I like to say I fell into this field because when I was an undergrad student I had no idea this field existed, and I was originally going down the pipeline of doing history, maybe getting a Ph.D. And then I had an epiphany my senior year. I studied abroad, and when I was doing that program, I found out about the [international education] field. And I just kept thinking I could do this for a career. This exists. And then I discovered there was a master's

program with the concentration in International education. And so because I wasn't going to change my major, I decided to get the history degree and then step into the career path I wanted to do in grad school.

It's been a journey that I've enjoyed because it's given me the chance to see new places and meet people from all over the world., although people may not understand what it is I do. Even members of family think I'm a teacher. Of course that's not quite what I do, but I enjoy being able to interact with students and get to know them and have conversations with them. And it's not as if I'm their teacher or professor. But this work is a great opportunity to get to know students and know their backgrounds and what their aspirations are. And it's like a cultural exchange every day happening at this tiny little desk in my office or on Zoom.

Andrews: It's the same thing for me, too! When I was an undergrad my family would ask, “What do you want to do as a career?” I would say, “I want to work with students.” And they'd say, “A teacher.” And I'd say, “No, but I'll be working with students.” When I first came here, I kept getting calls from home, people asking me, “Oh, we heard you got to do your graduate degree in the U.S. What are you studying?” And I'd

respond, “Educational policy, planning and leadership.” But they’d say, “Oh, a teacher,” and I’d say, “No...”

Q: What’s next for you after you get your master’s degree, Araba?

Andrews: I’m in a two-year program, and I’ve already completed the first year, so I graduate in December. Initially, I was looking to do a Ph.D. I have always wanted to get a Ph.D.--since I was a child. I have always loved reading. I just love school.

At the Mastercard Foundation, I met people from very remote communities in Ghana who didn’t have access to education, and the Foundation helped them to go to high school, helped them to get a first degree, and I saw how education transformed their lives. And I thought, “Araba, if you have the opportunity, you should go all the way.” So I told myself, I’m going to go all the way, because I love school, and I will be the first person in my family to have a master’s degree, so it’d be nice to have an a bachelor of education in social studies and soon a master’s degree. It would be nice if I were the first person to get a Ph.D., too. I would love to get all the experiences that I can get here in the U.S., get a Ph.D., and then I can go back home. And this will fulfill my dreams.

I’ve always said I wanted to establish my own school, and it’s something that is in my heart. I feel working in higher ed is going to help me know exactly where I want to go. 🌍

“I feel working in higher ed is going to help me know exactly where I want to go.”

A lesson in chemistry: Study abroad as catalyst

BY KATE HOVING

*"When you change the way you look at things,
the things you look at change."
- Max Planck*

ABSTRACT

The winter faculty-led study abroad program in Heidelberg, Germany, first conducted in January 2023 and led by Tyler Meldrum, shows study abroad can be an effective applied learning experience for any student, but especially students in STEM fields, and can help clarify life and career goals, as well as provide personal and professional growth and opportunities.

INTRODUCTION

T Tyler Meldrum, associate professor of Chemistry and Director of Undergraduate Research in Chemistry, is just starting his eleventh year at W&M, and it was only in his 10th year that he began to consider leading a program himself. "I think that after ten years you understand the W&M student. You know how a program might fit. Timing is a large part of it. And there's also having the confidence that you can go ahead and take a risk on the program."



Prof. Meldrum with an icon of 20th century physical chemistry: Max Planck. (Courtesy Tyler Meldrum)

Meldrum attributes that confidence to a couple of things. "I had lived abroad [in Aachen, Germany], and it was such a valuable experience for me. And science is so international. We can do things in labs anywhere, but we really gain value by working with our international colleagues."

A science and lab-based program in Heidelberg would be unique, but the impetus for him was more than novelty; it was also the hope it would attract the kind of student seeking more than a challenging course to fulfill a requirement.

"I think [a student with] intellectual curiosity is one characteristic, and really wanting to understand how matter behaves—all of these things that William & Mary students in general want anyway. But I think the international component means that you have to be just a little bit brave. And I think that's the intent of COLL 300—to push boundaries and to let you explore. And I think that being a little bit willing to get lost, a little bit willing to step into the unknown and try something, be it traveling, be it food, be it whatever—I think that little bravery, that willingness to do new things—that's the thing that makes the difference in my mind."

MATERIALS AND METHODS: FACULTY & STAFF COLLABORATION

Meldrum's first step was to reach out to a friend and colleague in Heidelberg: Dr. Leif Schröder, director of the Division of Translational Molecular Imaging at the German Cancer Research Institute [Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum]. They had known each other as postgraduates at Berkeley.

"I contacted him probably December of 2021. I said, 'I have this kind of crazy idea. I want to put in an application to bring a student group.' And he said, 'That

sounds great. I'd be happy to help.' And it just kind of ballooned from there."

As with all new study abroad programs, there was an application process, beginning with consultation with Reves Center staff and then submitting the proposal to the International Study Advisory Committee (ISAC) and the Educational Policy Committee (EPC), both in Arts & Sciences.

"I reached out first and said, 'I have this idea. I'm not sure how I can pull it off. I can't see the final product yet, but I know there's value here,' and the Reves Center was very supportive from the get-go," he recalls. "That's where a lot of the brainstorming came together, and we found a way to piece it together."

Sylvia Mitterndorfer, Director of the Global Education Office and Global Partnerships at the Reves Center, was on board from the very beginning. "[Tyler and I] had corresponded all the way back in 2018 about study abroad for Chemistry majors in general. I was very excited to hear of Tyler's idea of a Chemistry program in Germany given

that we have been actively working to increase study abroad opportunities for STEM students. We had a great conversation about what a proposal could look like and how to make connections to the learning objectives of COLL300. In 2021-22, ahead of the RFP deadline for winter 2022-23, we spoke and emailed as Tyler was preparing his proposal."

Winter break has been increasingly popular for majors in the sciences, as it doesn't interfere with semester and summer commitments. "Tyler's proposal, therefore, met multiple criteria and helps address the needs of STEM students. It is also an incredible opportunity to get access to labs, meet scientists in a multinational context, and learn about global careers in the sciences," Mitterndorfer explains.

Over the course of the three-week program, students would learn molecular and clinical imaging while studying at renowned research centers, including the German Cancer Research Center, the European Molecular Biology Laboratory, and the Max Planck Institute for Medical Research. In addition to academic

curriculum, the program would include visits to explore Heidelberg and nearby towns, learning about history and culture, and visiting other organizations and labs, including a hospital.

There was of course lab work and lectures, and students had to do a literature review on some contemporary magnetic resonance research as well as give a final presentation on a molecular imaging topic of their choice.

To succeed, it would require excellent preparation as well as execution.

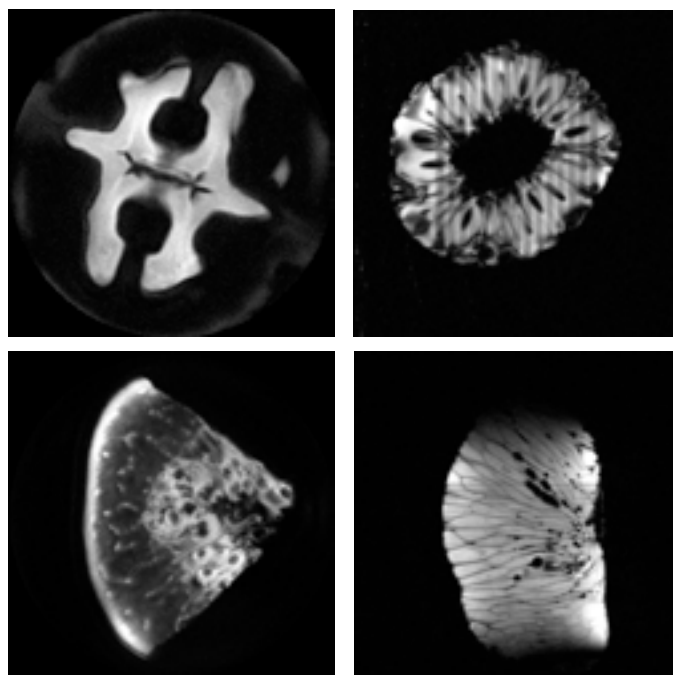
MATERIALS AND METHODS: STUDENTS

There were twenty students in the first cohort. "The majority of students were bio/neuro/chem majors. But we had an econ major. So, there was a broad range of interests and focus. Generally, they had an interest in health imaging or physics itself," Meldrum explains.

He required that students have one semester of general chemistry and one semester of organic chemistry, so one



Trapped in the dungeon! This basement room of the Karlstor (Carl's Gate) is normally inaccessible to the public. We got a tour from the artist-in-residence at the Gate, including the dungeon shown (that floods during high water). (Courtesy Tyler Meldrum)



year total of chemistry as a prerequisite. “But it’s a very gentle prereq, especially for students who are coming in with an interest in premed, because that’s half of the chemistry requirement you have to knock out early on.”

His goal was not to exclude anyone, as much as to ensure students had the preparation to succeed. “In the first semester of organic chemistry, students learn the very basics of magnetic resonance. And so, they know what I mean if I say, ‘This molecule is a hydrocarbon; this molecule is an alcohol; this is an ester.’ So, then we can start interpreting the data that we’re getting instead of thinking about the underlying terminology.”

In addition to the prerequisite, a key part of the preparation (as with any W&M faculty-led study abroad program), was a one-credit course in the semester leading up to the program. During the fall they had classes that covered the basic physics and chemistry that underlie magnetic resonance--how an MRI works, basically.

Sam Rubin '24 was one of the students on the Heidelberg program. “At the moment I’m a chemistry major and physics minor, but I want to be a doctor.” He’s considering radiology or biomedical imaging as a career. Put him and Meldrum in a room together to discuss

the program, and the intellectual energy is both palpable and, well, magnetic.

“I was super excited for this program because I’ve been working in Tyler’s lab for about two years now, and I’ve done most of my work on single-sided NMR (nuclear magnetic resonance). The program was focused on a certain niche topic, but you could expand it out to a broader picture of general biomedical imaging of human beings -- tissue, muscles, skeletal -- so it fit my interests very well.”

Rubin explains that in Meldrum’s lab, the size of what they can scan is different, but the principles are the same. “The actual MRI machine itself is very different from a typical NMR or different magnetic resonance instrument. Downstairs in ISC, we have a vertically standing magnetic resonance instrument and it takes only about a 5-millimeter tube -- a tiny tube of a liquid sample.”

An MRI that one would find in a hospital or diagnostic clinic is much larger, takes up an entire room, has safety precautions and requires special training.

That level of training is not feasible for undergraduates, especially on a three-week program.

But in Heidelberg, they did have access to a larger machine than at W&M. “We didn’t get human-sized MRIs, but we

were working with an NMR instrument that is a wide bore, so around 30 millimeters or over an inch in diameter,” Rubin says. “That allowed us to examine a tomato or cherries -- things that have hard and soft tissue to show contrast -- not necessarily human-sized, but still more than we have in Williamsburg.”

In Heidelberg lectures complemented the hands-on lab work, and Rubin saw that as useful. “There was a healthy number of lectures. We were talking about: How do you image? How do you know what molecules look like when you can’t see them? How do you know what’s inside a human when you don’t want to dissect them? And how can we use this magnetic resonance to do it?”

Meldrum even included an opportunity for any students in premed or considering premed to connect with someone working in the field. “My brother is a radiologist. And he zoomed into the program and gave a talk about his experience as a radiologist.”

They continued learning outside of the lecture hall and lab, taking day trips to surrounding cultural and educational sites. “We visited the German Röntgen Museum, in Würzburg, where X-rays were discovered. We looked at 100-year-old examples of how people found out how to take pictures of what’s in the human body,” Meldrum recalls. “That

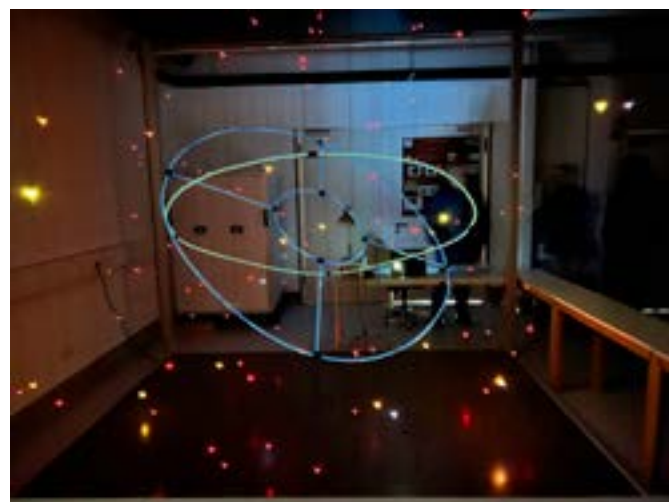
Above Sam Rubin in Heidelberg (Courtesy Sam Rubin); MRIs, clockwise from bottom left: fig, walnut, raspberry and orange slice (Courtesy Tyler Meldrum)



was the first time scientists could see what it looks like without even cutting it open. So, it hit both aspects of the chemistry and physics of the research, but especially the pre-med aspect.”

The group also visited the Max Planck Institute for Astronomy for a “lesson” especially compelling for Meldrum. “We talked with people about how they designed instruments for these very sophisticated telescopes, James Webb among them. We also saw a lot of ground-based telescopes that are doing radio imaging and trying to understand more and more. We asked them: ‘Our program has been about looking at molecules that you can’t see inside of people that you can’t see. You can’t go and just see a star. How do we use these measurements to interpret what’s happening based on the physics?’”

Rubin remembers, “We had a lecture from one of the scientists about the experimental optics they were doing, which arguably was above, I think, everyone in the room. It was fantastic, but deeply complicated.” Meldrum concurs: “It was fascinating but deeply complicated.” And deeply rewarding.



DISCUSSION: COLLEGIALITY AND RESPECT

And that experience of a high-level scientific lecture illustrates another important element of the program experience: The students, although undergraduates, were treated as intellectual peers.

“Maybe Sam’s experience was different, but I certainly got the sense that they knew that their audience, that we weren’t doing new research at the time –that this was three weeks of education, not developing new knowledge,” Meldrum says. “But at the same time, they weren’t afraid of actually talking about the experiments in full technical terms.”

Rubin concurred. “That’s my experience as well. I think the lectures were a good replacement for what we would have gotten in a 300 or 400 level upper class chemistry elective.”

The time on the Heidelberg program wasn’t an interesting side experience but a chance to apply what they learned. Rubin is enthusiastic about the quality and content of the information “You took a fundamental that you learned, and you applied it in different and more advanced and more technical ways, and you built on what you already knew. As for the labs, some of them were pretty advanced, but some of them at the same time were like a teaching lab. It was similar to what you would find in an undergrad lab where it’s not groundbreaking research, but if you don’t understand this, there’s no way you can get any further in the field.”

Rubin expresses no sense of boredom or impatience with the curriculum. “You had to learn the fundamentals, the basics, the actual, like mechanisms of action, of nuclear magnetic resonance, which was the theme of this, of how



From top: : At Roentgen museum in Wurzburg looking at original X-ray images from various animals and objects (Courtesy Sam Rubin); Model of solar system at the Max Planck institute for Astronomy. (Courtesy Sam Rubin); The group, situated in the central library, enjoys a seminar on social and historical developments in science from Prof. Herbert Zimmermann at the Max Planck Institute for Medical Research. (Courtesy Tyler Meldrum)

“I was super excited for this program because I've been working in Tyler's lab for about two years now, and I've done most of my work on single-sided NMR (nuclear magnetic resonance). The program was focused on a certain niche topic, but you could expand it out to a broader picture of general biomedical imaging of human beings — tissue, muscles, skeletal — so it fit my interests very well.”

of how these actual molecules interact on a microscopic nanoscale.” And he emphasizes, “It was an opportunity for us to learn but also for us to ask questions and for us to engage with the material.”

The high caliber of the curriculum and interactions was due in large part to Meldrum's own experience and to the partner he chose.

“My connections in Heidelberg came from Dr. Schröder. He was a postdoc in the same lab in California where I was a grad student. So, he also had these interests in this cross-national collaboration, and he understood a little bit about how the American system works. Both of us, because we had an interest in working with each other, were able to find common ground: How do we use the technical expertise, the instrumentation, the engineering skills that the Germany side has, coupling it with the William & Mary style education of bringing students along through the lab and the theory? And I think that because we understood each other's goals that way, it really worked well for undergraduates to be able to see what's happening at a cutting-edge facility.”

The program culminated in final presentations, and they did not disappoint.

Meldrum's students produced a wide and fascinating range of themes, from how airport scanners work with millimeter wave and how that's used as an imaging technique, to identifying the provenance of wine using magnetic resonance, to pure NMR theory and how you can relate molecular scale behaviors with macroscopic observables.

Rubin's presentation was on PET-CT, clinical imaging focused on detection of cancer through radioactive glucose. He was impressed with the work of his fellow students.

“I worked on mine, and I knew mine front and back, and everyone else learned theirs front and back and could answer questions and could take different feedback. It was very cool to see people delve into their own realms and apply what we learned to what they're interested in,” Rubin explains. “I didn't know how much range there would be in this field, but with the presentations on different imaging techniques, I didn't know half the things people were talking about and they seemed so passionate—in a week to put together a 10- to 15-minute oral presentation, and each of them brought such different aspects into the presentation itself.”

SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES: PROGRAMMATIC, ACADEMIC, PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL

Mitterndorfer sees the Heidelberg program as a success on multiple levels. “Students benefited greatly from Tyler's expertise in his field, connections with scientists in Heidelberg, and his own experience having lived and studied abroad. This program has added substantively to the winter portfolio of options, and we seek to continue to increase winter study abroad options for students. Tyler's program is a great example of how international research collaborations by W&M faculty can open doors to global experiences for W&M students. We are so grateful to

Tyler for his enthusiasm and support of study abroad.”

For the program director, who conceived of the program and saw it through from start to finish, there was satisfaction in accomplishing what he'd set out to do.

“I remember one night when one of the students was trying to piece together some of their thoughts for their presentation, and they couldn't figure out when we could meet,” Meldrum remembers. “So, we just walked up and down the main street and talked science as we were strolling through downtown Heidelberg. It was really memorable.” And later at the final dinner celebration, Meldrum had a similar sense of accomplishment. “It was so satisfying to just sit back and look at a group that had really made progress in terms of the science, and they had good cohesion. It was really satisfying to sit back and see that we did it.”

In addition to the intellectual stimulation and exploration and transformative life experience, it also had tangible effects on career choices for some students.

Meldrum expresses a certain amount of unabashed glee in reporting one unexpected outcome: “The econ major is now an econ-chemistry double major. She was persuaded.”

For a student like Rubin, who went on the program with fairly clear plans for his future, the experience broadened his options and his outlook in ways he hadn't anticipated.

He began thinking about doing more research abroad and he found an opportunity that was “even bigger and better [than in Heidelberg] and really cool!”

“Without even really thinking about it, the experience in Heidelberg set me up for success for a summer research program as well.”

The catalyst for Rubin was the summary review project Meldrum included in the curriculum—where students were assigned a research article and had to put it in some context: What does this mean? How do I understand this? How is this

“... being a little bit willing to get lost, a little bit willing to step into the unknown and try something ... I think that little bravery, that willingness to do new things —that’s the thing that makes the difference.”

related to some other ideas or projects I’ve thought about?

“There were 8 or 10 papers that were arguably seminal in the field of magnetic resonance imaging and MRI theory,” Rubin recalls. “And one of the papers—not even the one I ultimately reviewed!—was proposing a new and better way of doing things [The Acquisition of multidimensional NMR spectra in a single scan]. When I started the paper, I looked up one of the authors and found there’s a summer research program at his institute, the Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovot, Israel. I applied to it, and I got an initial response while in Germany and later, an acceptance. So I continued my journey in the field of magnetic resonance and different types of imaging in Israel this summer.”

Heidelberg was an important steppingstone to the Weizmann Institute, the next phase in his research career, and

one he hadn’t seen as an option before the program.

“It was very different from William & Mary or Germany: William & Mary is predominantly undergrad focused and focused on teaching one-on-one; and in Germany it was more lab group based or exploration based. Then I got to Weizmann, and it’s a true research institute. There are no undergrads. [Weizmann is a public university that offers postgraduate degrees only.] Everyone is 30 and a professional with 3 degrees. So arguably quite intimidating. But it meant that there was no holding back. They wouldn’t go easy on me.”

And from the joy in his voice and in his expression as he describes it, he clearly relished the challenge.

Which takes us back to Meldrum’s original hope for what a student would both bring to, and gain from, the experience: *“... being a little bit willing*



to get lost, a little bit willing to step into the unknown and try something... I think that little bravery, that willingness to do new things—that’s the thing that makes the difference.”

Rubin expresses no doubt about the value of the program in Heidelberg for him as preparation for his next step and future steps: “What I learned in Germany, and what I learned at W&M, really set me up to just fly right in and pick up on what’s going on.”¹⁰



Rubin with bust of Max Planck. Courtesy Sam Rubín; Heidelberg 2023 group at Königstuhl, the peak behind the Heidelberg Castle, overlooking the Neckar Valley. (Courtesy Tyler Meldrum)

A personal playbook for life

Being an 'outsider' helped actor Stephanie Szostak '94 find herself

BY CLAIRE DE LISLE

Originally published on the *W&M Alumni Magazine* website.



“It feels so vulnerable to talk about myself,” says Stephanie Frankel Szostak '94 in her French accent, smiling with a hint of embarrassment into the laptop camera.

She has just finished a five-season run in ABC's "A Million Little Things," after appearing in movies including "The Devil Wears Prada," "Dinner for Schmucks" and "Iron Man 3," but getting there wasn't easy. Hers is a story of discovering and rediscovering herself.

Raised in Paris, she enrolled at William & Mary, overcoming cultural and language barriers to earn a marketing degree and play on the women's varsity golf team. She then took a chance on New York City,

where at age 29 she attended her first acting class. Despite a rocky start, she kept at it, building a career in a highly competitive space.

She has now published her first book, "Self!sh: Step Into a Journey of Self-Discovery To Revive Confidence, Joy, and Meaning," in partnership with the mental health advocacy nonprofit Give an Hour. In the book, she shares a piece of her personal story, including what she calls one of her "epic thoughts": "I come from a different culture; I think differently. I bring value to this team."

Szostak came to this mantra about five years ago, but it's something she could have used when she was a student at William & Mary. Her father, who is American, took her to look at colleges on the East Coast.

"In France, you don't have liberal arts education. And you don't have college sports, either. And I didn't know what I wanted to study, and I also wanted to continue playing golf competitively, so coming to the States made sense," she says.

After visiting William & Mary and Colonial Williamsburg, she fell in love with Williamsburg. She applied, was accepted and moved into Yates Hall.

Her freshman year was hard, between the culture shock, the language barrier and feeling like an outsider. At first, she cried every day in her room.

One of her first classes was Psychology 101, but she failed her final. She had never taken a multiple-choice test before, and though she had studied the material, she had

“I love being a foreigner, living in a foreign country, even though in the beginning it’s hard. It allows you to find your own way, to get away from the expectations of what you are supposed to do because of your culture and upbringing. You are thrown into a whole new environment, and in a way that gives you a lot of freedom to do things differently.”



trouble narrowing down the answers. A sympathetic professor turned the situation around.

“I went to the professor after, and I said, ‘I don’t understand why I failed. I assure you I know this really well.’ And he was amazing. He went through the questions with me, and he was like, ‘Yes, you do know the material — you just think too much,’” she says. “He let me write a paper instead. I got an A.”

A professor who taught English as a Foreign Language invited her to her house for tea and helped her learn the nuances of writing papers in English, “which is so very different from the dissertation model taught in France,” she says, laughing.

Her teammates and coaches on the women’s varsity golf team were also a wonderful source of friendship and support.

“I often felt quite lonely, but just being part of the team and having a structure around daily life and practices was really helpful,” she says. “There was so much laughter when we were traveling, too.”

Around that time, her older brother became very ill. He had struggled with substance abuse and Szostak learned that he was HIV positive. She was unsure of how to confide in anyone and felt isolated.

Wanting to be closer to home, Szostak studied abroad at the American University of Paris for her sophomore year. There, she was able to spend time with her brother before he passed away at age 28. She also made friends with American students, including Britt Szostak, who would later become her husband. By the end of the academic year, she was ready to give William & Mary a second try.

“My freshman year at William & Mary is one of my greatest achievements, because it was a really hard moment, but I stuck it out and I grew from it. I learned that any new environment can be challenging and lead me to feeling like an outsider. That’s where my epic thought comes in handy,” she says.

When she returned to William & Mary, she lived in Reves Hall and then the French House. She made friends

with American and international students.

She became a business major, focusing on marketing, hopeful that the degree would give her options. When she graduated, she moved to New York City and took an office job at Chanel marketing skin care products. She didn’t like the job much, but she loved the city, and eventually felt at home there.

“I love being a foreigner, living in a foreign country, even though in the beginning it’s hard. It allows you to find your own way, to get away from the expectations of what you are supposed to do because of your culture and upbringing. You are thrown into a whole new environment, and in a way that gives you a lot of freedom to do things differently,” she says.

At age 29, having never acted before, she answered a “small inner voice” that told her to give it a shot. She signed up for an acting class. She didn’t get up on the stage at first — she just listened and learned until she worked up the courage to try it.

Szostak played on the varsity women’s golf team at W&M and continues to golf today. (Courtesy photo)



When she gave her first monologue, she realized that by portraying someone else, she had found a way to access a part of herself that had otherwise been buried.

“I felt this true connection to myself. I think a lot of actors find it’s easier to reveal ourselves when we are hidden behind another character,” she says. She took to heart the words of the legendary theater coach Uta Hagen, “Instead of losing yourself in the part, find yourself in the part.”

For the first 10 years of her acting career, she says she was motivated by feeling like the underdog. Then, suddenly, her career picked up. She was working with the likes of Meryl Streep and Steve Carell, and as the roles and sets got bigger, that feeling of being an outsider resurfaced. She started putting much more pressure on herself and doubted that she was good enough.

“Something I’ve struggled with since I was little is when I’m the only one who doesn’t know something in a group. It makes me feel like ‘Oh my gosh, I’m dumb. They are going to think I’m dumb. I don’t fit in. I don’t belong.’ Working on my mindset for the past 10 years, learning practices and tools, like crafting epic thoughts, has helped me better navigate those moments and

ultimately embrace opportunities that come with any new environment.”

It was on the set of “A Million Little Things” that she connected with the founder of Give an Hour, Barbara Van Dahlen. The show dealt with depression, suicide and other mental health concerns — issues close to Szostak’s heart after experiencing her brother’s struggles. Van Dahlen was a consultant to the writers and producers.

Szostak told Van Dahlen about her playbook that she uses daily for her mental wellbeing — much like a playbook a coach might use, but for an individual to use to better respond and thrive in the face of adversity.

“If we don’t have a game plan for our daily state of mind, our daily life, then we’re going on autopilot. When we are living like that, we are more vulnerable to whatever external stressors are happening that day, and our own internal stressors,” she says. “So why not have something to help us respond better to whatever’s coming at us that day?”

That discussion turned into a series of webinars during COVID-19, and then the book “Self!sh,” which came out on Oct. 10.

The book is structured as a step-by-step workbook for readers to answer a

series of guided prompts, culminating with the creation of their own personal playbook. It is interspersed with personal stories from people affiliated with Give an Hour and scientific context for each exercise from mental health professionals. The accompanying app will be released soon to provide readers with a platform to create digital versions of their playbooks.

“You need to really understand who you are in order to have the guts to do the things you want. That’s one of the reasons why the book is called ‘Self!sh,’ because it’s about having the courage to live the life that you want. Your playbook will give you a tool to pause and shift your focus back to what serves you well, so you can better respond to the day — and hopefully bring more of what you cherish and value to the world and those around you.

“Your playbook is private, for you and only you,” says Szostak. “In an age where everything is public and social, it’s a tool to quiet down the noise and reconnect to the whole of who you are.”

Above left: Szostak (third from right) with the cast of ABC’s “A Million Little Things” (Courtesy photo); Szostak with Robert Downey Jr. and Ben Kingsley on the set of Iron Man 3. (Courtesy photo)

A career game plan leads to Singapore

BY KATE HOVING



The recent announcement of the partnership between Disney and Epic Games should dispel any doubts about the robust and lucrative future of gaming in multimedia entertainment. The success of HBO's *The Last of Us* proved that even non-gamers could become enthralled with the characters and storylines, because video gaming is ultimately about storytelling—and storytelling that captivates all ages.

Cam Jones '24 was a little ambivalent about the positive attention the show garnered. “The *Last of Us* show was really great for gamers, but it was also a little frustrating, because when it came out, a lot of people were saying they didn't realize games could have any artistic value, but gamers have been saying that for thirty years.”

And that's longer than Jones has been alive, so his comment is both insightful and an indication of the thoughtful and determined

approach he brings to gaming and finding his place in it as an undergraduate and ultimately as a career.

TAKING ON LEADERSHIP ROLES

Jones is serious about gaming. He is president of the W&M Esports Club, a recognized student organization, which has 300 to 400 members who game casually. He is also a varsity player.

Dr. Michele King, director of the varsity Esports Program at William & Mary explains the difference. “The Esports Program is funded and supported through the Provost's Office. You have to try out to make the varsity roster, which is a significant accomplishment. And as a varsity player, Jones is also an Esports Pioneer. Only a handful of students get to do that.” Students have to propose to King how their area of expertise can add to the Program. Then, they are chosen by the Esports Advisory Board to focus on that area, such as data analytics, sponsorship

and outreach, community building, broadcasting and media and wellness.

Jones's role as a Pioneer focuses on sponsorship and outreach, so he helps with bringing speakers to campus and getting endorsements. He is well-suited to that position, as he has an instinct for finding opportunities that benefit the students, the university's program and gaming companies.

He has worked with other students to start the *Splatoon* team at William & Mary. “That meant for a semester he had to recruit students to try out and compete,” according to King. “Then he made a pitch to the Esports Advisory Board to make *Splatoon* an official game title in our program, because not all games are supported in the Program.”

For those unfamiliar with it, *Splatoon* is a third-person, competitive shooter game, where the players shoot paint.

Cam Jones attended the first in-person Esports Olympics in Singapore thanks to an internship with MAINCARD. (Courtesy photo)



“I think Splatoon reaches a niche audience that we didn’t really have in the Program. I saw it as an interesting community that was growing rapidly, so I wanted W&M to get in on the ground floor with it.”

A MAJOR THAT REFLECTS PASSIONS AS WELL AS CAREER GOALS

Jones has had a vision of where he wants to go with his love of gaming, but that vision didn’t fit into conventional majors.

“I’ve always been interested in the game industry, but I thought my only pathway into it was through computer science major. After a few classes, however, I decided it really wasn’t for me, so I needed to figure out a different approach instead of just giving up.”

Jones designed his own major in Game Studies, which explores the more artistic side, such as creative writing, music, art design and voice acting.”

His sophomore year, he reached out to King “I figured she would understand better than anyone else the importance of looking at gaming in a multi-lens way. So we put together a series of classes.” He’s taken a lot of theater courses as well as art and creative writing courses.

“Courses such as theater and art enable you to bring out your creative side,” he explains. “They allow you to develop new stories and new ideas and discover things about yourself and about the world through the artistic process. And that is essential when you’re designing games, because you want to design something that players are going to feel is fresh and new.”

Jones wants to provide a sense of wonder and joy in the games that he makes. “When you turn on that game for the first time, I want to make you feel like you’re a little kid again. That you’re lost in that world that I created.”

Courses such as theater and art enable you to bring out your creative side. They allow you to develop new stories and new ideas and discover things about yourself and about the world through the artistic process.

And that is essential when you’re designing games, because you want to design something that players are going to feel is fresh and new.

THE PATH TO AN INTERNSHIP

King works tirelessly to promote Esports at William & Mary and around the world, and she is even more determined to advocate for her students to help them turn their gaming skills and experience into career opportunities. With Jones’s unique combination of passion for gaming as well as marketing and business development skills, King wanted to set things in motion for him.

The opportunity turned out to be GAMEmason, a tournament hosted by George Mason University last spring.

“I was a guest speaker and leading a workshop at GAMEmason, and we had some of our teams competing. Although Cam wasn’t competing, I knew companies were going to be there, too, and I knew what Cam wanted to do. So I said to him, ‘Showing up is 90% of it. Let’s just show up and network.’”



One of King's connections at the tournament didn't have any openings at the time so King continued networking. "I'm always asking on behalf of students, 'What internships do you have? What jobs do you have?'"

King had done the reconnaissance and set-up; Jones closed the deal. "Cam went right on up and introduced himself, and he just took it away from there," King says proudly. "He never gave up. He kept going. He had that grit, that determination, and then he made it happen."

In his usual self-effacing way, Jones remembers the exchange more simply. "I met the CEO of MAINCARD, Victoria Cheng. We started talking, and she gave me her business card, so I followed up with her, and that's what led to the internship with her company in Singapore."

ON TO SINGAPORE

The connection King and Jones made at George Mason yielded unexpected opportunities – and travel. MAINCARD is an eSports company based in Singapore who is creating an app/platform which will work directly with esports athletes and scouts. "When I saw the app pitch, it looked like a mix of LinkedIn and Instagram. It allows players to share their statistics so scouts can look on the platform and recruit players," Jones explains. "And it allows MAINCARD to manage that and potentially set up opportunities between the recruiters and the gamers themselves."

Jones's internship with MAINCARD lasted approximately three months, and he was in Singapore for about five weeks of that. He was able to do the work that didn't require him to be in person virtually.

"They were primarily involved in the Southeast Asian esports market, and they were interested in breaking into the North American market," Jones explains. "I was serving as a consultant to them on the differences in the gaming market and the collegiate structure in America. I was doing research and giving presentations on financing, programs, and tournament organization.

Outside of work, MAINCARD wanted Jones to experience the Esports Olympics while he was in Singapore. "They got me a free ticket because Victoria was involved with casting it. In addition to arena settings where you can sit down and watch the competitors play, there were lots of demos and hands-on opportunities to try new products like VR [virtual reality] or just play different games," Jones remembers. "It was like an expo, really, with all kinds of technology from different companies. A new Sonic game came out recently, but I got to play an early version of it back in Singapore several months before it was released because Sega (the company that makes Sonic) was there and had a demo for people to try. Usually those kinds of opportunities are reserved game journalists or reviewers."

NEXT STEPS

Jones returned from the internship more committed to working in the game industry as a career than ever before. "I don't have concrete plans right now, but I am looking at jobs throughout the country."

His dream job would be something akin to a creative director, overseeing all the individual aspects of production. "I'd be working with the voice actors, artists, musicians, sound designers, environment designers, writers— every facet of the projects."

"I hope to join the list of greats like Yuri Lowenthal '93, Todd Howard '93, and Raul Fernandez MBA '05, who have graduated from William & Mary and gone on to impact the gaming industry." 🎮



University hosts baseball symposium centered on U.S.-Japan diplomacy

BY ETHAN QIN '26 AND AGAVNI MEHRABI '26

Originally appeared in **THE FLAT HAT**

Friday, Oct. 27, the William and Mary U.S.-Japan Baseball Diplomacy Project held its “150 Years of U.S.-Japan Baseball Diplomacy” symposium in the Sadler Center’s Commonwealth Auditorium. Professor of government and Co-Director of the Social Science Research Methods Center Marcus Holmes, associate professor of history Hiroshi Kitamura and Isabelle and Jerome E. Hyman Distinguished University Professor and Director of public policy Paul Manana hosted the symposium with the help of their team of undergraduate students. Sponsored by the United States Department of State, the conference celebrated

the role of baseball in shaping relations between the United States and Japan.

The symposium centered on diplomacy and emphasized cooperation, resulting from an inter-organizational collaboration between the Japan Retired Foreign Player Association, Major League Baseball Players Trust and North American Sake Brewery, professors from Rice University and Western Washington University, as well as the College’s departments of government, history and modern languages and literatures. The symposium also featured interdisciplinary collaboration with faculty from the department of kinesiology and between students studying international relations, government, history, economics, public policy, data science, psychology and sociology.

The symposium began with opening remarks from Holmes, United States Ambassador to Japan Rahm Emanuel and William and Mary baseball head coach Mike McRae. After Holmes began the symposium with opening remarks, Senior Vice President of MLB International Jim Small delivered a keynote speech about his experience with baseball’s cultural significance. Small recalled an interaction with a young man who survived the 2011 Tohoku earthquake and tsunami, in which the young man told Small, “If you get knocked down seven times, you get up eight times.” The same young man who offered Small this advice was the star pitcher of a Japanese youth baseball team who beat an American team 8-1 a few weeks later.

“If you want to know what baseball means to Japan and what Japan means to baseball, it’s a 13-year-old kid trying

to console me by saying, ‘It’s okay, I’ve got this,’” Small said.

Professor of history at Rice University Sayuri Guthrie Shimizu shared a brief history of U.S.-Japan baseball diplomacy to lay the groundwork for the rest of the day’s programming. She explained how Horace Wilson introduced the sport to Japan in 1872 while he was teaching at Kaisei Gakko University. Later named Tokyo Imperial University and currently known as the University of Tokyo, this institution eventually came to be known as the site for the first formal baseball team in the country.

Shimizu also shared how she came to be involved in the research surrounding the U.S.-Japanese baseball diplomacy. She recalled coming to the realization that there is an inseparable connection between the impact of baseball and the history of U.S.-Japanese diplomacy as a whole.

“I was not a sports historian, but I’m a U.S.-Japanese diplomatic historian,” Shimizu said. “Once I delved into the U.S. Japanese relations, there were certain inflection points that were very, very important that constituted a great general arc of the U.S. Japanese history, and in each inflection point, baseball was there. So that’s why I was like, ‘Why is this so important?’ And then I began to research, and that’s how I got involved.”

Looking forward, Shimizu emphasized that she looks forward to seeing a positive future impact imparted by U.S.-Japanese baseball diplomacy, defining success for this kind of sports diplomacy as the transformation of the experiences lived by future generations.

“In my way of thinking, it’s just how many young boys and girls play baseball and then it becomes part of their daily life and their lived experience and they look at the other ones, Americans or the Japanese, as a sort of equal partner in this sporting community,” Shimizu said. “If they can really start to think of themselves that way, I would say that’s really the major successful cultural diplomacy.”

Afterwards, professor of journalism at Western Washington University Derek Moscato further discussed these ideas of public diplomacy and soft power in the context of U.S.-Japan relations using the example of Ichiro Suzuki’s illustrious career in the MLB. As Moscato described it, public diplomacy and soft power are concepts within international relations that refer to a country’s ability to persuade others without the use of force or coercion. In essence, soft power uses attraction to influence others, often through aspects of a country’s culture.

Moscato expanded on this idea by referencing a 2002 article titled “Japan’s Gross National Cool,” written by Douglas McGray. In the article, McGray argued Japan was in the midst of a shift from an economic superpower to the potential of a cultural superpower, referencing the impact of Japanese cultural exports such as anime, food, fashion, architecture, design and in the context of this symposium, sport.

This article was published less than a year after Suzuki’s MLB debut in 2001. Moscato elaborated that Suzuki’s popularity in both the United States and Japan was evidence of the shift that McGray foresaw and evidence of legitimacy of public diplomacy and soft power.

“Japanese baseball star Ichiro Suzuki left Japan to bat lead-off for the Seattle Mariners,” Moscato said. “Japan sports shops were already filled with official Mariners jerseys and baseball caps in anticipation. Japanese television covered every Mariners game live despite a 12-hour difference.”

Moscato reiterated that although U.S.-Japanese baseball diplomacy may seem contemporary with the success of this year’s World Baseball Classic and the monumental popularity of Japanese baseball star Shohei Ohtani of the Los Angeles Angels, Suzuki’s influence two decades ago set the foundation for the legacy that Japanese players like Ohtani carry when playing in the United States today.

“Ichiro was a cultural intermediary ... the embodiment of what was possible through mutual exchange and cross-cultural learning”

“Ichiro was a cultural intermediary who [was] the embodiment of what was possible through mutual exchange and cross-cultural learning,” Moscato said. “[Ichiro] was real proof that Japan could compete on a larger stage of culture and sport, serving as a metaphor for Japan’s influence in arenas like cinema, food, architecture and design.”

Baseball journalist and specialist Brad Lefton shared a few examples of some of the many ways Japan has influenced baseball America throughout the years he has covered the sport. Lefton began his discourse by discussing the innovative nature of Japanese training and condition practices in the late 1990s. A significant amount of Japanese training and conditioning actions centered around the concept of pre-habilitation, which involves preventing injuries and lessening the number of players who require rehabilitation.

While this practice may seem commonplace in professional sports today, nearly three decades ago, such training methods were revolutionary. Effectiveness of the impact of pre-habilitation is still observed today, with about half of MLB teams having a Japanese member of their training staff.

Lefton highlighted teams like Cincinnati, Miami, Boston and Houston as particular points of interest, as they have Japanese trainers, but no Japanese players.

“Many Japanese players typically bring a trainer over with them because major league teams want that player to be comfortable here,” Lefton said. “But, then what happens in the



case of teams like Cincinnati, Miami, Boston and Houston, is when the player is not re-signed, management feels compelled to hold on to the trainer. And, so the trainers have stayed with these organizations, even though the Japanese player isn't there anymore because the management and other players feel so good about the training that they're getting from these Japanese trainers."

Lefton then discussed Japan's influence on baseball hitting in America through the story of Philadelphia Phillies' advisor Charlie Manuel. A former MLB player, Manuel had an unremarkable six-year career in the MLB, batting an average of .198 and only hitting four home runs. However, in 1996 he crossed the Pacific Ocean to play ball in Japan. Over his four seasons in Japan, Manuel hit a .303 average with an on base plus slugging percentage of 1.988. He credits his Yakult Swallows manager Hiroshi Arakawa and Japanese baseball player Sadaharu Oh for revolutionizing his bat swing.

While Manuel did not imitate Oh's famous flamingo batting stance, he still applied the same technique as Oh and Arakawa, who conceptualized

the importance of a strong core for balance and generating power from the legs. Today, such concepts regarding batting stance are widely accepted — however, Oh and Arakawa emphasized such methods back in the 1960s.

After a short intermission, Kitamura moderated a conversation between former baseball players Masanori "Mashi" Murakami and Greg "Boomer" Wells.

Murakami was the first Japanese player to play in the MLB, making his debut for the San Francisco Giants on Sept. 1, 1964. Murakami initially arrived in the United States as a part of a minor league working agreement between the Giants and the Nankai Hawks, Murakami's Japanese team.

Though his stint in the MLB was short-lived, with Murakami returning to Japan after the 1965 season, Murakami was a pioneer for Japanese players in the American major leagues, bridging two baseball cultures and starting the influx of following Japanese talent entering the MLB.

Wells helped solidify the belief that American players could have

successful and lucrative careers playing baseball in Japan. After a few brief stints in the MLB, Wells signed with the Hankyu Braves of the Nippon Professional Baseball, where he found considerable success, winning Pacific League MVP and the NPB Triple Crown in 1984.

Before Wells, it was common for American baseball players to only go over to Japan towards the end of their careers to make one last check before retiring.

"I'm like, okay, I'm too young not to be playing; I don't want to go there to make one last check and be through playing baseball," Wells said. "So, I fought it and after I didn't have a choice, then I went over and played. But, it just so happened that the class of players that went over with me were all in the same boat of wanting to still play baseball. So when we went over there, we kind of changed the Japanese perception of the American baseball player, because guys used to only go there to get one last check and leave."

Other working components of the U.S.-Japan Baseball Diplomacy Project, which are in current

development, include an interactive online trivia game lead by Manna, an oral history project focused on interviews with the players themselves conducted by Kitamura and a campaign to send a group of young baseball players from the Williamsburg Youth Baseball League to Kamakura, Japan for a series of exhibition games. Professor of kinesiology Amy Rains and professor of government Jackson Sasser are part of the team of coaches involved with lifting this last initiative off the ground.

The campaign will take place next August. The team of 11 and 12 year-olds from the Williamsburg Revolution travel organization was selected in due part to submitted essays explaining what benefit they would get out of going to Japan.

“These guys are going to represent the U.S. and the City of Williamsburg in the best way possible,” Rains said. “They’re going to spend ten days in Kamakura, which is an old capital city just outside of Tokyo, known for its robust history with religious shrines and temples. So, we’ll get to do a lot of sightseeing, and we are absolutely thrilled.

As Rains emphasized, cultural exchange programs such as this hold an important role in the ever-growing relationship between the United States and Japan. Not only will players from both countries be able to experience the differences in style of play, but players will be able to experience an entirely different culture.

“It’s always a really good thing to open your minds and realize that there are people all over the world that like to do the same things that we do,” Small said. “And, if that’s hitting a baseball, maybe that’s going to bring the kids over here and the kids in Japan closer together.”

The closing keynote for the night was delivered by none other than former MLB player, coach, manager and broadcaster Bobby Valentine. Valentine discussed the impact baseball can have on bringing people of all backgrounds together.

“Why am I so lucky to be at this venue listening to these prior guests share their wisdom, experience and love for baseball,” Valentine said.👏



From Top: Professor Marcus Holmes introduces the Symposium (Photo: Ryan Goodman); MLB pioneer Masanori Murakami suiting up for the US-Japan Baseball Diplomacy Project’s oral history interview (Photo: Hiroshi Kitamura); The Williamsburg Youth Baseball League Team (Photo: Haley Englert)

Promoting Gender Equality in the Egyptian Justice System



Throughout the year, in partnership with the Presidential Precinct, the Reves Center hosts delegations from around the world under the auspices of the Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP).

This past fall, three lawyers and their translator came to Williamsburg as part of the State Department's Egypt Project. The objectives were to illustrate the evolution of the rule of law in the U.S. and how it promotes fair,

inclusive, transparent, accessible, and independent judiciaries; to introduce visitors to inspiring female legal leaders in the academic, public, and private sectors; and to create linkages among professionals in the legal field working to promote international cooperation in strengthening women's leadership in and access to justice.

In addition to International Liaison & Interpreter Ms. Rana Raad, the delegation included:

Ms. Amal Mahmoud Mohamed Ahmed (Quena): Lawyer

FOCUS OF WORK: Gender issues, particularly female genital mutilation (FGM). Amal has contributed her expertise and legal acumen to the work of several civil society organizations to increase public awareness of the physical and legal consequences of FGM. She has also consulted with various groups in proposing amendments and revision to the personal status law and the criminal code. Amal also seeks to enhance women's participation in local bar associations.

Ms. Nesma Elsayed Elbalboushy Mohamed (Cairo): Founder/Executive Director, Sanad Initiative for Legal Support for Women

FOCUS OF WORK: Gender issues, child marriage, sexual harassment, gender-based violence, FGM, and domestic worker exploitation. In addition to founding Sanad Initiative, she provides legal assistance and advice to at-risk women through the National Council for Women. Nesma has also collaborated with the Center for Egyptian Women's Legal Assistance on gender issues, which contributed to the revisions to and proposed amendments to key laws, including the personal status law..

Ms. Hala Doma (Cairo): Attorney; Founder/Owner, Horreya Legal Consulting Office

FOCUS OF WORK: Children's and labor rights as well as media freedom. She has specialized in women's rights since 2020, representing female clients facing political detention, forced disappearance and torture. Additionally, she works as an advocate to raise awareness among historically neglected populations about their legal rights and conducts research on these topics. Doma also works on issues such as violence against women and defending survivors of Daesh who were taken as wives of fighters, and therefore face terrorism-related charges.



PANEL DISCUSSIONS, DEMONSTRATIONS AND TOURS

The History of Gender Roles in American Case Law (Virtual Session)

- Andrea L. Miller, Senior Court Research Associate at the National Center for State Courts and Clinical Assistant Professor of Psychology at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Enforcing Anti-discrimination Laws in the U.S. Legal System (Virtual Session)

- Cassie Crawford, Assistant U.S. Attorney, Middle District of North Carolina

The Intersection Between Gender and Law

- Lina Kassem, Visiting Assistant Professor of Politics, William & Mary

Difficulties for Women in the Legal Profession

- Nancy Combs, Ernest W. Goodrich Professor of Law, William & Mary Law School
- Stacy Kern-Scheerer, Director of Clinical Programs; Director, Immigration Clinic; Clinical Associate Professor of Law, William & Mary Law School

How Journalism and Law Enforcement Partner

- Sean Dunn, Chief of Police, City of Williamsburg
- Kim O'Brian Root, Editor of the Virginia Gazette
- Major David Jay, Williamsburg Police Department
- Major Ashley Nichols, Williamsburg Police Department

Courtroom Technology Demonstration of Proto, Inc. Hologram Portal & Discussion at the Center for Legal & Court Technology

- Fredric Lederer, Chancellor Professor of Law; Director, Center for Legal & Court Technology, William & Mary Law School
- Tracy Byrd, Center for Legal & Court Technology Administrator, William & Mary Law School

First Africans Commemoration at Jamestown Settlement

- Executive Director Christy S. Coleman

Clockwise from top left: Lina Kassem joined them; Virtual discussion ; a selfie with police; At the Center for Legal & Court Technology in front of the Proto hologram portal with Professor Lederer and Tracy Byrd; Lina Kassem poses with the lawyers; Combs and Kern-Scheerer discuss the challenges for women in the legal profession. (Photos: Kate Hoving)



At the Center for Legal & Court Technology the visitors "became" holograms using the Center's Proto Epic, equipment provided by California-based hologram company Proto Inc.,



Clockwise from top left: Sergeant Edgar Jones demonstrates the technology available in police vehicles; They participated in demonstrations and posed for a group photo with the officers and Editor Kim Root; Nancy Combs and Stacy Kern-Scheerer pose with the lawyers at the Reves Center; They attended the First Africans Commemoration at Jamestown Settlement and met Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation Executive Director Christy S. Coleman (Photos: Kate Hoving)



Journalists share solutions, hope from “Climate Generation” reporting

BY EMMA HENRY

Nearly 40 students, faculty, and community members attended “The Climate Generation: Born into crisis, building solutions,” a public talk by Christian Science Monitor (CSM) journalists Stephanie Hanes and Sara Miller Llana, who shared insights gathered from a year’s worth of reporting in eight countries.

The event was cohosted by the Charles Center, the Reves Center, and the Pulitzer Center, as a part of this year’s Sharp Journalism seminar. William & Mary is part of the Pulitzer Center’s Campus Consortium network.

Hanes and Llana’s project, published in the CSM in seven parts last fall, examined the social and cultural transformations that young people across the globe are enacting in response to climate change. Over the course of their reporting, they visited

with youths who are creatively seeking solutions to climate-based problems in a wide range of countries, including Namibia, Portugal, and Bangladesh.

Hanes is the environment and climate change writer for CSM, a Pulitzer Center grantee, and serves as instructor for the Sharp Journalism seminar. Llana serves as the CSM Americas bureau chief and deputy international editor, based in Toronto.

According to Llana, the inspiration for the project occurred nearly 15 years ago while in Bolivia with CSM staff photographer Mel Freeman, who told Llana about the 1980s CSM series “Children in Darkness,” which examined the absence of children’s rights globally. Llana was immediately inspired to build upon this work, in a contemporary context.

“I started with a blank slate – children in the world – and asked Stephanie to help me figure out where we should focus. Very quickly the two of us decided that climate change is the story

of their generation. Thus: The Climate Generation,” Llana said.

Hanes credits the project as Llana’s “brainchild,” and reflected on her own start with the Climate Generation. Hanes mentioned that, within their first discussions, they noticed a paradox among children born after the United Nations began articulating children’s rights through the Convention on the Rights of a Child.

“Young people born since 1989, when that convention process started, had more rights, and by a lot of other metrics were doing way better, than ever before. But during the same time period, climate change really passed a tipping point,” Hanes said. “So those same young people were facing a world with unprecedented challenges—challenges that were going to exacerbate everything from poverty to migration and all those human rights issues.”

Despite the daunting nature of the climate crisis, Hanes and Llana soon discovered the optimism and

Journalists Stephanie Hanes and Sara Miller Llana of the Christian Science Monitor share insights gathered from a year’s worth of reporting in eight countries. (Photo by Emmanuel Sampson)



trailblazing occurring within younger generations. Instead of watching climate change happen to them, this generation was stepping up to create innovative solutions.

“And a lot of them were looking straight at climate change and were determined to do something about it. That didn’t mean they were necessarily advocates or involved in politics. Some young people were coming up with new business ideas connected to climate. Others were reimagining what it meant to have a ‘successful’ life. But climate, for this cohort, was the set for a whole new relationship with longstanding institutions and ideas,” Hanes said.

Llana added that “while it is doom and gloom that dominates headlines when it comes to young people and climate change, young people really are agents of change.”

In their talk, Llana and Hanes described their approach to reporting and writing the series and shared stories and photographs of young changemakers and innovators leading their respective communities through creative responses to climate challenges across the globe.

“These are stories not only about ‘what’s happening,’ which we hope to document, but these are the epicenters of challenge, hope and creativity for

our world today. Our job is to find and tell these stories, both to inform and to inspire,” Hanes said.

Both journalists hope that these stories will inspire young people to continue this important work, despite the magnitude of climate change.

“If you are worried or scared, get involved. While terms like ‘eco anxiety’ dominate headlines, no one I talked to said they sat around worried about it or worried about their future—because they were too busy,” Llana said.

Hanes reflected on how universities and students can get involved in supporting storytellers, activists, and innovators.

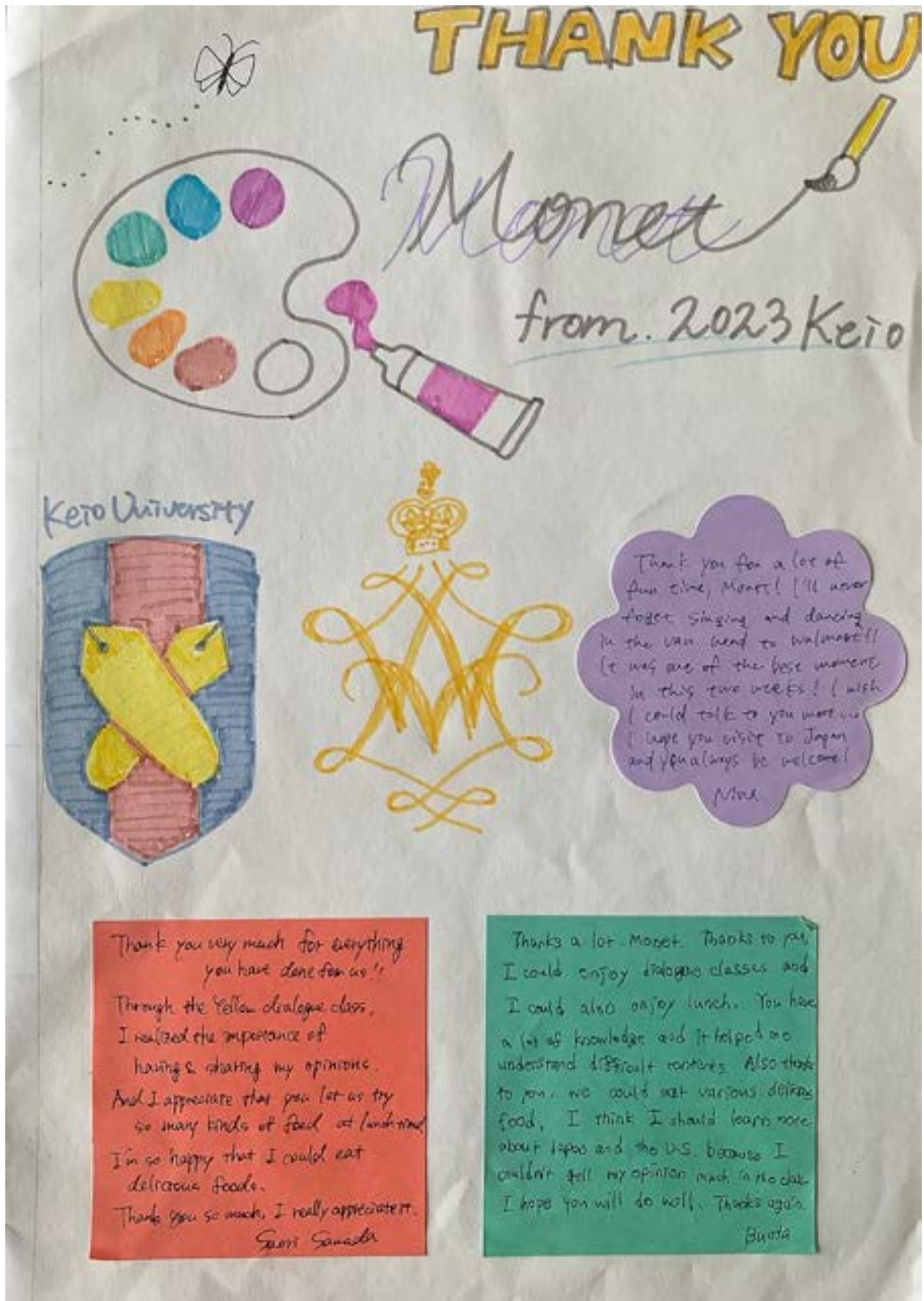
“Traditional activism is one path for getting involved in what we call climate action, but climate touches everything, from how we consume to what we eat to how we live,” Hanes said. “Universities should keep doing what the best liberal arts colleges like William & Mary have done for years—create the environment and rigor and educational experience that build the foundations of complex thought and creativity. I’d say that universities are also institutions and can perhaps model the institutional changes we are going to need across the board to thrive in a 21st century climate.”

Llana and Hanes both spoke about the critical role of journalism in transmitting ideas and dignifying



global voices that might otherwise go unheard.

“As a journalist, I believe in connecting people and in the power of those connections to bring about solutions,” Hanes said. 🌍



Keio program maintains longstanding impact

BY KATE HOVING



The Keio University/William & Mary Cross-Cultural Collaboration is a program centered on experiential learning which allows both Japanese and American students to study questions of cultural difference and national identity.

The program brings 25 to 40 Japanese university students to America for two to three weeks to study and experience first-hand American society and culture with William & Mary graduate and undergraduate students. Students attend lectures on a variety of topics including race, religion and pop culture while engaging with American culture firsthand through fieldwork activities such as trips to Colonial Williamsburg, Hampton Roads, Richmond and Washington, D.C.

A cutting-edge program when conceived in 1990, the Keio University/William & Mary Cross-Cultural Collaboration, has grown and evolved over the years to become an important part of the university's commitment to developing relationships with higher education institutions around the world.

Nasha Lewis, Associate Director of Global Education at the Reves Center, manages the Keio program. The 2023 program that ran in late August was the first in-person program since 2019 and involved 25 Keio students and 10 W&M student workers.

Lewis sees the benefits that both W&M and Keio students gain from the collaboration. "The Japanese students learn about American culture and share aspects of their own culture with fellow program participants. It's a great networking opportunity for

them," she explains. And for the W&M student assistants and directors, "They take a deep dive into aspects of American history and culture that they may not have previously explored. The W&M students can compare and contrast American and Japanese cultures along with the Keio students. It's an opportunity for them to learn and network as well."

As Lewis notes, the program changes each year depending on the desires of the Keio students and the W&M Academic Director. "I enjoyed the visits to Canon and Lockheed Martin in 2018 and 2019 respectively. The group toured the companies and got a brief look behind the scenes. Those were memorable experiences for me, too."

Morgan Brittain, PhD Candidate in American Studies, was the Academic Director Lewis hired for 2023, and

Opposite: The cover of a book of thanks her Keio students made for for Monet Watson. (Courtesy Monet Watson); At the end of the program, a photo of the Keio students with W&M Keio team. Academic director Morgan Brittain is standing at far left. Photo: Kate Hoving)



he will serve in that role again this summer. It's the kind of program that appeals to him. "I'm constantly thinking about cross-cultural relationships in my research and academic work, and it felt like a perfect fit to work with this program helping to build those kinds of connections."

For the curriculum he devised, Brittain drew from expertise across the university. William & Mary professors from a range of disciplines gave lectures geared to various themes, including: Anthropology Professor Martin Gallivan (Indigenous People in Virginia); Charles McGovern, Director of American Studies and Associate Professor, American Studies and History (Global American Culture); Elizabeth Losh, Duane A. and Virginia S. Dittman Professor of English & American Studies (Social Media and the Rise of Far Right Politics); and Leisa Meyer, Professor of American Studies, History, and Gender, Sexuality and Women Studie (Gender and Sexuality in the U.S.). The students also explored topics ranging from race relations to contemporary music, with a mix of lectures, site visits and field trips.

Although he was not a stranger to cross-cultural educational experiences, the intensity and pace of the Keio Program was a new experience for him." I'd had several Japanese students in my classes, and at a previous institution, I taught Asian art and culture, so I knew about some aspects of Japanese culture.

At the same time, though, there's something particularly special about this program in which thinking about, discussing, and exchanging aspects of Japanese and U.S. culture are almost constant. Two weeks isn't all that long, but I don't think anyone who was part of the program—staff or student—would tell you they didn't come away at least a little bit better."

Lewis hires William & Mary graduate students to be classroom instructors and undergrads as peer assistants. The instructors lead discussions based on faculty lectures. In addition, they read and grade journals and other projects, supply thoughtful and constructive feedback to students to promote their use of the English language and understanding of American culture, participate in afternoon and evening cultural and social activities, and supervise and provide leadership to one or two W&M undergraduates who, as peer assistants, assist the Keio students with their projects and other related tasks.

Monet Watson, a graduate student in anthropology, served as a classroom instructor. She had no background with Japanese students or traveling to Japan, but she took to the role, helping them understand lectures and leading discussions about the day's topics. She also graded journal submissions and gave feedback and guidance on projects.

It turned out a large part of her role was supporting them and helping them to get more comfortable

with sharing information about themselves, and that meant the most to her. "Talking and being with the students was the most gratifying part of the program," she recalls.

Alex Nakamitsu '26, a philosophy major, was a peer assistant.

"I'm half Japanese, was born in Japan, and lived there until I moved to the U.S. when I was four," Nakamitsu explains. "I never had a chance to make lasting friendships and build a social connection with my home country. I applied to work on the Keio Program because I wanted to meet Japanese students and make friends. I'm also very proud to be a William & Mary student and wanted to share my college experience with the Keio students."

Nakamitsu echoes the aspect of the program that Lewis described—that W&M students were learning alongside the Keio students. She considers the day trip the group took to Richmond a highlight of the program for her. "We visited the Virginia Museum of History and Culture and Belle Isle. I got to learn more about Virginia history that I'd previously known very little about (I'm originally from New Jersey)."

The short length of the program required an energetic pace, but it didn't detract from the experience. "I was surprised at how engaged and excited the Keio students were about seeking out new experiences. Two weeks is a relatively brief time to study abroad, especially if you're trying to learn as much as possible about the country you're in," says Nakamitsu. "Even during our free time, we were always going out and doing something, like shopping or going to the movies. Even though I wasn't required to go, their excitement and enthusiasm made me want to go with them."

The connections were heartfelt and deep for both students and counselors, and there were tears and gifts exchanged when it came time for the students to go back to Japan.

Top: Monet Watson (center) with her Keio students in front of the Reves Center (Courtesy Monet Watson)

Watson was a little surprised, in fact, by the impact. “We had a very tearful goodbye. The students created individual books filled with their comments or observations about us that they enjoyed. They gave us lots of gifts, and it wasn’t until that moment I understood the impact I had on them.”

Nakamitsu also has fond memories of the program and the students she met. “I remember getting really emotional on the last day of the program when the students surprised all the W&M staff with goodbye cards. I consider the students in my focus group my friends, and I even got to see them when I went to Japan this past winter.”

For Brittain there were many memorable aspects of the experience. “Of course, we carefully planned the program to be memorable. Anyone who’s been in a higher ed classroom has experienced the collective ‘Ohhh!’ that signals simultaneous understanding. It’s hard to beat.” But he goes on to talk about an unplanned moment that had a special impact. “It was toward the end of the program, and the students and

staff had all been working hard. The students were juggling lectures and discussion and preparing their focus group presentations on an aspect of American culture. The staff had been deeply engaged teaching and mentoring the students and keeping the program running smoothly. A big group of us decided to go for ice cream at Shoofly. We had a terrific time enjoying our sweet treats, singing along (in my case, very badly) to Miley Cyrus’s “Flowers,” and drawing and writing on the pavement with sidewalk chalk.”

He explains: “A big thing that makes this program so remarkable is that it brings together a group of cool and curious students (Keio and W&M) that are genuinely interested in forming connections, and when you do that, it creates opportunities for spontaneous joy.” 🌍



Top: Alex Nakamitsu met up with some of her new Keio friends when she was in Japan (Courtesy Alex Nakamitsu); Below: On the final day of the program, students presented their research projects. The five projects were (clockwise from left): Differences in working environments in the U.S. and Japan; Creating McDonald's in the Japan and U.S.; Package Design in the U.S. and Japan; Differences in educational systems in the U.S. and Japan; and Differences in Fan Culture Between Japan & America. (Photos: Kate Hoving)

The Uninvited Host: Telling the story of the true cost of tourism in Goa

BY KATE HOVING



"The state of Goa, which occupies a sliver on the country's western coast, is where residents of Mumbai, Delhi, Bangalore and other cities converge for long weekends and lazy holidays filled with sun, sand and revelry. These days, the beguiling beaches might look like they've been colonized by foreign hippies and rave-goers by the thousands, but the region's European connection dates back centuries... The result of this commingling of cultures is one of the most fascinating pockets of India, defined by a leisurely pace and laid-back attitude. Perhaps there's no better way to describe the vibe in Goa than 'susegaad,' a Konkani term derived from Portuguese that alludes to a sybaritic, contented way of life..." [from 36 hours in Goa, New York Times, by Sarah A. Khan]

"In a small place like Goa [approximately 3,700 kms or smaller than the state of Delaware] its infrastructure is overwhelmed by the mass influx of tourists. Between 2018 and 2019, it is estimated that thirteen to fifteen million people visited the holiday destination. Compare this to the state's population of just under two million residents as per the last national census of 2011." [from *The Uninvited Host: Goa and the Parties not Meant for its People*; Text: R. Benedito Ferrão; Illustrations: Angela Ferrão; Design: Maria Vanessa de Sa]

From December 7-18, 2023, Gallery Gitanjali: Panjim Pousada in Goa, India, hosted an exhibit that was the brainchild of R. Benedito Ferrão, assistant professor of English & Asian and Pacific Islander American Studies. Entitled "The Uninvited," it featured works by Goan artist

Angela Ferrão (no relation) that were the result of a collaboration that has produced, in addition to the exhibit, a printed and digital comic book, *The Uninvited Host: Goa and the Parties not Meant for its People*. It's the culmination of more than a year's worth of work, mostly long distance,

driven by scholarship and creativity as well as passion.

The project explores a Goa that most tourists don't see or even wonder about, but that is rich and complex and resilient.

"I teach a class that is about Goan representation in literature, and part of that course is to help students understand contemporary issues in

Goa as they come up in literature,” Ferrão explains. “As I always say in my classes, while what I teach is a vehicle for that particular subject--be it film, literature, Asian American studies--it should also give students a larger sense of the world. As they learn about Goa, I think that we also want them to think about Goa as part of a larger host of issues around the world, especially around the environment and tourism. And this is particularly relevant for study abroad programs. On the one hand, you want to be aware of cultural issues, and have that educational bent of mind around issues that you will be studying there, but what are the ethical responsibilities of the traveler?”

THE IMPACT OF TOURISM: NUMBERS VS REALITY

Ferrão has a personal perspective on the effect of tourism on Goa. “This is something that both Angela and I as Goans have seen our communities grapple with, being, as we say in the comic book, the ‘uninvited hosts’ to the tourism industry, which indiscriminately uses resources and is not necessarily an economic benefit.”

“Even though tourism is an employer in Goa, many of the key players are not,” Ferrão continues.

“Many of them are not located in Goa. The profits don’t stay in Goa, and they don’t have the same investment as local people do in sustaining culture and environment.”

Ferrão also doesn’t think that the infrastructure is adequate for the needs of residents. “I think all the infrastructure that has been developed has been to promote tourism, not for the local good.”

“Tourism works in the colonial vein. Most of the tourists that occupy Goa are from other parts of India. So I think the Indian tourists, when they come to Goa, don’t consider the fact that there are local people that live there.”

Ferrão sees that disregard to local needs happening in tourist destinations all over the world, not just Goa. “Because Goa has been promoted, it’s very much like the way one would think of Hawai’i in the context of the United States, where people forget that it’s got its own history, its own people and traditions and customs, and for whom the land is sacred.”

CHOOSING THE RIGHT MEDIUM FOR THE MESSAGE

As with all of his projects, Ferrão looks for formats and venues to deliver his thesis in a way that will be visually powerful as well as informative. He is an award-winning photographer, and he has both experience (curating four exhibitions since 2017) and great success in combining words and images to present a narrative or history—whether curating an exhibit or a publication. An example of his facility with working in multiple media is a special issue of the João Roque Literary Journal he co-edited in 2021 that contained contributions ranging from works on canvas to memoir and short film.

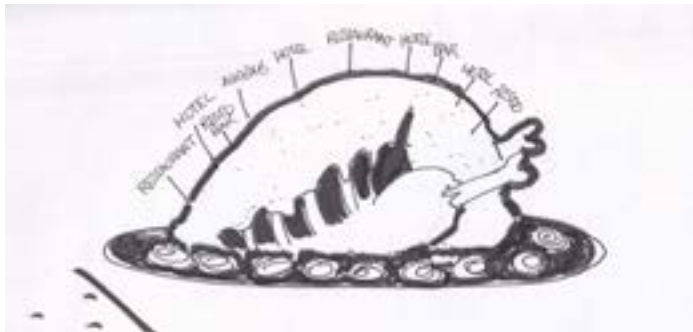
So why for this project did he choose the comic book and exhibition?

“This comes from my own pedagogical impetus to think about ways to use my academic research for public consumption,” Ferrão explains. “I don’t want the research I do to circulate only within academia. I want to think of ways that it can be used by the public, especially when writing about issues that affect the public.”

Ferrão also sees students as part of his intended audience. “I thought that a comic book would be a good resource for students to have as a reference point for contemporary goings on, but it will also be a good resource for our study abroad program in Goa. The comic book will give a sense of things on the ground--to think about the issues of tourism, sustainability and



Angela Ferrão Exhibition poster: "The Uninvited" (Design by Fernando Velho); A page from "The Uninvited Host"



environment not only in Goa, but around the world.”

That said, some habits are hard to break: “When you look at the comic book, you’ll see it actually has footnotes. And the reason for that is because we do cite statistics,” Ferrão admits.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND TEAM BUILDING

Ferrão decided on a two-part project: the comic book, printed editions of which will be available for the opening at the gallery in Goa; and a digital version that can be used online by William & Mary students preparing for the W&M faculty-led program to Goa & Bengaluru this summer. He received a Studio for Teaching & Learning Innovation (STLI) grant, which mainly goes to support his travel to Goa to prepare and then launch the comic book.

Ferrão next began to assemble his team.

“I thought of Angela immediately for this project, because not only is she an artist, but she’s also a very socially responsible artist, critic

and satirist. I was very aware of her work, and she has spoken to these issues already. So I spoke with Angela first, and I said, ‘Listen, I’ve got this idea for a comic book. Would you be interested in illustrating it?’”

Angela was on board right away.

“Well, it was a no-brainer, really,” Angela recalls. “I didn’t have to think twice about it because I support anything that helps promote more knowledge about how one walks around a place as a tourist. There are people who walk around thinking that [Goa] is just about tourism, and there’s nothing more. I think the book encourages you to explore local history and maybe be a little more empathetic towards Goa.”

The next step for Ferrão was writing the text. “I wrote what is for all intents and purposes an academic essay, but I made it more user-friendly for a comic book interface with shorter paragraphs. I was thinking, what is this going to look like on the page in terms of the bubbles [or speech balloons] or the little inset frames and things like that? It obviously couldn’t look like

an academic essay; it would be very off-putting in a comic book.”

Angela then read through the essay and provided the illustrations. “They were entirely of her own devising.”

Angela approached the artistic challenge as the experienced illustrator she is. “It has to be appealing visually, but it also has to convey the writing, to back up whatever’s being said in the writing, so it can’t be abstract or too funny. So it would have to be a medium where it’s funny, but it’s still serious.”

In addition to an illustrator, they needed a designer. The two contacted their friend Maria Vanessa de Sa, an architect, urban designer, and artist, who became the graphic designer of the comic book. That turned out to be the most time-consuming part of the process, as it was mostly done online. “Obviously, it’s Angela’s vision in terms of the images, but we were also working with Vanessa [the graphic designer] with her own input. So when the comic book is published, it’s actually going to have the names of all three of us, because



I really think of it as a joint project among the three of us,” Ferrão says.

Angela concurs. “It just came together so beautifully because of Vanessa’s graphic design and the way it flows. It’s a very good collaborative effort. You’re surprised sometimes because you do the illustration, and you can never imagine how it will be laid out.”

SHARING THE WORK WITH THE PUBLIC

Ferrão called on a W&M study abroad connection for the mounting of the exhibit. Dr Vishvesh Prabhakar Kandolkar, Associate Professor of Architecture at Goa College of Architecture, is the faculty advisor on the ground for the W&M Goa & Bengaluru program, and he serves as project manager and designer for the exhibition.

“The last time I was in Goa we worked solely on the exhibition, choosing the images that will go in the exhibition and then contacting the gallery--Gallery Gitanjali:

Panjim Pousada,” Ferrão recalls. [Another connection with the study abroad program: the gallery is located in the Panjim Inn, where W&M students stay when they’re in Goa.] “The biggest cost was going to be the cost of the gallery, but they are hosting the exhibition. That’s a huge expression of support. It’s a wonderful space and centrally located. I’m really grateful to them.”

The exhibit is going to have a few items from the comic book as well as some other associated pieces touching on related themes, such as the environment, culture and tradition and activism.

Having a show of this kind of local Goan art is in itself noteworthy.

There are many art festivals in Goa, but they rarely feature the work of Goan artists. As Ferrão notes, “There is no state repository of Goan art in Goa, so one cannot go to an art museum in Goa of Goan art. You could go to a local gallery, or you could go to a one-off exhibition, but

there really is no sense of Goan art history. Angela’s work is important in its own right, but it’s also part of a longer tradition amongst Goan artists. And I think having an exhibition is good, but having a printed publication is also very important, because that then works as a more permanent record.”

Interest in the exhibit has been very high, in part because Angela is very well known on social media and in local papers with her activism and her artwork. But the interest is also because it promises to be a unique gathering of artists, academics and activists.

This project is deeply personal for both Angela and Benedito.

“On the one hand, the issues of tourism and environment are really important to me academically,” Benedito explains. “But even more important to this project is that it’s using the work of a Goan artist to speak to a Goan community, to speak to Goan issues. I think making this



R. Benedito Ferrão is an Assistant Professor of English and Asian & Pacific Islander American Studies at William & Mary. He has been the recipient of fellowships from the Fulbright, Mellon, Endeavour, and Rotary programs, the Bayreuth Academy of Advanced African Studies, and the American Institute of Indian Studies. Curator of the 2017-18 exhibition *Goa, Portugal, Mozambique: The Many Lives of Vamona Navelcar*, he edited a book of the same title (2017) to accompany this retrospective of the artist's work. His scholarly articles appear in *Research in African Literatures*, *Verge: Studies in Global Asias*, and *Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication* among other journals.

Angela Ferrão is an illustrator and satirical cartoonist. She has published a book for children titled *Fuloos Plays with the Sun* (2013), illustrated a book of Goan stories for children, and been part of an anthology of gender-based stories, where her narrative deals with women's employment. She has worked in different media, from animation to instructional design. Her main interest is humor, through which she attempts to show the irony of social and political life in her home state of Goa and the world. Her work appears in several publications, including *Countercurrents.org*, *Tehelka*, *eTropic*, and others.

Maria Vanessa de Sa is an architect, urban designer, and artist. Her art explores stories from the everyday world, on being a woman, a mother, and a Catholic in Goa. She is conversant in multiple media and has also collaborated with other artists and writers. Most recently, she provided art direction for the graphic novel *The Destination Is the Journey*, which features the artwork of Vamona Navelcar and a story by R. Benedito Ferrão, and was published in *Goa/Portugal/Mozambique: The Many Lives of Vamona Navelcar* (2017). She also collaborated with Fernando Velho on the art direction of *Song Sung Blue* (2019), a hybrid illustrated novel by Savia Viegas.

an art project is really important, not only in being able to visually demonstrate things so that it opens up how people understand issues, but also as a means to contradict the tourist's belief that Goa is a place for consumption, without its own unique artistic culture and community."

Angela has a visceral connection to the place and people. "I lived in Mumbai for most of my life, but I'm Goan, and [Goans] live, breathe, and do everything that is connected to Goa and with Goa."

"I started doing a lot of work related to the environment, and how people view Goa and use Goa to further their own career or creativity--or the lack of, I would say. I've read a lot of the works of people like Benedito, about colonization, and how it ties in with what is going on and how we are colonized, but we don't even know it; we don't know why these things are happening, and why we're not able to reach our aspirations. It gave me a little more insight into my work."

Angela sees one of the dividends of the project and the exhibit is to counteract assumptions. "There's stereotype of Goans that they're not serious; that they're just fun-loving and into music. So I'm always hopeful that people like Benedito and this work will help focus on the intellectual

community in Goa. That's why the collaboration is exciting for me, because I get to work with the people who are in academia and also Goans. And that changes the entire narrative."

Benedito remarked that working with his colleagues has been one of the best parts of the project. "Angela, Vishvesh and I, and a few other academics and artists of our generation, have circulated in many of the same circles in Goa, but this is our first collaboration."

A first collaboration, but most likely the first of many. Angela sums up the project for the whole team: "When you see the book it is really something to be proud of. 🙌"

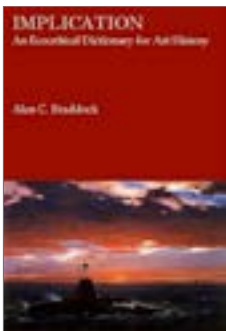
Recently Published Books by W&M Faculty



UNDERSTANDING ECONOMIC TRANSITIONS: PLAN AND MARKET UNDER THE NEW GLOBALIZATION

By Berhanu Abegaz, Professor of Economics

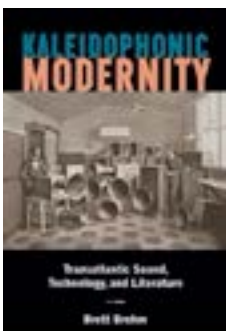
“Understanding Economic Transitions” explains the genesis, operation, and transformation of the centrally planned socialist economy into a market-driven one. The book provides a self-contained, comprehensive, and authoritative treatment of modern economic systems: (i) Using the prism of comparative institutionalism, it melds theory and evidence from four analytical case studies (Russia, China, Poland, and Vietnam); (ii) It takes economic planning seriously in theory and practice as a prominent marker of the ever-changing boundaries between state and market; (iii) It focuses on the dynamics of systemic transition in formerly socialist countries by contextualizing them in terms of the whence (central planning), the how (modalities of transition), and the whither (illiberal or liberal capitalism) of politico-economic transformation; and (iv) It examines the profound impact, on these structural processes, of the post-1990 phase of economic globalization. Published by Palgrave Macmillan



IMPLICATION: AN ECOCRITICAL DICTIONARY FOR ART HISTORY

By Alan C. Braddock, the Ralph H. Wark Professor of Art History, Environmental Humanities, and American Studies

From the publisher: “Ecocriticism is an interdisciplinary mode of inquiry that examines the environmental significance of art, literature, and other creative endeavors. In *Implication: An Ecocritical Dictionary for Art History*, Alan C. Braddock, a pioneer in art historical ecocriticism, presents a fascinating group of key terms and case studies to demonstrate that all art is ecological in its interconnectedness with the world.” Published by Yale University Press



KALEIDOPHONIC MODERNITY: TRANSATLANTIC SOUND, TECHNOLOGY, AND LITERATURE

By Brett Brehm, Assistant Professor of French and Francophone Studies

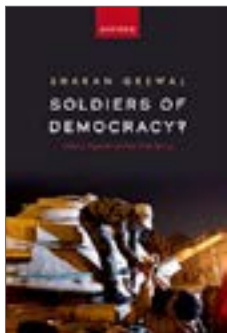
“Kaleidophonic Modernity” examines the development of mechanical sound recording technology in the 19th century by charting the orbits of poets, photographers, writers, scientists, musicians and artists in France and the United States. Working between comparative literature, the history of science, and urban studies, Brehm builds a bridge between the scholarly fields of visual culture and sound studies. Published by Fordham University Press



THE UNINVITED HOST: GOA AND THE PARTIES NOT MEANT FOR ITS PEOPLE

By R. Benedito Ferrão, Assistant Professor of English and Asian & Pacific Islander American Studies; Angela Ferrão; and Maria Vanessa de Sa

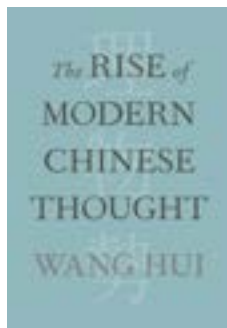
Despite its history as a favored destination for hippies from the West in the 1960s and 1970s, present-day party tourism in Goa largely attracts Indian travelers. This is a product of the post-1990s liberalization of the Indian economy, coupled with the exoticization of Goa, which has rendered it a pleasure periphery to the subcontinent. While tourism has become an economic mainstay in Goa, the party economy pays little heed to Goans and their culture, treating the land as a place where fun is paramount and local concerns, including environmental ones, are sidelined. Published by The Uninvited



SOLDIERS OF DEMOCRACY? MILITARY LEGACIES AND THE ARAB SPRING

By Sharan Grewal, Assistant Professor of Government

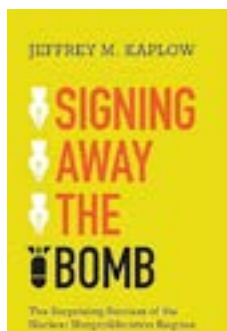
This book presents a significant new interpretation of the Arab Spring revolutions and transitions. Incorporates interviews which have never been published before, including with a former Tunisian president, three former prime ministers and 11 senior generals. Published by Oxford University Press



THE RISE OF MODERN CHINESE THOUGHT, BY WANG HUI

Edited by Michael Gibbs Hill, Vera Barkley Associate Professor of Modern Languages and Literatures

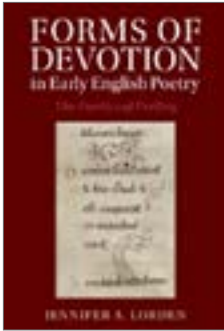
The definitive history of China's philosophical confrontation with modernity, available for the first time in English. Published by Harvard University Press



SIGNING AWAY THE BOMB: THE SURPRISING SUCCESS OF THE NUCLEAR NONPROLIFERATION REGIME

By Jeff Kaplow, Associate Professor of Government

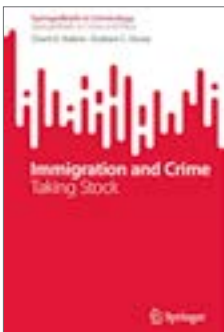
For more than 50 years, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the wider nuclear nonproliferation regime have worked to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. Analysts and pundits have often viewed the regime with skepticism, repeatedly warning that it is on the brink of collapse, and the NPT lacks many of the characteristics usually seen in effective international institutions. Nevertheless, the treaty continues to enjoy near-universal membership and high levels of compliance. This is the first book to explain why the nonproliferation regime has been so successful, bringing to bear declassified documents, new data on regime membership and weapons pursuit, and a variety of analytic approaches. Published by Cambridge University Press



FORMS OF DEVOTION IN EARLY ENGLISH POETRY: THE POETICS OF FEELING

By Jennifer A. Lorden, Assistant Professor of English & Medieval Studies

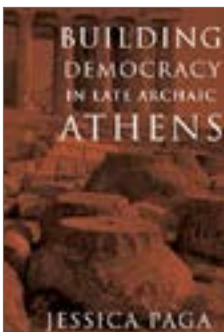
Jennifer Lorden reveals the importance of deeply-felt religious devotion centuries before it is commonly said to arise. Her ground-breaking study establishes the hybrid poetics that embodied its form for medieval readers, while obscuring it from modern scholars. Working across the divide between Old and Middle English, she shows how conventions of earlier English poetry recombine with new literary conventions after the Norman Conquest. “Forms of Devotion” reconsiders the roots and branches of poetic topoi, revising commonplaces of literary and religious history. Published by Cambridge University Press



IMMIGRATION AND CRIME: TAKING STOCK

By Graham C. Ousey M.A. '93, Professor of Sociology

China is now the lender of first resort for much of the developing world, but This book explores and synthesizes theory and research focused on the connection between immigration and crime in the United States. It examines theories positing a relationship between these phenomena, covers data and methods for studying the topic, evaluates research and considers implications of empirical findings for immigration policy. Published by Springer



BUILDING DEMOCRACY IN LATE ARCHAIC ATHENS (IN PAPERBACK)

By Jessica Paga, Associate Professor of Classical Studies

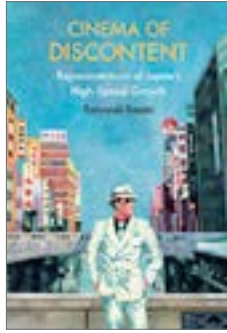
By attending to the built environment broadly, and monumental architecture specifically, this book investigates the built environment of ancient Athens during the late Archaic period (ca. 514/13 – 480/79 B.C.E.). It was these decades, filled with transition and disorder, when the Athenians transformed their political system from a tyranny to a democracy. Concurrent with the socio-political changes, they altered the physical landscape and undertook the monumental articulation of the city and countryside. Interpreting the nature of the fledgling democracy from a material standpoint, this book approaches the questions and problems of the early political system through the lens of buildings Published by Oxford University Press



BADHAI: HIJRA-KHWAJA SIRA-TRANS PERFORMANCE ACROSS BORDERS IN SOUTH ASIA

By Claire Pamment, Associate Professor of World Theatre at W&M; with Adnan Hossain and Jeff Roy .

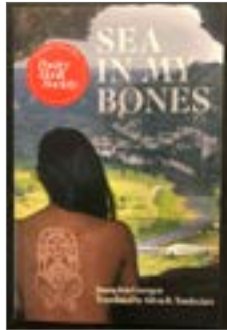
This is the first full-length book to provide an introduction to badhai performances throughout South Asia, performed by socially marginalised hijra, khwaja sira, and trans communities. This collaboratively authored book draws from anthropology, theatre and performance studies, music and sound studies, ethnomusicology, queer and transgender studies, and sustained ethnographic fieldwork to examine badhai's place-based dynamics, transcultural features, and communications across the hijrascape. Published by Methuen Drama, Bloomsbury



CINEMA OF DISCONTENT: REPRESENTATIONS OF JAPAN'S HIGH-SPEED GROWTH (IN PAPERBACK)

By Tomoyuki Sasaki, Professor of Japanese Studies

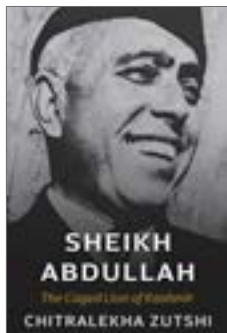
From the mid-1950s to the mid-1970s, Japan transformed itself from a war-devastated country to a global economic power. We tend to see this history as a story of great national success. *Cinema of Discontent* challenges this view and details the tensions generated by massive and intense capitalist development through analyses of popular cinema produced during the era of high-speed growth. It demonstrates how these films address problems immanent to Japan's postwar capitalism, including uneven development, increasing corporate control over individuals, precarious and contingent work, and militarized peace and prosperity. Published by SUNY Press



SEA IN MY BONES

Translated from Spanish to English by Silvia R. Tandeciarz, Vice Dean for Social Sciences & Interdisciplinary Studies and Chancellor Professor of Modern Languages and Literatures

“In this extraordinary bilingual edition of *Mar En Los Huesos*, Juana Goergen and translator Silvia Tandeciarz underline the richness of collective memory and lineage through an intertextual and linguistically captivating experience. These poetic sequences unfurl across lyrically fertile landscapes, where the sea comes to metaphorically represent both body and place, as well as the braided history and mythology of the Caribbean's ancestral past. Goergen's poetry ‘distances and exhibits’; there is a careful witnessing and a fierce resistance in its compellingly told narratives of spirituality, colonial violence, and a deeply felt inheritance.” – Alycia Pirmohamed, *Another Way To Split Water*. Published by the87press



SHEIKH ABDULLAH: THE CAGED LION OF KASHMIR

By Chitralekha Zutshi, Class of 1962 Professor of History

“*Sheikh Abdullah: The Caged Lion of Kashmir*,” is as much a biography of one Kashmiri as that of an entire generation of leaders who shaped the politics and institutions of twentieth-century South Asia. In this richly researched and elegantly crafted biography, renowned historian Chitralekha Zutshi transcends these labels by placing Abdullah's life in the context of critical global developments in the twentieth century. She deftly illustrates how his political trajectory—forged in the inequities of the princely state system and burnished in the flames of anti-colonial nationalism, Islamic universalism, socialism, communism, secularism, communalism, federalism and the Cold War—embodies the becoming of India itself. Published by HarperCollins India in its prestigious “Indian Lives” series. Its North American/European edition will be released by Yale University press this May

Alumnus Abroad

A Q&A WITH **LAIMIS KISIELIUS '08**

"Laimis Kisielius went above and beyond in Vilnius last summer [during the Project Go and W&M study abroad programs]. He was like an unofficial country director. Sasha [Prokhorov] and I had our roles, but Laimis was there to guide us in the right direction whenever we needed to know about hotels, emergency services, local events, restaurant recommendations, tours that we should go on or museums we should visit. He also taught us a lot about the local culture and language nuances. He was constantly explaining Lithuanian history, why the war in Ukraine mattered so much to Lithuanians and to the region in general.

"He also talked to the students about Lithuania's biggest and most popular sport: basketball."

–Nick Vasquez, Associate Director, International Travel & Security



Above: Sasha Prokhorov and Laimis Kisielius in Vilnius (Photo Credit: Nick Vasquez)



Where were you born? What do you consider your hometown?

I was born in Vilnius, capital of Lithuania. Despite subsequent adventures, including pursuing college in America and a professional basketball career that took me to various cities and countries, I eventually found my way back home to Vilnius, making it a central and enduring part of my journey.

Why did you choose to attend William & Mary?

Choosing William & Mary was a straightforward decision for me. When I came to the United States, I had a clear goal of pursuing both basketball and a quality education, which wasn't easily achievable in Europe at the time. In Europe, you were typically boxed into either being a full-time professional athlete with intense training or a dedicated student. It was like choosing between peanut butter and jelly separately, but I wanted the PB&J. The American system provided a unique opportunity to strike that balance, and William & Mary emerged as the ideal choice for me.

Starting my journey at the university coincided with joining the first-year recruiting class under basketball coach Tony Shaver. Coach Shaver was not only an exceptional mentor but also a fantastic person. I still keep in touch with him and think of him as one of the best coaches I've ever had. He assured me that I would make an immediate impact on the court (probably gave a similar message to other recruits too!). So, the idea of getting a top-notch education while playing basketball right from the start made choosing William & Mary an easy and exciting decision for me.

What was your major? Did it prove useful in your future career(s)?

My major was Finance, and it has proven immensely useful in my subsequent career. I've always had a knack for numbers over writing, and my studies equipped me with valuable knowledge in areas such as investing, accounting, and corporate finance. This background has been instrumental, from managing my own investments to embarking on a



career as an investment advisor, assisting others in their financial endeavors. However, when it comes to playing basketball on the court, my Finance degree didn't contribute much—except perhaps for some friendly banter!

Did you have a favorite course or professor while you were at W&M?

When it comes to picking a favorite course or professor at W&M, I'll be straight up—I tended to favor classes that didn't demand extensive writing assignments. English wasn't my first language (and still isn't), so I found myself navigating through quite a few late-night writing sessions to meet the course requirements.

It has to be difficult to maintain your studies while being an athlete. Was it a challenge or did you find it wasn't a problem for you?

Balancing studies with athletics can be a challenge, but the system for student-athletes in the U.S. is like a well-oiled machine. For me, attending classes and taking notes comprised the bulk of the academic workload. The main challenge arose during away games when we had to leave town for a day or two. However, thanks to the online resources available to us, staying on top of studies during

such periods became manageable. So, in short, maintaining studies wasn't particularly difficult for me.

I read an article about your job teaching Lithuanian for Jack Martin's linguistics class. Did you study linguistics at William & Mary?

Technically, it wasn't a job; the class needed to study the language with me as their sole source. For them I was like the last person on Earth who could speak Lithuanian, and they had to dive into the language in meticulous detail. For the final paper—Jack can correct me on this—they were tasked with having an 80-page write-up about the language itself. You can probably guess that I didn't study linguistics, as I might still be writing that paper to this day if I had!

Do you have a favorite memory or memories of your time at W&M?

Certainly, I have numerous cherished memories from my time at W&M, with a significant portion tied to the world of basketball, from trying to prove everyone I was good enough my freshman year (I was) to leading the team to the championship game my senior year (wasn't lucky enough to win). However, beyond the victories and defeats on the court, the most treasured memories revolve around the incredible people I had the privilege of connecting with during those years—individuals I still keep in contact with today. The bonds formed off the court are the highlights that make my W&M experience truly unforgettable.

What are you currently doing professionally?

At the ripe age of 37, I wrapped up my professional basketball career in the spring of 2022. Fortunately, my wife and I had made strategic real estate investments during my playing days, providing a foundation for our ongoing business ventures post-retirement. Currently, I wear multiple hats—I serve as the president of the Basketball Players Association in Lithuania and hold a license as an Investment Advisor. However, my most significant role at the moment is embracing the full-time responsibilities of being a dad to our 3-month-old son, Lukas.

How do you think your experience at W&M has affected your life and decisions you have made?

This is a question that doesn't come my way often. The straightforward response is that I owe a lot to my time at W&M for shaping where I am today. While I might have graduated from another institution, the unique basketball opportunity I received at W&M played a pivotal role. A successful freshman year allowed me to fulfill one of my childhood dreams: playing for the junior national team. So, in many ways, my experience at W&M has been a defining factor in the trajectory of my life and the decisions I've made.

Do you have any advice for current students?

One piece of advice that stuck with me was shared during and alumni weekend, when a former player emphasized:

"Enjoy college, these are the best years of your lives". Now, whether he was happily married or just had a questionable job satisfaction, I can't say, but the message stuck with me as a reminder to navigate through life with minimal stress and make the most of the college experience.

Is there any advice you wish you had received?

Yes, buy a few bitcoins in 2012 and don't sell for 10 years. Jokes aside, I would emphasize the importance of early investments. The power of compounding interest is like the eighth wonder of the world. Establishing financial independence early on is a significant stride towards a stress-free life. It's advice I wish I had received earlier in my journey.

Do you think international experience as a student is helpful in future life and career?

Absolutely, international experience is incredibly beneficial. Being immersed in different cultures provides invaluable insights into communication styles and differing perspectives on life's priorities. Witnessing and living among these settings is a great learning experience, and in my opinion a game-changer for personal growth. 🌍

Reves Center Snapshot — Fall 2023

Study Abroad

#1 W&M IS #1 IN PERCENTAGE OF UNDERGRADUATES IN STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS

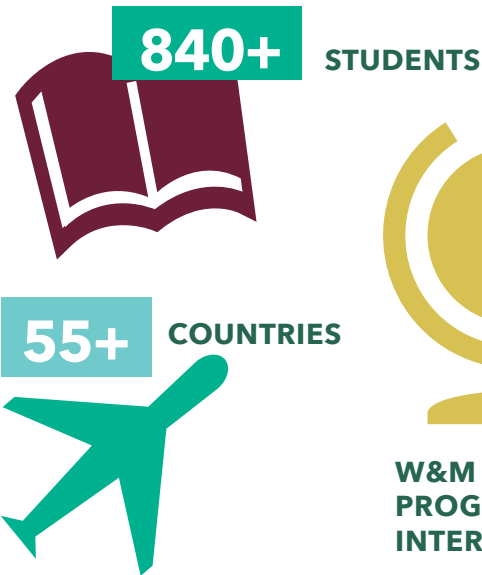
compared to other public universities in the U.S.

≈ 55%

OF W&M STUDENTS STUDY ABROAD DURING THEIR UNDERGRADUATE YEARS AT W&M

\$600,000+

SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED FOR STUDY ABROAD EACH YEAR and the NEED FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT REMAINS CRITICAL



International Community at W&M



PLACES OF ORIGIN

\$31.6 million

ANNUAL CONTRIBUTION OF W&M'S INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO THE REGIONAL ECONOMY. (SOURCE: NAFSA)

 Graduate
247

 Undergraduate
281

 Scholars
69

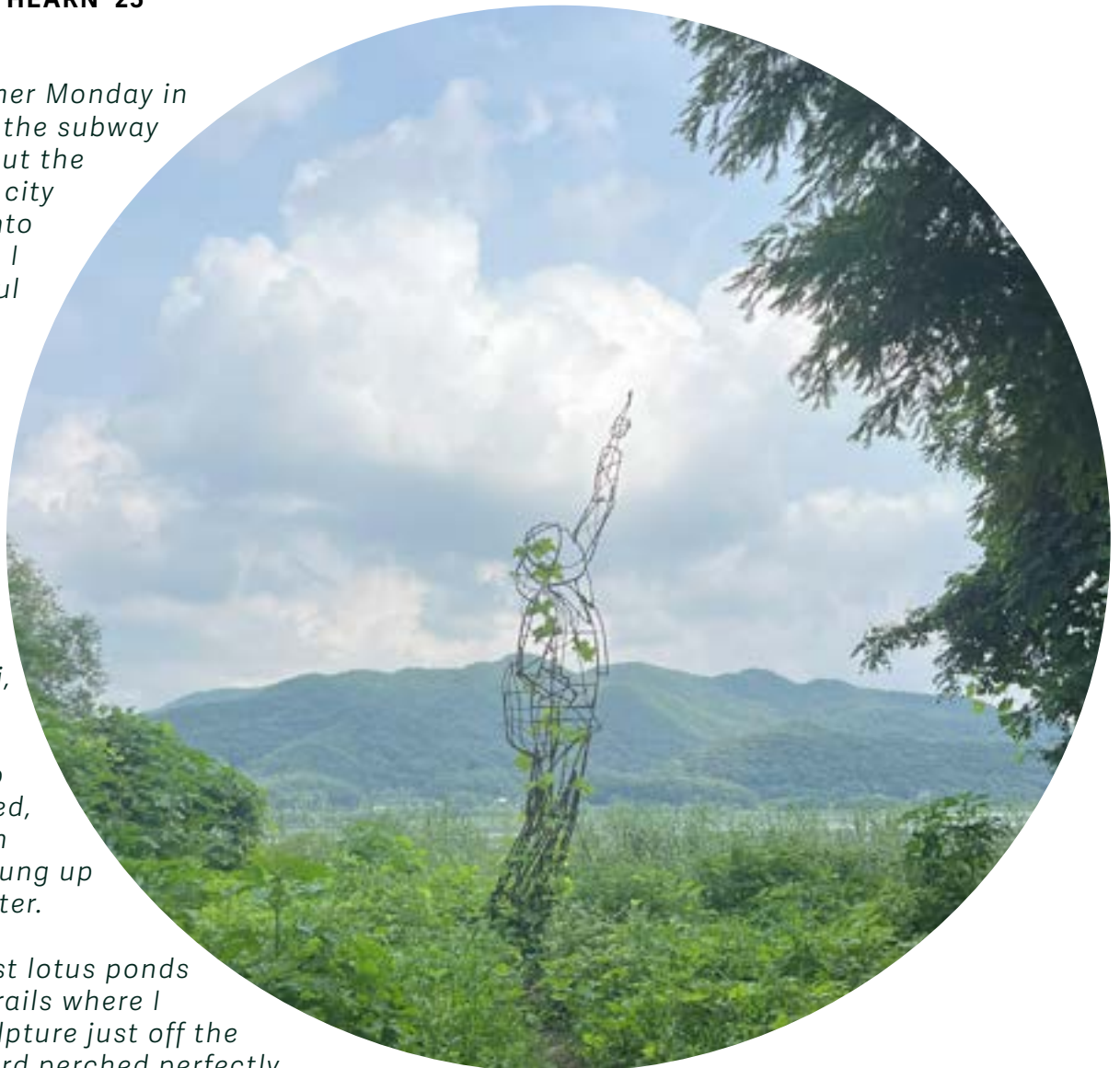
A study abroad reflection *from* Seoul, Korea

BY BREEGAN O'HEARN '25

On a hot summer Monday in Seoul, I sat on the subway and watched out the window as the city melted away into fields of green. I loved how Seoul teemed with energy, but I craved an exploration outside the constant bustle. I arrived in the town of Yangsu and made my way to Dumulmeori, a popular ecotourism spot. Here, two rivers converged, and vivid green mountains sprung up beyond the water.

I wandered past lotus ponds and meadow trails where I found this sculpture just off the path. With a bird perched perfectly on her finger, and the trees framing her against a beautiful blue backdrop, it was too picturesque of a moment to not capture. I saw a reflection of myself in the statue; a girl walking through the trails and pausing to enjoy the flitting butterflies and listen to the screech of cicadas cutting through the thick humidity.

I admire the abundance of parks scattered throughout Seoul despite it being such a developed city, but escaping to Dumulmeori allowed me to peacefully soak in Korea over a slow day. 🌿



Breegan is the Student Marketing Manager for W&M's Office of Sustainability and is majoring in biology and environmental sustainability.



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Photo by Jeff Rohde