

Retirement from the Skidmore College Faculty

Spring 2024



Faculty Meeting
April the Twenty-Sixth
Two Thousand and Twenty-Four

Be It Resolved:

The faculty of Skidmore College expresses its profound appreciation and admiration for the following members of the Skidmore faculty who have this year expressed their determination to retire. The faculty further resolves that the following biographical highlights be included in the minutes of the faculty meeting of April 26, 2024 in recognition and celebration of their distinguished service and achievement.



I invite you all to take a deep breath in. And out. Once more. Inhale, exhale. And, now, go ahead and—on that next exhale—sigh out on sound, perhaps letting the corners of your mouths turn up just a little. Here we go. Inhale and . . . sigh.

How do you feel? A little more grounded? A little more present? Good.

Now, imagine, if you had a colleague who embodied that reminder. . . to breathe, to sigh, to revel in presence, in human-ness.

Such is Kate Kelly Bouchard. If you have worked in a Theater department, you know that the costume shop is like the kitchen, a kind of heart of the house. The voice and acting teacher is like the soul. At their best, the voice and acting teacher is the capacious keeper of the great range of humanity and its experience, the keenest listener you will ever be graced by, and the most empathetic and patient steward of success, risk, failure, and elation alike. Such is Kate Kelly Bouchard, a master teacher of voice and acting.

Kate came to teaching alongside a career in professional acting. Even with a full slate of classes and coaching at Skidmore, Kate never stopped acting professionally, doing the generous labor of bearing witness to characters with body, mind, and heart, the gifts actors give to audiences. Kate's acting career is an enviable journey through classical and contemporary work alike, and she has embodied characters drawn by the great writers of our time, from Kate in *Dancing at Lughnasa* by Brian Friel to the stage manager in Thornton Wilder's *Our Town*. As an actor, she takes on characters whose strength is accompanied by profound vulnerability. On Broadway, she played Gladys in *The Skin of Our Teeth*, directed by José Quintero. She won roles in First National Tours and major regional Rep Theaters alike. Kate is a founding member of the Lexington Conservatory Theater and Capital Repertory Company.

Professor Emeritus Carolyn Anderson recalls that "I first met Kate when she was acting at Cap Rep back in the early 80s. I was a Cap Rep board member and beginning a career at Skidmore. Our department chair at the time, Alan Brody, was in the process of developing a professional model for our department and reached out to Cap Rep actors. They were hired as

visiting guest artists teaching acting, and voice for the actor. As Cap Rep moved away from the repertory theater model, we continued to remain interested in the actors who continued to work there. We got to know Kate well through her work at Cap Rep, and we knew that, ultimately, she would make a great addition to the department. When I was chair, I hired Kate as a full-time artist in residence. We needed a voice specialist, and for many summers Kate amplified her knowledge of vocal training with Kristin Linklater, the renowned voice specialist. She studied the Kristin Linklater method of voice training and became certified as a Linklater teacher and the department's expert in that area."

Carolyn, as those of you who know her can attest, has terrific instincts and a keen eye for great artist-teachers. Kate dove into teaching and has reveled in the collaborative nature of shaping the journey and training of young actors. Carolyn continues:

"Early in Kate's career she was selected to be a part of the very competitive HB studio's master classes with Uta Hagen. Kate studied with Hagen and trained our students in Uta Hagen's acting methodology. Kate spends hours with her students outside of class. Many wait outside her office door for advice about audition material, coaching for graduate school auditions, professional auditions—and life! "

Kate's impact on students is profound, a testament to her passion for the craft and art of acting, her boundless curiosity, and deep empathy. Alumna Salomé Egas, class of 2014, writes that:

"Kate's classes were always a safe ground for courageous mind, body and voice explorations. Having Kate as a teacher was a truly a gift. Besides the amazing supporting and generous energy she provided all of her students, as an immigrant student of color, she was willing to really get to know me and learn how my personal experiences could enrich my performances. I grew so much as an actor because of her deeply intuitive virtue of knowing how to guide my acting to uncover different emotional levels. I laughed, I cried, I released and I loved every single class. Thank you, Kate, for your care, love and for creating such a nurturing and healing space."

Reyn Ricafort, a rising senior Theater major, actor and playwright, writes directly to Kate, expressing his gratitude and connection with his teacher. Reyn says “Kate, trying to capture your magnitude in a mere few sentences is difficult. You have shown me what it means to take ownership of my voice, my space, and most importantly, my story. Whether I am pining for a political opponent’s support (Farragut North) or assessing the unfamiliar friendliness of a pregnant woman (A Taste of Honey), you have taught me how to pull from my humanity to inform and give breadth to stories that existed outside of me. I credit a significant part of my artistry to your teaching, and I suspect it will remain that way for a long time. Every character, every script, and every story that spills from my heart will in part have been touched by you. Thus, if there is one sentence that can come close to capturing how I feel, it would be- thank you.”

Kate’s work with students has been a part of every audience member’s experience, too. If you have seen a play at the JKB, anytime between 1985 and this year: you have reaped the benefits of Kate’s work.

Kate’s infectious passion and compassion is not limited to her students or our audiences. Her colleagues, from across the department extol the joy with which Kate works, the authenticity, and the breath, she brings into every space.

Suzanne Golub, our departmental administrative assistant, gives us a glimpse of the gift that is Kate. She writes “Kate comes down the hallway loudly intoning AAAHUMA, AAAHUMA as she enters her office preparing to teach her voice or acting classes. You can hear BBBBRRRR, BBBBRRRR as she warms up her vocal cords for the work ahead. I can hear Kate’s classes in the studio through my office wall. Students practicing vocal techniques from a whisper to a roar – numbers, words, expressions, songs, all repeated over and over training their voices in Kate’s practiced style. Over the years, Kate has nurtured and taught dozens and dozens of students preparing them for the stage and performing arts with expertise, skill, and love. Her loudly intoned vocal exercises always make us smile, and her contagious energy will be missed by all who have had the good fortune to know her and work with her.”

New colleagues, too, sense Kate’s passion from the outset. Our new colleague this year, Margarita Blush,

recounts the delight and inspiration Kate provides, just by doing her work:

“When I first arrived at Skidmore last fall, I would look out of my office window on Mondays and Wednesdays and would see Kate and her students outside playing with a parachute, walking around under the trees engaged in partner work, collecting sticks...It always brought me so much joy to see this kind of immediate and engaged work, as I knew how valuable it is for the students.”

This play, of course, is full. It is not only a game, but a method. To learn, or re-learn, to play is the actor’s job. . . The play is the thing. . . the thing that you play. In play, actors increase capacity for risk taking, for listening and responding with spontaneity and truth, for learning to be present in mind and body and breath. There is deep, deep rigor in Kate’s teaching, melded with great joy and compassion.

For many years, Marie Glotzbach and Will Bond collaborated closely with Kate, as they worked together on an acting curriculum that would serve the students and combine their skillsets and passions. Marie begins to let us in on what it is like to work with Kate as a colleague and collaborator:

“Kate is a dynamic theater artist who has made significant contributions to the theater department. She is always ready and available to visit rehearsals to help with voice work and acting coaching. She is graciously accommodating in making time to work with students one-on-one outside of the class or rehearsal. Kate is highly collaborative and caring. She excels at giving support and encouragement to those she works with. She is a talented actor and an insightful acting teacher who has earned the respect and trust of both her students and colleagues. She brings diligence and commitment with a passionate original voice. To round out the picture: she is one-of-a-kind, quirky, and just downright fun. No one will replace our Kate!”

Will Bond rounds out the picture yet further. A consummate artist himself, it seems most fitting to end this tribute with his beautiful, evocative words about the incomparable Kate Kelly Bouchard:

“I’m so happy to remember Kate Kelly over the 15 years we shared studios and students together. My very first memories are of a high, full-throated laugh that would echo down the theater department corridor announcing the breathless and animated entrance of the one and only Kate Kelly. I always thought privately, “This is an actress. She knows how to enter.”

I remember sometimes running into Kate in the hallways and finding ourselves doubled over in laughter about something or other and trying to shush one another like two students worried we’d get in trouble. I think we kept each other young.

I remember sometimes sitting in on Kate’s acting class and marveling at how quickly she could get to the emotional center of a student’s work and guide them through the logical steps of a performance moment. And it was always very serious business, but the warmth and care of her voice held a safe and compassionate space for the student to work. I always thought she was so brave. One could feel her years of professional training and experience. There was no pretense, no academic distance, but real shared experience. Only an artist can offer this kind of guidance.

I know for certain that students adore Kate. Even as I could see them trembling before entering her studio because they knew she would get the truth out of them, I could see that they WANTED this work because they would learn something and get better.

Finally, I remember, perhaps most fondly in all of my time at Skidmore, sitting on the front porch of Marie and Phil Glotzbach home where Kate, Marie, and I would spend time eating and planning together late into the evenings our Intro to Acting classes. These were times of sharing our own experiences, debating exercises and strategies that would best serve our students, learning from each other, and changing our minds. AND I remember sometimes thinking, ‘ I’m sure the neighbors can hear Kate’s glorious laughter and must be wondering what’s happening over at the president’s mansion.’ What’s happening was Kate.”

Kate, as Carolyn writes, your “warm welcoming ways and tough love along with your passion for the theater -and your theater students- make you one of our most beloved faculty. “

Kate, you have prepared so many students so well for a life in the theater-you have enriched so many lives in theater at Skidmore. . .

Now it’s time for you to take a bow!

- *Lisa Jackson-Schebetta, Associate Professor and Chair, Theater*

Giuseppe Faustini, our distinguished Professor of Italian, has marked an impressive milestone with 50 years of dedicated teaching at the college level. With a Ph.D. from Harvard University in Romance Languages and Literatures, Giuseppe has profoundly shaped the academic and cultural landscape of Skidmore College through his multifaceted career.

Twice Chair of the Department of World Languages and Literatures and Director of the Self-Determined Major Program, Giuseppe demonstrated leadership and vision, enhancing the department’s stature and academic breadth. His teaching skills were recognized with The Ralph Ciancio Award for Excellence in Teaching, along with the Edwin M. Moseley Faculty Research Lecture, underlining his commitment to pedagogical excellence and scholarly inquiry.

A fervent advocate for Italian culture and literature, Giuseppe expanded the Italian program by founding the Italian Minor and developing advanced courses and translations. His courses on Dante’s *Divine Comedy* and Italian cinema became student favorites, reflecting his innovative approach to teaching, which emphasizes visual learning and engagement with Italian language films. One of his students wrote: “Professor Faustini’s classes are more than just lessons in Italian; they were a journey into the culture, history, and soul of Italy itself. I left each class not only more fluent but also more connected to Italian life.” Giuseppe also mentored more than thirty faculty members during his time at Skidmore, sharing his extensive knowledge and experience to foster their professional growth and development.

Giuseppe’s scholarly endeavors are evidenced by prestigious honors such as the Fulbright Distinguished Service Award for Italy and Greece, a National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Fellowship, and participation in the National Endowment for the

Humanities Dante Seminar at Dartmouth College. His role on the Editorial Boards of *Italica* and *Pirandelliana*, coupled with his contributions as an outside evaluator for several Italian and foreign language departments, including Middlebury College and Marist College, showcases his expertise and the respect he commands in the field. Giuseppe's scholarship is notable for its breadth and depth, specializing in Modern and Renaissance Italian Literature and Italian Cinema. His publications, particularly on Luigi Pirandello and Dante, have made significant contributions to literary studies, with the monographs *Luigi Pirandello, studi e ricerche* (2017) and *Un amore primaverile* (2019) receiving extensive praise and recognition. Specially, his last book was nominated for the prestigious Roma Prize. He has also published numerous articles, essays and reviews on Dante, Rinaldo D'Aquino, Machiavelli, Pirandello, Bontempelli, DeFilippo, Ginzburg, Moravia, on Risorgimento history, and on Italian film directors: De Sica, Tornatore, De Santis. His articles and reviews have appeared in prestigious academic journals such as *Nuova Antologia*, *Il Veltro*, *Ariel*, *Nuova Rivista Storica*, *Rivista Internazionale di Ricerche Dantesche*, *Machiavelliana*, *Il Cristallo*, *Pirandelliana*, *Scena Illustrata*, *The Journal of Italian Translation*, *Romance Notes*, *Modern Language Journal*, *Pirandello Society of America*, *Pirandello Studies*, *American Journal of Italian Studies*, and in several edited volumes, anthologies and conference proceedings. He also served several years as the book review editor of the *Pirandello Society of America* journal. Giuseppe's commitment, however, extended beyond his research on key themes in Italian literature to also include creative endeavors, as shown by his one-act play, *Una famiglia, due culture*, published by Voices in Italian Americana.

Our colleague, Prof. Emeritus of French, John Anzalone summarizes Giuseppe's trajectory at Skidmore as follows: "Giuseppe Faustini has achieved international recognition as an authority on Dante. He is also acknowledged as a frequently published expert on all aspects of the work of Luigi Pirandello. Our students have profited from Giuseppe's research on these central figures in Italian literature as well as from his extensive and fluent mastery of Italian cinema thanks to the many courses he has created over his career at Skidmore."

After half a century of teaching, Giuseppe Faustini's legacy is not only in the students he has inspired and

the colleagues he has mentored but also in the body of work he has produced—a testament to a life devoted to the exploration and dissemination of Italian culture, literature, and history. *Grazie mille, Maestro!*

- Maria Lander, Professor and Chair, World Languages and Literatures

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fter a long and illustrious career at Skidmore, Jim Kennelly is retiring. Jim joined Skidmore 28 years ago, in 1996, having just earned his PhD in International Business and Management from NYU. Academia was his second career, after 14 years in accounting and financial management positions with several multinational corporations.

Jim joined the United States Air Force within a month of graduating high school in order to qualify for the GI Bill, which paid for his education at Montclair State University. As a result, Jim has always felt a particular connection with first-generation college students like himself, and the greatest respect for those who have served our country – our veterans. Ten years ago, in 2014, Jim organized an annual Veterans Day commemoration at the flagpole to recognize the important contributions veterans have made and continue to make to our country and the College.

In his time at Skidmore, Jim has been Chair of our department, Director of International Affairs, Director of Sustainability for Academic Affairs, the Courtney and Steven Ross Chair in Interdisciplinary Studies, and the Interim Director of the University without Walls. He has served on many college and faculty committees, including the Curriculum Committee, the IPPC, the (old) Financial Policy and Planning committee, the (old) Benefits Committee, the Committee on Promotion and Tenure (CAPT), the Faculty Development Committee, the President's Optimization Task Force, the Summer Task Force on UWW Restructuring, the Task Force on Divestment, and many others.

At Skidmore, he has taught a variety of courses, focusing mainly on his two special interests, international business and sustainability. He has also regularly taught his first-year seminar on Ireland as part of the FYE. Jim particularly enjoyed the travel

and alumni seminars to Ireland, Vienna, and Istanbul that he has offered, which he describes as “great fun and many fond memories.”

Jim has also been Visiting Professor at NYU’s Stern School of Business, at Aalto University in Finland, and twice as a visiting Fulbright Scholar at the University of Applied Sciences in Krems, Austria.

We cannot, in honoring Jim’s life and career, ignore the importance of place. Jim’s life has been shaped by a sense of place, and the uniqueness of every place.

Jim was shaped, first of all, by Bayonne, New Jersey, in the shadow of New York City, where he grew up. If you’ve spoken with Jim at all of his life, you have no doubt come to consider Bayonne as a sort of working-class Eden, a city of neighborhoods that were truly communities. Jim likes to say that people from Bayonne are always eager to tell you where they’re from, because they are proud of having risen from such humble beginnings. Equally important in shaping Jim’s life is the Ireland of his parents and family, which gifted Jim with his love of poetry, of literature, and of the well-turned phrase. Finally, when Jim and his family came to Skidmore, they moved to rural Washington County, close by the Vermont border, where they went to work restoring an old dairy farm with a circa 1840s Greek Revival house. His rooting in the rhythms of a still largely agricultural community also effected a real transformation in his scholarship.

It is always tempting but rarely true to draw a straight line from the lives of scholars to their scholarship, but in considering Jim’s career it is undeniable that his experience informs his profound understanding of the importance of place. His career, infused with the essence of his beginnings, has been a testament to the power of environments in shaping perspectives, enterprises, and communities. This understanding has been the cornerstone of his research and teaching, particularly his innovative work on place-based enterprises.

Throughout his tenure at Skidmore College, Professor Kennelly has delved into the symbiotic relationship between businesses and their locales, underscoring how the cultural, social, and environmental contexts of an area contribute to the sustainability and success of its enterprises. His studies on the Kerry Co-op, Cooley Distillery, and other organizations reveal a keen insight into how place-based enterprises leverage local

strengths to foster economic development, community engagement, and environmental stewardship.

Ireland, with its rich history and complex socio-economic landscape, has played a pivotal role in Professor Kennelly's research. His work elucidates how some Irish enterprises, deeply rooted in their local environments, exemplify the principles of sustainability and community cohesion. Through his eyes, we learn the importance of connecting with our heritage and surroundings to build businesses that are not only economically viable but also socially responsible and environmentally sustainable.

In Saratoga Springs, at the heart of Skidmore College, Professor Kennelly's theory of place-based enterprises has resonated with both his colleagues and students. His leadership roles and commitment to sustainability have inspired a generation of thinkers to consider the critical impact of place in business strategy and organizational development. His legacy is evident in the courses he has taught, the seminars he has led, and the numerous publications that bear his name, all reflecting his deep appreciation for and understanding of the places that have shaped him.

As we celebrate Professor Kennelly's retirement, we honor not just his academic achievements but also his profound impact on how we understand the relationship between enterprises and their places. His journey from Bayonne, through Ireland, to Saratoga Springs, is a narrative that enriches our appreciation of his scholarship and teaching. It reminds us that to truly understand Jim Kennelly's life, career, and contributions, we must recognize the places that have shaped him.

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to James for a remarkable career, filled with significant contributions to the field of international business and management. May his retirement be, for himself and his wife Linda, as enriching and inspiring as the places they hold dear.

Congratulations, Jim, and thank you, from all of us, for your invaluable contributions to our department, to Skidmore College and to the broader academic and local communities. Your legacy, grounded in the places you've cherished, will continue to inspire both your colleagues and your students.

- *David Cohen, Associate Professor and Chair,
Management and Business*

Elaine Larsen earned her BS in Animal Science and MS in Nutritional Biochemistry from Cornell University. She went on to Tufts for her PhD in Human Nutrition, and then completed a postdoc in cellular and molecular immunology at Albany Medical College. In 2004 she joined the Skidmore faculty as a Teaching Associate, and in 2010 was promoted to Senior Teaching Associate (now Senior Instructor).

For the past 20 years, Skidmore students have benefitted from Elaine's passion for teaching, enthusiasm for introducing non-majors to scientific inquiry, and ability to infuse her courses with her own unique interests and skills. Drawing on her broad training in biology, Elaine taught labs in Introductory Biology, Genetics, Cell Biology, Molecular Biology, and Comparative Vertebrate Anatomy. In the Health and Human Physiological Sciences Department, she taught Principles of Nutrition.

Throughout her teaching career, Elaine has been committed to incorporating active learning principles to engage students and improve their understanding. If there was a pedagogy workshop offered on campus, Elaine was likely attending. She served as a resource and mentor for other faculty interested in exploring approaches such as Team-Based Learning, Peer-Led Team Learning, and the use of case studies. Biology faculty member Erika Schielke says that 'Elaine has an impressive ability to translate pedagogical concepts into concrete activities. She was an incredible resource as I was starting my teaching career at Skidmore – and she still is.'

Non-science majors at Skidmore particularly benefited from Elaine's innovative course design, which drew on her experience as a horse owner and trail rider, and her involvement in the fiber arts community. In addition to teaching Human Biology for non-majors, she developed two highly popular courses that attracted a wide range of students – especially equestrians and artists. Students enrolled in 'Inside Equus: Biology of the Horse' could be found in the Skidmore stables studying behavior, or in the lab determining how to formulate a balanced diet based on the nutritional characteristics of various feed components. Or they might enroll in the linked travel seminar, 'Mustangs and the Wild West,' during which they would spend spring break observing horses in both wild and captive

settings in Nevada, and learning about the challenges of managing wild horse populations on public lands.

With Sang-Wook Lee in the Art Department, Elaine co-developed the course 'Straw Into Gold: Science in the Fiber Arts.' She continued to offer this course independently, and students could be seen throughout the semester working on the dyeing or weaving of their independent projects, or reviewing the microscopic structure of various types of fibers. She also participated in the development of the Tang exhibit 'Radical Fiber: Threads Connecting Art and Science.'

In addition to horses, Elaine also has a flock of sheep. Usually the only evidence of this is the orders of lamb chops that she brings in for colleagues, or the sheepskin that she displays for students. But occasionally Elaine has brought along a newborn lamb that requires bottle feeding. On a campus with an agricultural science program, it might be unremarkable to find a bleating lamb in a dog crate outside an office door. Here at Skidmore, the bottle lamb never failed to draw curious faculty and delighted students.

Elaine drew on her experience in animal husbandry and animal science during her 15 years on the Health Professions Advisory Committee. In addition to advising students in a range of pre-health professions, Elaine was the primary advisor for students interested in applying to veterinary school. She also served on the College's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), and read applications for Porter and S3M scholarships.

One final anecdote demonstrates Elaine's commitment to engaging students in authentic, hands-on experiences: When she encountered a roadkill otter, Elaine obtained the necessary permit to collect it, brought it to campus, and, after a demonstration of skinning and fleshing by the husband of another faculty member, dissected the otter with students. On a Saturday.

Two decades of students have Elaine to thank for engaging lab experiences, their first foray into scientific experimentation, or guidance on their path to veterinary school. We suspect that Elaine has no plans of slowing down – but perhaps lambing season will be easier when it doesn't coincide with early morning labs. We will deeply miss her enthusiasm, creativity, and commitment to our students.

Trish Lyell's 2021 painting *Untitled I* looks alive. Across the canvas, expanses of color take on loose shapes, intersecting, concealing, bending, disrupting, expanding, and splitting in an exploration of how forms change in space and time. This description of the painting can also describe Trish: bold, colorful, and shape-shifting. It was 1977 when Trish Lyell arrived on campus as a new Skidmore student. In the years since, she has had many different roles: she led the Skidmore tennis team as one of its captains, returned in 1990 to teach in the Art Department, and most recently turned to curating art in her current role as Assistant Director of the Schick Gallery. Since her first auspicious steps (and volleys) on Skidmore's campus, Trish has been a force that has changed Skidmore, shaping students into artists and becoming one of the strongest voices in the Art Department through her humor, her leadership, and her commitment to art as a space of exploration and transformation.

As a student in the Art Department, Trish studied painting and drawing with Jeff Elgin and David Miller. But like a true Skidmore student, she had many interests and also found herself spending time in the American Studies department with Mary Lynn and Joanna Zangrando. Jeff Segrave reminds us of another of Trish's passions at Skidmore: "What most people probably don't know about Trish is that she was an excellent tennis player. . . . She started for Skidmore's women's tennis team all four years of her undergraduate career. She was a two-time captain and a finalist in the NY State collegiate tennis doubles championships. But her role as captain was probably the most significant—she was the rock, the on- and off-court leader who helped transform the Skidmore women's tennis team from a state to a national-level program. Trish was like an assistant coach—an organizer, a motivator, a disciplinarian, and a powerful role model for the younger players. She was a natural leader! She also had a wonderful sense of humor that always leavened the situation." A little-known fact: in 1979, Trish and her doubles partner were ranked #2 in New York State across Divisions 1, 2, and 3.

After graduation, Trish left Skidmore, but came back to the Saratoga area in 1984 after completing her MFA

at the Mount Royal School of Painting at the Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore. In 1990 she returned to the third floor of the Saisselin Art Building to join the Art Department as a teacher, and since then she has been a key player among the Drawing and the Painting faculty. Her colleague emerita, Doretta Miller, describes Trish as "a positive and inspiring force on the third floor—always giving her students the best suggestions and motivation to improve, and displaying timely and informative student art in the hallways. Our drawing and painting students gain fundamental training, and are encouraged to become creative artists and original thinkers, because of Trish's teaching skills and many contributions to the department."

One of Trish's greatest strengths in the classroom is her role as a communicator and facilitator of dialogue among students. In her courses, critique is not a moment of evaluation but rather a chance for nuanced discussion among fellow artists. In critique, Trish guides groups of students as they do a close reading of each element of a drawing, investigating the ideas and aesthetics that are at play. Trish's classes are not easy—she expects hard work and has high expectations for each student. In the Senior Thesis Exhibition each spring the drawings that are exhibited are beautifully executed, thoughtful explorations of forms and ideas—a testament to the many months of hard work and deep conversation between the artists, their peers, and Trish. Her former student Jayo Chandler describes the transformative power of Trish's classroom: "Trish showed me what art creation can be, and how to break out of the boxes we create for ourselves."

Trish's own artwork is also a space of exploration. Her paintings show a strong sense of play: colors shift and change, shapes can be read multiple ways, and the canvas as a whole becomes a place where she works out questions of form and questions of the world. She writes beautifully about her own work, stating that she thinks of it "outside of spoken language or referential images. Though there are constant strands of reference in my head—places or circumstances I have experienced or imagined, my limited knowledge but expansive awe of the universe, general conditions of human existence (loneliness, wonder, humor, absurdity)—I'm not interested in trying to weave those strands together. Rather, the interactions and collisions—awkward, elegant, surprising, bent,

crooked... reflect the inchoate qualities of life that feel authentic to me.”

Trish has shown her work in spaces across the northeast, including the Lake George Arts Project, where she has had solo and two-person shows, SUNY Albany, the Schenectady Museum, the Hoyt National Exhibition, the National Painting Exhibition in Cooperstown, and Salem Art Works, where she had a two-person show just this year. She has also shown in faculty exhibitions at Skidmore for thirty years. Her work has won the Schenectady Museum’s Vallie Coulter Award, the Hoyt National Exhibition’s Purchase Award, and the National Painting Exhibition’s Best in Exhibition Award. She has also received a grant from New York State Council on the Arts and held a residency from the Vermont Studio Center. Her work is in the collections of Adirondack Trust, Canny Bowen and Associates, the Hoyt Museum, the John Griefen Collection, and Skidmore’s own Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery.

Trish has always been extremely generous in volunteering her time for the Art Department. In this past year alone, her contributions have ranged from organizing the Malloy Visiting Artist Lecture and introducing artist Nina Katchadourian to meeting with accepted students at Yes Day to helping select an artist for the department’s new Work+Space residency program. One of Trish’s biggest impacts on the Department and the culture of art at Skidmore has been through her curatorial work on campus. She was a member of the curatorial team for *Like Sugar* at the Tang Museum in 2019, and became the Assistant Director of the Schick Art Gallery that same year. Rebecca Shepard, Director of the Schick, writes that “Trish’s passion for doing things that matter, and doing them well, is unmatched, as is her willingness to put in the time needed to make a stellar exhibition. Never limited by conventional or formulaic ideas, she brings light and air to all of her endeavors. But it is Trish’s quick wit and big heart I will most sorely miss. This wit contributed one of the best eponymic slogans ever—*Schick Happens*—a phrase now emblazoned on tee shirts worn by Schick Gallery workers, exhibiting artists, and friends. And the big heart—well, if you have Trish on your side, you have a steadfast supporter, and everything you do together will be better for her involvement.” Trish and Rebecca co-curated *Indelible* in 2020 and, along with Art Department faculty members and Rebecca, Trish worked on: *7 Metalsmiths at Work*, *Parallel Play*, *True to Type*, and

Alchemy of Light, as well as many faculty exhibitions, student exhibitions, and the occasional pop-up exhibition. Trish curated *Humor Me*, featuring artists Betsy Brandt, Kiah Celeste, Amy Cutler, David Greenberger, and Nina Katchadourian, in 2022.

Trish and Rebecca have co-curated many shows at the Schick with Art Department faculty, including *Indelible*, *7 Metalsmiths at Work*, *Alchemy of Light* and *Parallel Play: Works in 2-D and 3-D by Four Sculptors* as well as many faculty exhibitions, student exhibitions, and the occasional pop-up exhibition. Trish also curated *Humor Me*, featuring artists Betsy Brandt, Kiah Celeste, Amy Cutler, David Greenberger, and Nina Katchadourian, in 2022.

But these accolades on paper can only partially capture Trish’s contributions to Skidmore and to the Art Department. Like her work, she is multifaceted and multidimensional. Her colleague Matt Wilt noted that there are “too many things to say about Trish,” but tried to capture some of her qualities in a list: “passionate, compassionate, direct, funny, questioning, critical and constructive, curious, giving, seeking, deft, caring, a lover of the creatures on this planet who don’t speak with human voices, friend, commiserator, accomplice, conspirator, and fiery heart.” Trish, we will miss you on the third floor and in the gallery, and we hope you will return often to take on your newest role at Skidmore: welcome visitor, advisor, and friend.

- Sarah Sweeney, Associate Professor and Chair, Art

This tribute to Monica Raveret-Richter’s magnificent career as Skidmore’s Behavioral Ecologist begins with a “Thank You” to her spouse, native New Yorker Wayne Richter. Knowing that Monica, being from “Mwawkey” might not recognize the intrinsic attractions of Skidmore and Saratoga Springs, Wayne circled an ad in “SCIENCE”, 34 years ago, for a biology position at Skidmore, wrote “Get This Job” and luckily for us, Monica did just that. As chair of Biology at the time, I met Monica for breakfast to begin the academic courtship ritual. I watched Monica consume about three breakfasts and store some “to go” items in her bag for later. I figured she must be hungry. Only later, when she arrived with her two-week-old daughter Caitlin, did I realize she was eating for two.

It may not be coincidental that Monica is an expert in ecology and animal behavior, with a specialization in optimal foraging.

I didn't know then how well Monica's practicing what she studies would translate into her brilliant work in the field, the classroom and the lab. Any non-human primate would have approved of Monica lecturing for her first two weeks of class with her infant Caitlin in a backpack, until a spot opened up for day-care. Most faculty in the 1990's used projectors to project lecture notes. Monica used them to illustrate animal behavior using shadow-puppets. Monica's imitations of bird calls and howler monkeys could be a sound track for an Indiana Jones film. More on Indian Jones later.

Monica came to Skidmore with impeccable academic credentials in her field: A B.A. in Botany and Zoology and a Masters in Entomology from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and a Ph.D. in Neurobiology and Behavior from Cornell University. She went on to develop courses in Animal Behavior, Tropical Ecology, Tropical Field Ecology and Conservation, Conservation Ecology, Ecology, Ecology of Food, and a First Year Seminar called "What to Eat?"

Corey Freeman-Gallant notes "When reflecting on Monica's contribution to Biology, it is impossible to separate the person from the pedagogy. Whether rendering the process of meiosis into dance or reveling in the pungency of durian fruit, Monica was always all-in, bringing her whole self to her teaching so that her students could bring their whole selves to their learning. Utterly rigorous and exacting in her science and generous with her time, she set outrageously high standards for herself and her students, supporting them even as she challenged them to reach their highest potential".

Corey wasn't kidding about the durian fruit. In her chapter "Sweet Talk" from the Tang Museum catalog for the 2019 "Like Sugar" exhibit, Monica writes:

"We novices eat our durian outdoors, where the fruity overtones, sweetness, and custardy texture can be appreciated while the disagreeable sewer odor diffuses into the surroundings, instead of building to an insufferable level in the confines of the classroom. After consuming durian, many of us experience a lingering garlicky or even petrochemical taste in our mouths, periodically renewed by the "burps" it induces. "Describe the

taste of a durian" has become one of my favorite extra credit questions on tests". In light of this example, Sylvia McDevitt notes that Monica frequently invited us to sample culinary surprises after her "Food Ecology" classes.

Monica senses things that are hidden from us amateur observers of behavior. Monica once revealed, for example, that she knows who is walking behind her in the hallway without turning around and looking at them. If you're thinking part ethologist and part Jedi, you'd be leaving out Indiana Jones. She once escaped from an Anaconda in the Amazon by flattening herself against a huge tree trunk that effectively enlarged her diameter beyond the Anaconda's capacity for constriction. A colleague walking in front of her during another tropical excursion was bitten by a deadly fer-de-lance viper hanging from a tree. Monica applied emergency first-aid and calmly figured out how to navigate him to the nearest hospital that could administer the anti-venom. When the ER staff expressed skepticism about the bite being from a poisonous snake, Monica handed them the snake's head. Just another day in the field for Monica, who works extensively with bees and wasps even though she is deathly allergic to them. Suffice it to say that when Monica leads her students into the field, whether it's the cloud forest in Monteverde Costa-Rica, Barro Colorado Island in Panama, the Bronx Zoo, the Insectarium in Montreal, or the North Woods at Skidmore, they are in expert hands in more ways than one.

David Domozych notes that "Her Tropical Ecology course and especially the Costa Rica field trip are "legendary". Alumni from 10-15 years ago remark about how it transformed their education. Her preparation and implementation for the trip to the tropics was amazing." Monica likens the preparation for each of her many travel courses to Costa Rica to giving birth, thinking "why did I do this" up to the last suspense-ridden second before departure, with the answer coming from the expressions on her students faces as they step into the rain forest for the first time.

Emily Rollinson, Skidmore '09, now an Associate Professor of Biology herself, recalls Monica's impact on her career:

"I remember the first class I had with Monica - she provided a guest lecture on the diversity and importance of insects in my second semester of

introductory biology. Her passion for her subject was clear on that first day... I have fond memories of working in the classroom that we shared with the animals we studied; ...of our luck in sighting several quetzals during our Tropical Ecology trip to Costa Rica, and our efforts over the course of that week to catch a glimpse of a long-tailed manakin- it would be challenging to state in brief Monica's influence on my thinking as an ecologist and as an educator. I wish her all the best in her retirement.”

Monica has a special affinity and gift for mentoring students whose interests span both the arts and sciences. Her spouse and fellow ecologist Wayne notes that “Monica truly believes in Skidmore’s liberal arts mission of developing creative, interdisciplinary, wide-ranging young adults”. This is exemplified by a reflection from Courtney Mattison, Skidmore ’08, world-renowned sculptor and ocean conservation advocate:

“She’s such an important mentor, advocate and friend... I already knew that I wanted to study both tropical/marine biology and art, but had no clue how to combine those two seemingly disparate fields, or if I would even be allowed to pursue such an unconventional path. Her guidance was fundamental in empowering me to combine my interests through a self-determined major, exploring intersections of art and science while discovering possible routes to turn my eccentricity and passion into a career as an artist and ocean advocate. I often refer to Monica’s tropical ecology class when thinking of inspiration for new projects, both in terms of the work ethic she instilled in us as students (sit down to read with a big cup of tea!) and in terms of inspiring actual concepts behind my artwork. For example, the flamboyant characteristics of tropical forest birds representing the abundance of resources they enjoy reminds me to celebrate the wild and wonderfully vibrant ways in which nature is more creative than I could ever be. Please send my love to Monica, and thanks again for the invitation to contribute.”

Monica’s uncommon combination of academic and personal talents, and uncompromising dedication to her students and profession is most impressive, and

I’ve only mentioned a few of those qualities. David Domozych notes that “Monica's writing skills are impeccable. Her compositions for classes and papers were outstanding” and also captures another one of Monica’s incomparable qualities: “Monica is one of the most compassionate humans one will ever meet. In times of crisis or sickness, she is always at the forefront of helping- whether delivering meals, substituting in classes, providing beautiful flowers- She is an inspiration”.

Monica has more than enough talents and wide-ranging life experiences to have had many other careers- food taster, scientific illustrator, folk singer, master chef, to name a few- but to do justice to the depth and breadth of Monica’s contributions to her students, to science and to The College, her career can only be fully appreciated by comparison to some of her peers: Monica is part Mother Teresa, but more humble; part Joan of Arc, but more subtle; she channels Charles Darwin, Dr. Doolittle and Rachel Carlson as Skidmore Professors, and Julia Childs as a food ecologist and chef in her own right (who has been known, with Wayne, to drive to Montreal just for dessert or really good cheese). But I submit that in reality, Monica is the Clarence Obody (Guardian Angel to George Bailey in “It’s a Wonderful Life”) of Biology: Monica is Guardian Angel to the Earth’s ecosystem that sustains life on the planet. Monica has the supernatural ability to teach her students the difference between *Homo sapiens* as part of nature, vs. *Homo sapiens* apart from nature. Monica herself provides the best salutation for her own retirement citation- from her 2019 article “Love of Home” in Orion Magazine:

“In these turbulent times, when storms inundate homes and land, we philopatric humans negotiate the pull of place. Pictures aching with devastation entwine with narratives of resolve to return and rebuild. Philopatry binds us to familiar habitat and offers opportunities for collaboration with kin and community. But in a pond or on a planet in transition, with shifting seasonality, more frequent and intense storms, how do we balance connection to a place with increased risk, or with growing mismatch between organisms and habitat? When do we stay, mine our resilience, and develop a different relationship with a changing place? When is it

time to seek new neighborhoods, cultivate new alliances?"

I have here an Arcosanti bell, cast in bronze, from the Arcosanti foundation, "dedicated to sustainability through experimental architecture and agriculture"- each bell a true "original", like Monica. To paraphrase Clarence Obody- "Every time you hear a bell ring, it means that some angel's just got her wings." Monica, this bell's for you.

- Bernie Possidente, Professor, Biology

Patti Murray Steinberger received her undergraduate degree in Biology from Le Moyne College, Syracuse, NY (Minors: Chemistry and Philosophy). She continued her education at Cornell University, Ithaca, NY. Here, she specialized in Microbiology, with minors in Biochemistry and Virology, cumulating in her theses: "Physiological effects of ammonium limitation on two different strains of *Methanosarcina*". While pursuing her graduate degree Patti was a graduate teaching assistant and teaching fellow.

After receiving her Ph.D., Patti worked as Research Associate at Michigan State University and the New York State Department of Health and held teaching positions at Rutgers University (New Brunswick NJ); Siena College (Loudonville, NY), Albany College of Pharmacy (Albany, NY), and College of St. Rose (Albany, NY), before joining the Biology Faculty at Skidmore College in Fall 2007.

Patti's teaching responsibilities within Biology started with teaching the Intro Bio labs, and development of laboratory exercises for new Introductory Biology courses following departmental revisions to the major requirements. Patti soon also became responsible for the continued development and delivery of one of Biology's non-majors lab science courses, *Microbes and Society*. And while this course was "on the books", Patti continuously thought to improve and update both content and delivery. More than one science major started their college experience in *Microbes and Society*, and "got hooked". Patti incorporated a fermented food lab, including some more odorous cheeses and less known foods, demonstrating the importance of microbiology in our daily lives outside the well-known issue of diseases. She also added "chalk talks", to keep students abreast with current developments in microbiology, encouraging them to

become lifelong science learners. As fellow microbiologist, Sylvia McDevitt fondly remembers the shared emails of some exciting microbes in the news.

A similar approach was taken, when teaching the 200-level *General Microbiology* labs. Once again, Patti not only taught the existing labs, but throughout the years found ways to improve the students' experience in said labs. It was also *General Microbiology* labs Patti taught when we went to remote learning due to COVID in Spring 2020 and she moved some of the exercises to her house to demonstrate the experimental set up via zoom. With social distancing in effect in Fall of 2020, Patti found creative ways to engage students in online labs, while also ensuring that all students in the class collect their own microbes, get some hands-on lab time, and learn some of the essential standard microbiology techniques. Not an easy task with an overenrolled course and seating capacity reduced to 30%.

One story from Patti's early teaching career at Skidmore shared by Denise McQuade demonstrates Patti's devotion to her students:

"I distinctly recall a conversation I had with Patti, shortly after she began teaching in the Biology Department. She was teaching multiple laboratory sections of our introductory course for Biology Majors and she came to me with a question: did I review students' lab reports prior to submission. I'm certain I told her, "no"; students were welcome to bring their reports to my office hours and we could go over them together, but I did not have time to pre-read and comment on their papers before submission. She said that she'd already been willing to do that for one student, and what she'd done for one, she'd have to do for all. Needless to say, she donated a lot of time to pre-reading submissions that semester!"

Patti's willingness to "bend over backwards" and "go the extra mile" for her students characterizes her approach to teaching. She's at her best working directly with students, whether instructing in the lab, assisting students during office hours, meeting with HPAC advisees, or supervising student workers. For many years, she did all the hiring and bookkeeping for the student employees. Because she invested so much time with the Lab Teaching Assistants and prep students, she was often called upon to write letters of

recommendation. That's in addition to what she wrote for her HPAC advisees, a position she had for over a decade.

Throughout her teaching career, Patti did not only challenge her students, but had the greatest emotional and empathetic connections with the students. If one of her students experienced a personal or health issue that prevented them from attending lab, she'd help them make up missed work on her own time. If they were having difficulty with an assignment, she'd let them work on it in her office. As a mom of four, she treated students with the same compassion that she'd want her own children to be treated. And as Josh Ness puts it: "She's intensely protective of them and they recognized that."

Patti's empathy and willingness to lend a helping hand is not just reserved for her students, but extends to her colleagues as well. Be it teaching an overload while also training two part-time new colleagues in BI 107 to ensure all lab sections were covered due to medical leaves. Frequently checking in with a colleague going through a difficult time, sharing some of her own experiences, and picking up some of the workload. Or being, as usual, still in the lab/her office late at night and willing/happy to help out if one of us forgot something. We can email Patti - chances are that even if it's 8 pm, she is on campus and happy to send something to the printer, transfer a PCR reaction to the freezer, or take something out of the autoclave.

Patti's empathy and compassion have made a world of a difference to her colleagues, and she will be missed dearly. Knowing Patti, we are assured that she will find some venue to continue to share her excitement about microbiology with others. For all Patti has done for us in her seventeen years in the Biology department we offer her our sincere thanks and wish her the best in this next stage of her life.

- Sylvia McDevitt, Associate Professor, Biology

When he arrived at Skidmore College in Fall 1988, Professor David Vella was already well on his way to becoming the teacher-scholar he is today. After completing degrees in mathematics, including a B.A. from American International College and a Ph.D. from the University of Virginia, David went on to complete a research fellowship at the California Institute of Technology and teaching visits at the University of Notre Dame and Bowdoin College. At Skidmore, David became

an inspiring instructor and cultivated his scholarship into a fruitful feeding ground for students.

One of David's most compelling activities as a teacher-scholar has been his involvement in undergraduate research. As his long-time colleague Professor Emeritus Mark Huibregtse observed, "David has had extraordinary success as a mentor to future mathematicians through undergraduate research." David's most visible contribution began in 1993, when he co-founded the Hudson River Undergraduate Math Conference (HRUMC), an annual mathematics conference designed primarily for students. HRUMC welcomes undergraduate students to the mathematics community and provides them with an opportunity to network and attend and/or give research or expository talks on mathematics. As Mark Huibregtse describes, "HRUMC has become a national model that spawned other such conferences." For over 30 years, David has worked tirelessly and enthusiastically to sustain, support, and promote undergraduate research in mathematics at HRUMC. He has been a co-organizer, session chief, speaker, and sponsor of student lectures at dozens of HRUMC conferences across the Northeast, including several that were hosted at Skidmore.

In addition to promoting student research, David is also remarkably creative and energetic in his own scholarship in algebraic group theory, and more recently, game theory and generating functions. His latest and most ambitious scholarly project culminated in his newly published book titled *Invitation to Linear Programming and Game Theory*, a topic that David originally developed for a series of departmental courses called "Mathematics in Context" and taught many times in his Scribner Seminar titled "Serious Games: Conflict, Voting, and Power." The numerous articles he has written over the years cover a variety of topics in mathematics and mathematics education and have appeared in reputable journals like the *Journal of Algebra*, *Journal für die Reine und Angewandte Mathematik*, and *Memoirs of the American Mathematical Society*. Even now, on the eve of his retirement, he has three papers and another book in progress. David has also refereed and reviewed dozens of textbooks and journal articles and attended and lectured at 60+ conferences, workshops, symposia, and colloquia. His mathematical presentations always exhibit clarity of thought and tremendous enthusiasm, and when others lecture, he is the most likely one in the room to ask incisive questions.

Inside the classroom, David has inspired the intellectual growth and mathematical maturity of generations of students with his relaxed enthusiasm and approachability. He has taught nearly every mathematics course in the Department, including a total of 29 different preps and several courses he developed himself, as well as numerous Honors Forum courses, Scribner Seminars, and liberal

studies and interdisciplinary courses. While many faculty members prefer repeat preps, David thrives on variety and often chooses to teach 5 different mathematics courses every year and even 6 if he is doing an overload. Typical characterizations of David's teaching by students and faculty suggest that he "makes math fun", "is an excellent explainer," and "exemplifies the supportive and challenging ideal." Many students have been amazed by how much time David devotes to them, with extended conversations often lasting long after office hours have ended. Many more have remarked on his capacity to make them to *want* to learn mathematics. As one student put it, "He inspired me to love math."

Through his dedication and hard work, David has supervised 32 independent studies and 13 senior theses. According to these students, David's thesis advising inspired several of them to pursue graduate degrees in mathematics and others to pursue successful careers in mathematics outside academia. Alumna Bond Caldaro '04 best describes the student experience with David:

"I did not just learn math from Professor Vella, I learned how to learn – how to build a mental model of complex systems, problem solve creatively, and apply rigorous logic to my thinking – all of which allowed me to pursue a successful career in mathematics. The endless lecture preparations, grading of assignments, office hours, and thesis meetings must have seemed tedious, but sometimes those hours are what set a student out on a lifelong path of intellectual satisfaction, a good career, and in turn, a good quality of life. It was certainly the case for me, and certainly for many other students. I will always be grateful and indebted to Professor Vella."

In addition to his teaching, research, and mentoring activities, David has served the Department and the College in many ways. He was department chair from 2014 to 2018 and charter member and director of the Honors Forum from 2007 to 2011. He has served on and/or chaired numerous departmental and college committees, including six search committees. In 1997, he established our local chapter of Pi Mu Epsilon, the national mathematics honor society, and for the past 27 years, he has served in various capacities, as faculty advisor, permanent faculty correspondent, and liaison to the national organization. Over the course of many summers, David also taught mathematics courses in the Johns Hopkins Center for Talented Youth (CTY) Summer Program at Skidmore College and Hong Kong University.

Since 1991, David has served as the local proctor for the annual W. L. Putnam Mathematical Competition, widely considered to be the most prestigious undergraduate-level

competition in the world. The Putnam Competition is a one-day, six-hour exam that consists of extremely challenging math problems, with a typical median score of zero out of 120. In fact, in 2007, with colleagues at three of our peer institutions – Colgate University, Hamilton College, and St. Lawrence University – David started a sub-competition called the Snow Bowl, a contest whereby the math department whose top three individuals earn the highest combined score on the Putnam exam takes possession of the Snow Bowl Trophy. The success of the Skidmore problem solvers in both competitions is due in no small measure to their participation in the Skidmore Problem Solving Group (now a Skidmore Honors Forum course) that David also created. Since 1992, this group has been solving difficult journal problems, and over the years, has submitted scores of correct solutions, many of which have been published in various journals.

David has contributed so much to the intellectual life of the Department and Skidmore that it's hard to imagine this place without him. He is an incredibly talented mathematician, with an enormous enthusiasm for mathematics. We will miss his curiosity, his creativity, and his sense of humor. We can't wait to see what he does next. Whatever it is, math is sure to be involved. We wish you, David, the very best in your new role as Professor Emeritus of Mathematics.

- *Julie Douglas, Professor and Chair, Mathematics and Statistics*