

Robert K. Ritner

Robert Ritner's most visible role during the past year was as the featured speaker of the donors' reception for the inauguration of Robert Zimmer, incoming President of the University of Chicago, held at The Field Museum on October 26. His lecture, entitled "Tutankhamun for the Twenty-first Century: Modern Misreadings of an Ancient Culture," defended the significance of ancient Egyptian culture against errors in the popular press and was published online on the Ori-

ental Institute Web site: http://oi.uchicago.edu/OI/IS/RITNER/Zimmer_Lecture_2006.html, and in the *University of Chicago Record*, December 7, 2006, pp. 8–10. By request, it appeared also on the North Texas American Research Center in Egypt Web site: www.arce-ntexas.org.

This was but one of many lectures given this past year. On October 14, for the Seventh Chicago-Johns Hopkins Theban Workshop, “Perspectives on Ptolemaic Thebes,” Ritner spoke on “Ptolemy IX (Soter II) at Thebes,” surveying the often faulty modern copies of this king’s historical records at the once great city, which was devastated by civil war during this reign. The text of the lecture will be published in a forthcoming conference volume by the Oriental Institute. At the Egyptian embassy in Washington, D.C., on April 27, he lectured on “Magic and Medicine in Theory and Practice in Ancient Egypt” for the Washington chapter of the American Research Center in Egypt. The next day, he provided a five lecture, all-day seminar for the chapter on “Creation Stories,” “How a Temple Works,” “The Great Deities of Mythology,” “The Impact of Egyptian Religion,” and “The Function of Egyptian Art.” On May 14, he discussed “An Introduction to Ancient Egyptian Religion and Magic” for the Oriental Institute Volunteers.

Ritner lectured daily for the Oriental Institute from March 11 through 27, when he led “The Wonders of Ancient Egypt” tour, which featured both famous highlights and lesser-known, but highly significant, Egyptian monuments from Cairo to Abu Simbel. He then returned to Luxor for a week to assist Chicago House with the interpretation of Ptolemaic hieroglyphs carved in the remodeled Eighteenth Dynasty temple at Medinet Habu.

In addition to the publications noted above, his study “‘And Each Staff Transformed into a Snake’: The Serpent Wand in Ancient Egypt,” was published in *Through a Glass Darkly: Magic, Dreams and Prophecy in Ancient Egypt*, edited by K. Szpakowska (Wales: University of Swansea). Brief articles on “Seti I” and “Ramses II” appeared in *World Book Encyclopedia*, and he completed a manuscript on “Graffiti and Ostraca in the Tomb of Nespakashuty” for New York’s Metropolitan Museum of Art.

During the course of the year, he served as a photographic contributor for the University of Pennsylvania Museum’s publication *Akhenaton and Tutankhamun*, a translator for the Frank H. McClung Museum (Knoxville, Tennessee), a publication referee for University College London, and the American member of the Academic Review Committee for the 10th International Congress of Egyptologists, to be held in Rhodes. Beyond teaching and university committee duties, Ritner served his final year as Graduate Counselor for the ancient fields in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations.
