

# VILLAROSSA VOICE

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY IN FLORENCE NEWSLETTER FOR STUDENTS, FACULTY & STAFF

## We Are Memory's Memory

A memory is something that by nature fades, slowly removed from one's mind through the act of entropy. And as all memories are subject to this law even the most powerful will succumb to this process, lost in the

Sean Nelson  
SUF Teaching Assistant

penultimate state of senility or ultimately erased in death. Yet, Senator Furio Colombo holds tightly to a moment in his past, grasping to it with the knowledge that he must share it while he can. He holds onto this memory with the conviction that this moment is necessary for the greater future of the world and that we must experience it just as he did.

*You enter the auditorium of your grade school and notice something strange. In the front of the room your teachers sit with their backs turned to the students in feigned ignorance of your presence. As you sit down in your row, confused at the sudden change in procedure, you can tell something is wrong.*

*Normally during assemblies the teachers sit next to the children to protect them from themselves. But today you have no protection. Today you are alone. Before long, the director of the school introduces a man. He is referred to as the "Race Inspector." This uniformed figure stands above you pacing through the rows of your friends. He begins reading names from a list, stating that the students named must leave the school and never return. They are of an unfit race. Soon they will be relocated from the city along with their parents. All around you children begin to rise up, calling to your teachers to help those who are being taken away. You plead and cry for their aid. But they do not hear you. The wall of backs in the front of you remains unbroken, shattering your trust in your teachers forever.*

This was one of the many memories passed on by Senator Colombo to the SUF community on January 21st at the inaugural lecture of the spring semester 2008 and the first of the events for *Shoah: A Week of Reflections on the Holocaust*. His talk was entitled "Memory's Memory" and addressed his role in the creation of "The Day of Memory" in remembrance of the Shoah or Holocaust. Colombo is both an Italian senator and one of the most famous journalists in the country, working for such publications as *Time Magazine* and *L'Espresso*.

Senator Colombo was the central figure in the establishment of the day of remembrance for the Shoah in Italy, recognized annually on January 27th. The purpose of this day, as Senator Colombo explained in his talk, was to establish a living memory for

*See Memory's Memory, page 2*



Photos: Francesco Guazzelli

Furio Colombo completely captured the audience's attention in his thought-provoking lecture entitled "Memory's Memory."

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"...the director of the school introduces a man. He is referred to as the "Race Inspector." This uniformed figure stands above you pacing through the rows of your friends. He begins reading names from a list, stating that the students named must leave the school and never return. They are of an unfit race."



Photo: Francesco Guazzelli



Photos, from top to bottom: Furio Colombo

Enrico Fink, one of the major figures in the Jewish music scene in Italy, presents his concert "ItalyJazzKlez" to a large crowd of SU Florence students, faculty and staff, and people from the Florence community in the Villa Rossa of SUF.

those memories which, like his, will eventually be lost. "The human memory is not eternal," he reiterated. However, the effort to establish the day of remembrance was not easy. Many of the members of the parliament feared that dredging up the past would compromise the future. "Can't we just move on from these horrible moments?" they asked him. But Senator Colombo reminded them that in the very seats in which they sat 355 members of parliament once unanimously approved Anti-Semitic laws and the deportation of Italian Jews to Nazi Germany. "I ask you to vote unanimously for this day. This will not give back the dignity lost, but we will say that it matters to us, although it will be no more than a signal," pled Senator Colombo. Shortly afterward the members of the Italian parliament voted unanimously for the creation of a national day of remembrance for the Holocaust.

In its own effort to create memory's memory here in Florence, on January 30th the SUF Art Gallery opened "1938-1945: The Persecution of Jews in Italy," echoing Senator Colombo's plea to remember these atrocities. The show consists of panels of images and text detailing the persecution of Jews in Italy through primary documents. Visitors can read about Anti-Semitic propaganda spread throughout Italy in books such as *Fascism and the Problem of Race*, published in 1938. The book, written with pointers given by Mussolini himself, explains the importance of human races and illustrates how Jews are not part of the Italian race. Panels also teach the public about the fundamental role the Jewish community played in the unification of Italy and its later growth, making sizeable contributions to the state, such as to the WWI defense fund. These panels illustrate the show's objective; to disseminate memories of past horrors to a new generation.

For SUF, one of the most significant aspects of this exhibition was the role our own students played in its realization. All of the panels in the show were translated from Italian to English by undergraduate students here in the fall and spring of 2007. But those who played a less active role in the realization of the show were still impressed. "To come to Italy and be exposed to this knowledge is important" said student Jane Dalzell, who arrived here this semester. Certainly, this participation of the student body, whether in helping to create the exhibit or simply by attending, have become what Senator Colombo desires so passionately. They have become new champions for those memories of the Holocaust which fade everyday.

The last event of "Shoah: A Week of Reflections on the Holocaust,"

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took place in the Villa Rossa shortly after the gallery opening. Enrico Fink and accompaniment played a number of songs inspired by the Jewish-Italian musical tradition. Fink is also part of memory's memory; he revives and continues a musical tradition that he inherited from his great-grandfather, a Jewish Russian refugee who served as a cantor in several Italian synagogues. His music was certainly inspiring, updating traditional Yiddish and Italian-Jewish songs with a mixture of Jazz and prayer.



The conclusion of the week of remembrance at SUF has left us all with a clear responsibility, but particularly for the younger generation of students. "There are a number of things in the past which will help you to be an agent of your age," stated Senator Colombo. We must remember these words and take heed of the memories that have been passed down to us during this week. As agents of our age we must carry this memory onward, never allowing it to fade, for fear that we may be forced to relive Senator Colombo's memory, instead of simply bearing it.



Photos, from top to bottom: SU Florence student David Seracino, Studio Arts Major at VPA of SU, studies one of the panels of the exhibit *1938-1945: The Persecution of Jews in Italy*, which was translated into English by SUF students of the fall '07 semester in their Italian language classes.

SU Florence student Michael Marchand, Architecture student at SU's School of Architecture, studies one of the panels of the exhibit.

A crowd of SU Florence students, faculty and staff, and people from the Florence community attend the opening.

From left to right: Michele Sarfatti, Director of the Jewish Documentation Center in Milan; Barbara Deimling, SUF Director; Nora Dempsey, Consul General of the United States in Florence.

## Giving Voice to Memory

As an academic exercise related to the events of the Shoah, SUF students enrolled in the class “Mass Communications in Italian Culture” listened intently to the stories told by the elderly Jewish during their class visit to the rest home Ospizio Isralitico Saadun. Here below is one of the many memories told to our students during this intense and emotional meeting.



Photos: Caroline Elo

Left: Lauren Surovi, Shanna Robalino, and Allison Baruck, all from SU, listen intently as Signora Albertina recounts her experiences living as a Jew in Fascist Italy.

### ‘Una madre sola, durante l’Olocausto’

Shanna Robalino  
Syracuse University

L’Olocausto: la tragedia del ventesimo secolo. Milioni di ebrei hanno affrontato fame, angoscia, povertà e terrore. Le storie di molti sopravvissuti dell’ Olocausto dividono e fanno discutere ancora per il crudele trattamento che gli ebrei hanno subito. Albertina Servi, è una delle molte donne ebrei sopravvissuta all’Olocausto con cui abbiamo conversato all’Ospizio Israelitico Saadu di Firenze in occasione delle celebrazioni della settimana della Memoria. Oggi ha 83 anni. La sua storia, come quella delle altre ospiti è straziante. E’ sempre difficile assorbire, per chi non ha vissuto questa tragedia, il racconto della vita di lei, suo marito e di sua figlia.

All’età di 19 anni, in periodo di leggi razziali e di conflitto bellico nell’Italia fascista, molti cittadini Ebrei vivevano con grande difficoltà emarginati e perseguitati dalle istituzioni dell’epoca.

Albertina ha sposato l’amore della sua vita nel 1941. Un anno dopo il loro matrimonio, Ettore fu arrestato dai fascisti ed inviato a una prigione fuori Firenze per un anno e mezzo.

Albertina ha fatto molti chilometri a piedi per fare visita a suo marito mentre era incinta della loro prima figlia.

Hanno perso la loro casa e il negozio di abbigliamento, confiscati dallo Stato fascista, sono rimasti, senza lavoro, casa, denaro e cibo. Quando la loro bambina è nata, Albertina non poté iscriverla all’anagrafe e registrare l’atto di nascita di sua figlia per paura che le venisse fatto del male. Vivendo in povertà e fame con una bambina, Albertina ha affrontato con coraggio difficoltà enormi “La mia bambina piangeva di fame, ed io non potevo fare niente”. Dal 1941 al 1945 si è nascosta con la figlia nelle case di quelli che hanno voluto aiutarla, lei descrive questi anni come “4 anni infernali”. Nel 1945 è riuscita a fuggire dal paese attraversando il confine. Quando ha visto la Croce Rossa ha capito subito che lei e sua figlia erano in salvo.

Quando la guerra è finita, fortunatamente anche il marito è sopravvissuto alla prigionia. Ettore ed Albertina sono tornati insieme e hanno iniziato a ricostruire la loro vita da capo.

La storia di Albertina ci aiuta a capire l’impatto che l’Olocausto ha avuto nelle persone sopravvissute. Non dobbiamo dimenticare quelli che sono morti e quelli che hanno sofferto, perché tutto questo non accada mai più.



Top: Rachel De Gennaro, though not in the Mass Communication class, joined the group out of her interest in the subject.

Below: Another rest home resident talks about her experiences.

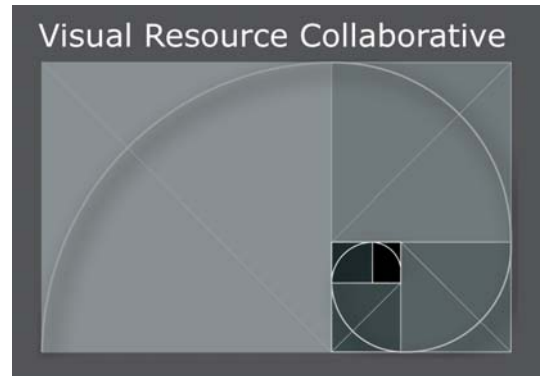
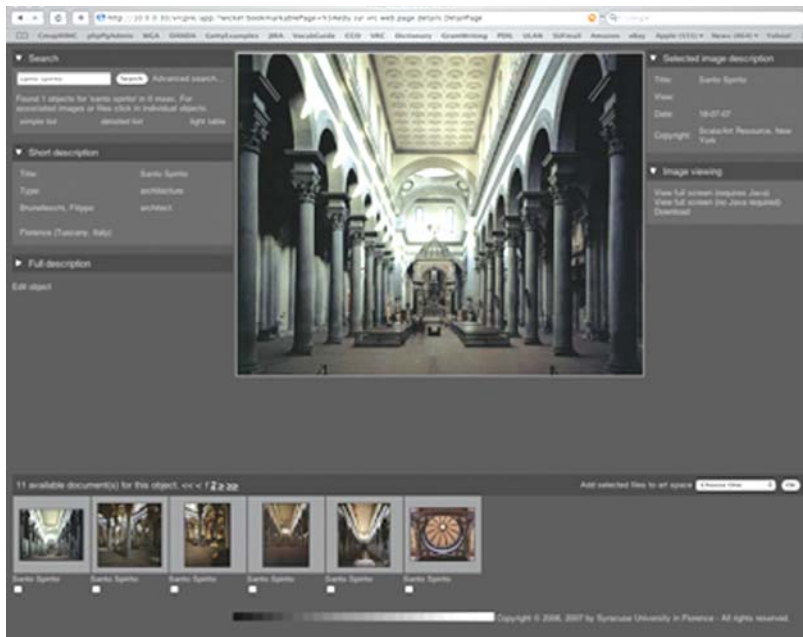
## News from the SUF Media Lab

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SUF is proud to announce that after years of development and feedback from trial users, the SUF Media Lab opened the Visual Resource

Emily Schiavone  
Staff

Collaborative (VRC) to faculty and staff of the SU Florence campus on October 22, 2007. The VRC is an open source, object-based catalog of images and information documenting the history of Italian art, architecture and urbanism, developed by Professor Alick McLean, Media Lab staff, and Emily Schiavone, working together with Italian programmers. The Media lab will continue working over the coming months to add images and data, and to enable online galleries, or “Art Spaces,” with cataloged images from some of our classes, so that students can begin to use the VRC to study images for their courses during this semester.



## Volunteer Program Opportunities Expand with *Trisomia 2*, Down Syndrome Association

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It's no secret that SU Florence likes to offer its students a chance to give—and give generously—of themselves and their time while studying in Florence. What started out as offering storytelling in English to

Brenda Cooke  
Staff



Florentine elementary classes has grown considerably in just over two years. SUF is proud to announce that an agreement has been made with the Florence branch of the Down Syndrome Association Trisomia 21, whereby students will have the opportunity to help young adults with Down Syndrome, a genetic disorder that causes difficulties in cognitive ability and physical growth. The staff of Trisomia 21 consists of both professionals and volunteers, with the aim of teaching these people to become independent adults. SUF students will help them to organize free time activities, and in so doing “will contribute to the Italian community, make special friends and enrich your semester abroad experience,” says Elena Gavilli, assistant to Volunteer Program Coordinator Vittoria Tettamanti.

Says Tettamanti, “At this point in time, students at SU Florence can volunteer their time through five distinct volunteer programs: Storytelling, the Seeds of Legality, the Soup Kitchen, the Women’s and Children’s Shelter, and the Down Syndrome Association.”

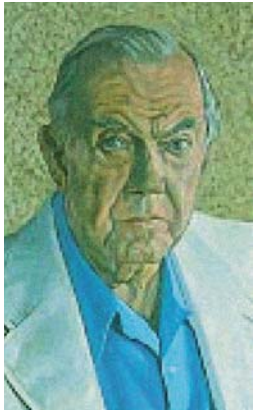
For more information about the SUF Volunteer Program, see:  
<http://www.syr.fi.it/volunteer-program-study-abroad-florence.php>

# Faculty Watch

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## Dorothea Barrett

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Dorothea Barrett went to England in January to complete research on her Graham Greene essay for *The Cambridge Companion to English Novelists*, edited by Adrian Poole, which will be published by Cambridge University Press later this year. While she was there, she presented the essay as a talk with Power-Point presentation to the Cambridge Graduate Seminar on Twentieth Century Literature. *The Cambridge Companion to English Novelists* is a volume of essays on English novelists by scholars from all over the world. The essay has now been completed, submitted and accepted.

*Portrait of Graham Greene, detail, by Anthony Palliser, 1981-1983, National Portrait Gallery, London*

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## Barbara Deimling

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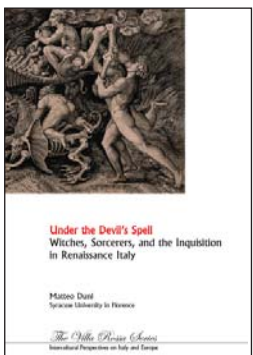
Barbara Deimling, Director of Syracuse University in Florence, has been awarded the prestigious Chancellor's Citation for Excellence Award in the category of "Engaging the World." Deimling, in her vision of an American institution that fully engages its students in the host community, has been responsible for the implementation of SUF's numerous volunteer programs (five and growing), the opening of the SUF Art Gallery, the involvement by students as interns all over the city of Florence, and the community lecture series. Her work in support of legality with local government officials in collaboration with the Sicilian initiative "Liberarci delle Spine" has been featured in the news several times. SU Chancellor Nancy Cantor recognized all these as "exemplary accomplishments in truly engaging the world."

The Chancellor's awards for excellence are campus-wide honors awarded to staff and faculty who have been nominated by their peers. The two other categories of awards include "Faculty Excellence and Scholarly Distinction" and "Outstanding Contributions to Academic Success." Barbara and the recipients of the other two awards will be honored with a banquet in March on the SU campus.

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## Matteo Duni

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This month Matteo Duni gave a lecture entitled, "Under the Devil's Spell: Witches, Sorcerers and the Inquisition in Renaissance Italy" as part of Georgetown University's (Villa Le Balze) guest lecture series. His lecture, of the same title as his recently published book (Villa Rossa Series, 2007) addressed the issue of the reactions to the witch-hunt during the Renaissance. Matteo's lecture and book explores the contradiction between a time characterized by innovative ideas, forward-thinking individuals and the incongruent reality of witch-hunters who burned witches at the stake precisely at that time, within the cradle of humanism on the Italian peninsula. Among the brilliant Renaissance intellectuals, were there none who objected to the burning of human beings during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries?

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## Antonella Francini

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Antonella Francini has been awarded a research grant by the John F. Kennedy Institute at the Freie Universität of Berlin, the most prestigious center for North American studies in Europe. As a fellow in residence she will spend one month over the summer developing a project on visual art and poetry imagery.

This past fall (November 20), Antonella participated in a national radio program (Radio Trè Suite) during which her latest book of translations, *Breve storia dell'ombra*, an anthology of Pulitzer prize winner Charles Wright's poetry (Crocetti Editore), was presented.

# Faculty Watch

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## Sara Matthews Grieco

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Sara Matthews-Grieco has received a generous publication grant from the Lila Acheson Wallace Publication Grant Fund, a grant allocated by The Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies at Villa I Tatti. This grant is for the publication of a collective volume entitled *Erotic Cultures of Renaissance Italy*, which is scheduled to be published by Ashgate Press in the fall of 2008. The volume is derived from a series of three conference sessions on the same theme presented at the Renaissance Society of America annual conference in Cambridge U.K. in spring 2005.

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## Francisco Sanin

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Francisco Sanin is curator for a major international architecture exhibition, *S(E)OUL SCAPE. Towards a New Urbanity in Korea*. The exhibit opened to the Florentine public on January 24, at the SESV gallery. Prior to the exhibition's opening, Francisco presented the well-known Korean architects who are exhibiting their work at a press conference in the Salone dei Duecento of the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence. The exhibiting architects are: Chung Guyon, Joh Sung-yong, Kim Young-joon, Min Hyun-sik, Seung H-sang and Yi Jong-ho. The exhibit, done in cooperation with the city of Florence and the University of Florence, will travel from Florence to principal international cities around the world.

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## Debora Spini

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Last month Debora Spini gave a lecture, "Post-National Civil Society," at Georgetown University as part of the Democrats Abroad Distinguished Lecturers Series. Her presentation was a condensed version of her recently-published volume, *La società civile post nazionale* (Meltemi editore, 2007). In reference to her research in this volume, she sees it as, "trying to avoid the lip-service to civil society and trying to reflect on the crisis of contemporary politics."

Debora has also published two articles recently. One, entitled, "Lobbying for values: il volto ambiguo della società civile europea" appeared in the October-December 2007 issue of *Image europa*. The second, entitled, "Fra lumi e interessi: linee di riflessione sul ruolo di una società civile post nazionale" was published in the most recent issue of the magazine, *Iride*.

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## Stefania Talini

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At the de Saisset Museum's (Santa Clara, California) Collections Committee meeting on November 6, 2007, the committee unanimously voted to place two photographs by Stefania Talini into the permanent Contemporary Art Collection. In March of 2007, Stefania had displayed these photographs in an exhibit at Santa Clara University for the SUF/Santa Clara faculty exchange exhibit, during which time these pieces were chosen for this prestigious honor. The two pieces now on permanent display are entitled "Casablanca" and "Jema El Fna." Versions of the same works will be traveling to Gettysburg, Pennsylvania in March for the exhibit *SWAP: Selected Works by Art Professors* (see related article, page 10).

## 100 Years of Scholarly Excellence: The Fine Arts Master's Program Honors Professor Rab Hatfield

Emily Schiavone  
Staff

**“Hatfield is a scholar like few others,” said the Soprintendente Speciale per il Polo Museale Fiorentino, “in that he has chosen to become part of Florence, and Florentines now consider him one of their own.”**

SUF Professor Rab Hatfield was honored on the occasion of his seventieth birthday with the presentation of a *Festschrift* of essays contributed by fifteen of his former students. The presentation took place at the Galleria

dell'Accademia on December 13, 2007, at the foot of Michelangelo's David—three days before his birthday. Many of those in attendance could recall a similar event held in the same place five years earlier for the presentation of Hatfield's groundbreaking book *The Wealth of Michelangelo* (Edizione di Storia e Letteratura, 2002).

The *Festschrift* presentation was part of a three-day celebration of “100 Years of Scholarly Excellence” at Syracuse University in Florence in recognition of the Syracuse Fine Arts Graduate Program. Of the 100 years being celebrated, Rab Hatfield's long and distinguished contribution to Syracuse University was one of the mathematical components which add up to that sum; thirty-six years of tenure at Syracuse University in Florence. Hatfield has also had a hand in the two other components of the calculation. He has taught graduate students for many of the forty-three years that the program has existed, acting as Coordinator of the Florence Graduate Studies. He has also prepared his students for the annual Florence Symposium in Renaissance Art for all of its

twenty-one years.

*Italian Art, Society and Politics: A Festschrift in Honor of Rab Hatfield* is the third volume in the Villa Rossa Series, edited by SUF Director Barbara Deimling. Deimling presented Hatfield with the book in front of the large crowd, who gave Hatfield a standing ovation. Moved by the reaction of those in attendance, Hatfield thanked everyone for being such wonderful students and colleagues.

Executive Director of SU Abroad John Booth took the podium to thank Hatfield for “quantity, quality and dedication,” pointing out that during Hatfield's thirty-six years at SUF he has taught at least four courses per semester and has acted as coordinator for both graduate and undergraduate studies. The quality of his performance, Booth noted, is reflected in his students, as Hatfield has affected their lives in significant ways. His dedication in these years has helped to make SUF the best study abroad program in Italy.

Cristina Acidini, Soprintendente Speciale per il Polo Museale Fiorentino, stood to

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Photo: Francesco Guazzelli



The evening was filled with emotional moments as Rab Hatfield was saluted by colleagues from within the SUF and Florentine communities, the home campus, many alums, and current students.

<< address the contributions that “*Il grande maestro*” Rab has made to the city of Florence and to scholarship on Florence. “Hatfield is a scholar like few others,” she said, “in that he has chosen to become part of Florence, and Florentines now consider him one of their own.” With his particular ability to understand other eras—from the time of Cosimo il Vecchio to the time of Michelangelo—Hatfield’s work explains what the images, the architecture and the sculptures themselves cannot.

Joseph Connors, Director of Villa I Tatti, Harvard’s Center for Renaissance Art, recognized that Hatfield has been part of the I Tatti community since 1971. “Of the 600 sons and daughters of I Tatti, we are all especially proud of one tonight,” Connors said. For the occasion, Connors reread many of Hatfield’s publications, emphasizing that Hatfield arrived at many hot topics before other scholars caught on, such as portraiture and pageantry. Humorously, Connors observed that Hatfield’s skills as a scholar could have served him well in other fields; Hatfield could have been a fantastic Savonarolan preacher, or a terrifying IRS auditor!

SU Professor Gary Radke, one of Hatfield’s first students as a professor in Florence, and for many years one of his Syracuse colleagues, spoke to the scholarly strengths that Hatfield has passed on to his students. Radke explained that Hatfield treats his students as a colleague would, demanding precision, clarity and honesty in their work. The success of Hatfield’s teaching is evident in the number of students who have become colleagues, and their ability to form a clear argument using evidence, making significant contributions to their field. “Your students,” Radke said, addressing Hatfield, “delight in the world around them thanks to your tutelage.”

Unscheduled speaker Cathy Newton, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Syracuse University, stood to congratulate “the lineage that Rab has helped to create and sustain, now and for the future” of Syracuse. Newton presented Hatfield with a certificate from the Legacy Honors Program in recognition of his contribution to Syracuse University.

The day was an especially rewarding one for Hatfield, as his own latest publication, *Finding Leonardo: The Case for Recovering the Battle of Anghiari* (The Florentine Press, 2007), came out in bookstores that same day. His numerous former students in the audience at the Accademia couldn’t help but feel proud.

“Hatfield’s students,” said Gary Radke, “delight in the world around them, thanks to his tutelage.”



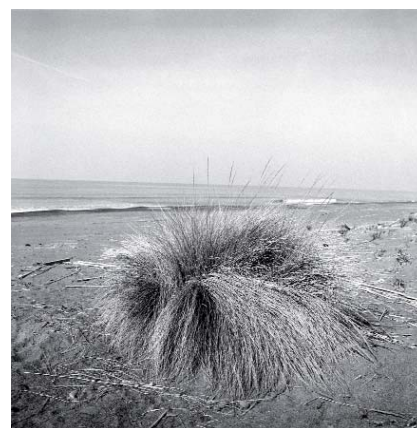
## Faculty Art Exchange with Gettysburg College

Next month, from March 10-30, SUF studio art faculty will display their work at Gettysburg College, in Pennsylvania. The exhibit, entitled, “SWAP: Selected Works of Art Professors,” is part of a faculty exchange

Brenda Cooke  
Staff

initiative. The project allows SUF art professors to exhibit their work in American university art galleries, and in turn, allows US-based art professors to exhibit their work here in Florence, at the SUF Art Gallery. Six professors from the SUF Studio Arts Department will display their work: Marco Fallani, Francesco Guazzelli, Kathy Knippel, Nick Kraczyna, Kirsten Stromberg and Stefania Talini. Thirty works have been selected for the exhibit, covering a wide range of media which include bronze sculp-

ture, photography, oil painting, multi-plate etching, batik and quilting. In fall of 2008, Gettysburg art professors will have a chance to have their art on display here in Florence at our gallery. The exhibit on the Florence campus is part of the SUF exhibit and lecture series “Contemporary Visions.” A key feature of this series lies in the interactive presentations and lectures given by the artists, thus giving the students a chance to dialogue directly with these artists.



Artwork by SUF professors, clockwise from top left: Kirsten Stromberg, Marco Klee Fallani, Francesco Guazzelli, Nick Kraczyna, Stefania Talini, and, center, Kathy Knippel.

## Whistler Exhibit Gives an Encore Opening at SUF Art Gallery

The SUF Art Gallery gave newly-arrived spring 2008 students the chance to see the widely-successful exhibit *An American in Italy: James McNeill Whistler and his Legacy: Thirty-five Prints by the Artist and his Followers*. The

Brenda Cooke  
Staff

show, inaugurated November 20, 2007, had already finished its slated run for the public (from November 23, 2007 to January 12, 2008) and was so popular that SUF Director Barbara Deimling and SUF Art Gallery Coordinator Devorah Block decided to keep it up one extra week, offering spring students a private 'mini-opening' complete with reception on the last day of orientation. Said Deimling, "We agreed an exhibit of this caliber should be shared with as many students as possible, and that this also presented an opportunity for spring students to get acquainted with our Gallery space prior to the next event."

Almost 100 students took time out of a busy orientation schedule to come peruse the art and were enthusiastic about both the exhibit and SUF's exhibition space, with several noting how unusual it was for a study-abroad program to have its own art gallery open to the public.



Orientation week gave newly-arrived spring 2008 students the chance to see the Whistler exhibition at the SU Florence Art Gallery.

# SUF's Villa Rossa Hosts First Global Primary for Democrats Abroad in Tuscany

Brenda Cooke  
Staff

SU Florence (SUF) intern Marissa Lorenzetti, Political Science major at SU, looks on as Nora Dempsey, Consul General of the United States in Florence, casts her vote in the first-ever online Democratic Global Presidential Primary. The atmosphere was decidedly festive as SUF opened the doors of its main building, the Villa Rossa, to the American ex-pat community of Florence and Tuscany to vote. The large turn-out of nearly three-hundred voters is a sure sign of SUF's place as a major point of reference within the Florentine community. The local press turned up to interview many voters. Many SUF students were appreciative of this chance to keep involved in and informed about the current political situation while studying abroad.



Photo: Francesco Guazzelli



The **VILLA ROSSA VOICE** is the newsletter for the Syracuse University in Florence community. We welcome your questions, comments, articles and/or artwork.

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Photo: Erin Murphy

