

# DEVELOPMENT

WALLY VERDOOREN, MATTHEW WELTON, POLINA KASIAN,  
AND ALI MALLET

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The Oriental Institute's Development program team oversees and manages all activities related to philanthropic support, membership programming, and special events. These three interrelated and collaborative areas of activities work together to build and integrate a more strategic and effective approach to attracting, sustaining, expanding, and strengthening a base of partners and supporters committed to advancing the OI's mission and goals. The Development program's efforts were particularly important in the previous fiscal year, since it also marked the OI's centennial, which was celebrated and commemorated with a yearlong series of enhanced fundraising appeals, special events, and heightened promotions.

In addition, it is extremely important to note that the final four months of fiscal year 2020 (spanning July 1, 2019, through June 30, 2020) were adversely affected by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in severe health and economic challenges on local and worldwide levels. This crisis created great financial stress for almost every business corporation, educational institution, and nonprofit organization, which certainly includes the OI. The work of OI scholars, staff, and students was impacted profoundly, as were the efforts of the Development team. While this section of the OI Annual Report will once again conclude with the honor roll of donors and members, we want to recognize and thank our many partners and supporters at the start of this report as well, for providing, renewing, and often increasing their annual philanthropic contributions during this very difficult year. Now more than ever, the OI's research pursuits and educational programs would not be possible without your steadfast financial commitment to our mission.

The OI Development team comprises:

- Wally Verdooren, director of development
- Matt Welton, associate director of membership programming, marketing, and communications
- Polina Kasian, assistant director of development and events
- Ali Mallett, digital marketing and member engagement manager

Of note, Matt Welton and Ali Mallett received well-deserved promotions and title changes during the previous fiscal year, which recognized their expanded roles overseeing the OI's communications efforts in both the print and the digital realms. The OI Development team works across the organization with senior administrative leaders, faculty, researchers, program staff, Advisory Council members, and other volunteers, as well as with colleagues in the University of Chicago's Alumni Relations and Development Office to advance the important philanthropic, membership, and community-engagement efforts of the OI.

## PHILANTHROPIC SUPPORT

Throughout the preceding fiscal year, the OI's many members and partners generously supported our mission to heighten the scholarly understanding of the ancient Middle East through research initiatives, cultural preservation efforts, educational programming, and the OI Museum and its collections. Contributions from the Advisory Council, annual members, volunteers, and other donors continue to maintain and strengthen the OI's standing as the world's leading center for scholarship on the ancient Middle East. Significant philanthropic achievements during the previously completed program year include the following:

\* FRP is the total combined dollar amount of all new gifts, memberships, multi-year pledges, and documented estate commitments received during the fiscal year.

- The OI had a \$38 million goal as part of The University of Chicago Campaign: Inquiry & Impact. This university-wide and multi-year fundraising drive ended on December 31, 2019, and the OI surpassed its overall \$38 million goal by securing a total of \$40,402,259 in new gifts, multi-year pledges, and documented estate commitments over the campaign period. Of note, the OI began its participation in the University of Chicago campaign with an initial overall goal of securing \$20 million in new gifts, multi-year pledges, and documented estate commitments, and thus ended the campaign by securing more than double its original goal.

While surpassing its University of Chicago campaign goal is noteworthy, the OI's fundraising work remains a top priority and continues to move forward at an accelerated pace. At the start of the 2018–19 fiscal year, the OI's leadership decided to extend its campaign period through the end of calendar year 2020, embarking on its special Centennial Campaign, which sought to leverage the many commemorative activities and heightened institutional visibility of the OI during its one hundredth anniversary year. The campaign set an increased goal of securing at least \$10 million in new gifts, memberships, multi-year pledges, and documented estate commitments between July 2018 and December 2020. In the first year of the Centennial Campaign (Fiscal Year 2019 spanning July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019), the OI received a total \$4,424,904 in new gifts, pledges, and estate commitments toward the \$10 million goal. In the second year of the campaign that also encompassed the OI centennial year celebration (fiscal year 2020 spanning July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020), the OI secured an additional \$6,609,596 in new gifts, pledges, and estate commitments, bringing the Centennial Campaign fundraising total to \$11,034,500 as of June 30, 2020. The initial total goal was



Photo: Joe Mazza.

surpassed with six months still remaining in the campaign period, and the OI's Development team remains hard at work and committed to exceeding its campaign goal even further. For anyone interested in learning more about the OI Centennial Campaign and its giving priorities and opportunities, please contact [oi-development@uchicago.edu](mailto:oi-development@uchicago.edu) or 773-702-5062.

- The chart below provides a comparison summary of fundraising results in key giving categories over the last two fiscal years, and all the categories of philanthropic revenue represented in these figures are making the OI's important work possible.

<i>Fundraising Giving Categories</i>	<i>FY 2018-19 \$ Amounts</i>	<i>FY 2019-20 \$ Amounts</i>
Fund Raising Progress (FRP)*	\$4,424,904	\$6,609,596
Expendable Cash	\$2,272,000	\$2,061,327
Realized Bequests	\$406,685	\$291,173
Payments on Multi-Year Pledges	\$1,348,838	\$1,392,960
New Pledge Commitments	\$1,839,160	\$4,006,170
New Deferred Gifts and Documented Bequests	\$1,600,000	\$1,297,000

\*All these philanthropic achievements during the 2019-20 program year provided the OI with essential resources for continued scholarly and programmatic growth, and this growth is only possible through the ongoing commitment and support of the OI's many members and partners.

## MEMBERSHIP PROGRAMMING

Our OI members continue to be a highly engaged group of individuals, dedicated to exploring the scholarship of the ancient Middle East. While the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a small dip in both renewals and new member acquisitions during April and May, June saw membership numbers rise to heightened levels, even showing an increase in new memberships. Before COVID-19, member retention remained strong. Fiscal year 2019-20 saw an increase in membership levels, with a great number of patrons moving up from the individual and family levels to the higher Supporting Associates level and James Henry Breasted Society. The OI Centennial Campaign and recent expanded online programming have resulted in a far broader member reach that extends beyond the greater Chicago area, allowing us to engage with patrons globally. The OI is excited to welcome each of our new members into this diverse community of dedicated individuals and inquisitive supporters intent on furthering our mission to advance and communicate the research and discovery of the ancient Middle East.

Thanks to the support of our members, we were able to continue with the tradition of providing free daily museum admission, as well as free monthly lectures presented by world-renowned scholars that are open to the public at large, both in person and online. Membership support has enabled us to effortlessly transition OI programming online when first the museum galleries and then the entire building closed due to social distancing orders caused by the pandemic.

The centennial year saw the implementation of our new Members' Film Series. During the 2019-20 academic year, we explored one hundred years of mainstream Technicolor epics, celebrating the myth of discovery and Hollywood's fascination with the ancient Middle East. We kicked our series off with a very successful festival celebrating the OI's most famous fictional alumnus, Indiana Jones. Sponsored by the Randi Rubovitz-Seitz Foundation, this weekend-long festival included a 35

## DEVELOPMENT | EVENTS AND LECTURES

mm screening of *Raiders of the Lost Ark* in partnership with DOC Films, screenings of *Indiana Jones and Temple of Doom* and *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* in Breasted Hall, conversations and presentations by contemporary archaeologists and scholars, docent-led tours, a trivia contest, and a celebratory pizza party. Other films in our 2019–20 series included the 1959 Hammer film *The Mummy*; the 1959 epic *Ben-Hur*, introduced by OI professor Theo van den Hout; the documentary film *Afro Iranian Lives*; and the Black Speculative Arts Film Festival, featuring new works inspired by ancient traditions. The films *The Adventures of Prince Achmed* and *Lawrence of Arabia* were scheduled as part of this new Members' Film Series, but these screenings had to be cancelled due to the COVID-19 campus closures.

To celebrate our centennial year Members' Lecture series, we began livestreaming all of our OI Members' Lectures, giving all of our members, regardless of geographical location, the chance to experience and enjoy every lecture in real time as they happened. Livestreaming continued on after museum galleries and Breasted Hall closed in March due to the pandemic, with our at-home Members' Lectures premiering on the OI YouTube channel, allowing us to reach a global audience. We will continue livestreaming each Members' Lecture in the 2020–21 academic year, and each lecture will remain up on YouTube for members to enjoy at their leisure.

Membership support has also allowed us an opportunity to enhance our podcast offerings. In 2020 we purchased new microphones and recording equipment for our OI podcast series. While the University of Chicago's campus closure put a pause on many of our planned member activities, we transitioned our podcast recording to an at-home production, using Zoom to record, which allows us to combine audio and video, resulting in our successful *Awakening the Dead for Love* series on OI YouTube. The OI's Robert Ritner, Rowe Professor of Egyptology, and Foy Scalf, head of the OI Research Archives, joined OI podcast host Steven Townshend for an at-home YouTube discussion surrounding an ancient Egyptian love spell recently translated and published by Ritner and Scalf. Of note, the first recorded podcast of this series had more than twenty thousand views by the end of June 2020. We have a continuing series of OI podcasts planned for the coming fiscal year, in a series that allows us to explore the ongoing research of OI faculty and staff during and despite the pandemic campus closure.

The OI is immensely thankful for the new and renewed support of our members. The continued investment and advocacy of our members allows us to continue on with our scholarship and research in these uncertain times, helping us to share OI discoveries with the world. Necessity has dictated that we transition from in-person to online programming and engagement and, in doing so, we find that we are now able to reach audiences in virtually every country, truly bringing the work of the OI to a global audience. We have seen an increase in international memberships during this period of online engagement, and we are excited to see how this expanded international reach will positively impact our member community and programming. Additional OI membership highlights over the past year included the following:

## MEMBERS' LECTURES

We presented our Centennial Year Members' Lecture series during the 2019–20 academic school year. In-person lecture attendance continued with strong numbers as we offered each lecture for live streaming online. Our centennial year series focused on our own world-renowned OI scholars and the OI's global research over the past one hundred years. While the COVID-19 crisis caused us to cease in-person lectures in Breasted Hall by April, we were able to pick up once again in May with at-home Members' Lectures presented on YouTube. Due to the COVID-19 campus closure, David Schloen's scheduled lecture in April 2020 will be rescheduled during the 2020–21 academic year.

Member support is directly responsible for funding lecture honorariums, speaker travel costs, food and drink for receptions, logistical expenses, and now, at-home recording equipment. Without member support, we would not be able to provide free lectures to the general public, both in person and online. We thank each member for their ongoing generosity and commitment toward these OI public learning and education opportunities.

Our Members' Lectures for the 2019–20 academic year included:

- Ayelet Gilboa, “The Rise of Ancient Israel and Other Problematic Entities: An Archaeological Perspective” (October 2, 2019)
- McGuire Gibson, “The OI in Iraq” (November 6, 2019)
- Martha Roth, “On Judicial Violence in Mesopotamia: The Problem of an Eye for an Eye” (March 4, 2020)
- Yorke Rowan, “Petroglyphs and Kites in the Black Desert, Jordan: Connecting Art and Landscape” (at-home lecture premiered on OI YouTube, May 20, 2020)
- W. Raymond Johnson, “Medinet Habu and Tel el-Amarna: Tales of Blocks and Towers” (at-home lecture premiered on OI YouTube, June 10, 2020)

Each lecture from our 2019–20 season, as well as a variety of archived lectures, are available to view at your leisure on the OI YouTube channel and are easily found by typing “Oriental Institute Lectures” at the YouTube site.

In addition to our Members' Lectures, members were also invited to attend a number of named lectures and special event lectures that took place during the past year; and each of these special lectures is described in the Special Events section of this Annual Report.

We would like to extend a very special word of thanks to each of our lecturers over this past year. While we are not certain whether in-person lectures will take place at the OI during the 2020–21 academic year due to the ongoing pandemic's social distancing measures still in place throughout the



Photo: Charissa Johnson Photography.

## DEVELOPMENT | YOUNG PROFESSIONALS



Photo: Charissa Johnson Photography.

autumn quarter of 2020, we are planning live at-home YouTube lectures each month, continuing the tradition of bringing a varied selection of the most recent and pioneering work and scholarship on the ancient Middle East to our members and our community. Each future lecture will be announced online, in emails, and in *News & Notes*.

## YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

The OI's Young Professionals (YP) group continues to be a vibrant community of young adults engaged with the discovery and exploration of the ancient Middle East. YP members are valuable ambassadors who support the overall mission and programs of the OI. This special membership category is designed to give emerging business and civic leaders a meaningful way to engage with the OI. YP membership is intended for anyone between the ages of twenty-one and forty-five who would like to learn more and engage with scholarship on the ancient Middle East while participating in exclusive social and volunteer activities with some of the world's foremost academics in their fields.

Unfortunately, the Young Professionals season was cut short, with several event cancellations caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. We did sponsor *Mummies and Martinis* on October 24, 2019, a very successful pre-Halloween happening that brought a great number of new patrons into the museum galleries. The evening included Halloween-themed beverages and appetizers, costumes, a DJ set, and small-group tours of the Egyptian Galleries. The YP also sponsored the lecture and discussion, "Star Wars and Religion," presented by the University of Chicago Divinity School's Russell Johnson on December 17, 2020 (which is available to view on the OI YouTube Channel).



Photo: Charissa Johnson Photography.

## MEMBERS' PUBLICATIONS

*News & Notes*, the OI members' quarterly magazine, continued publication throughout the 2019–20 fiscal year. The principal intention of recent issues of *News & Notes* is to retain a scholarly tone while making the publication attractive and accessible to a broader audience.

*News & Notes* is designed and produced by the OI Publications staff. We are especially grateful to Charissa Johnson and Rebecca Cain for their hard work, dedication, and creativity as we produced the most recent issue at home. In addition to the OI Publications team, we would like to thank each of the faculty, staff, graduate students, and research associates who contributed to articles and thereby provided engaging and educational content for every issue.

## MEMBER TRAVEL

The COVID-19 pandemic caused the postponement of all planned member tours and travel after February 2020. Our scheduled Turkey and Greece tour to be led by Theo van Den Hout of the OI and Seth Estrin from the University of Chicago's renowned Art History Department has been postponed until spring 2021. Scheduled members' trips to the Nefertari Exhibit at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City with Foy Scalf and The Met in New York City with David Schloen have both been postponed to future dates. Future OI tours to Egypt, the Mediterranean, and Israel have been postponed until travel is once again safe to resume.

We were fortunate to embark on our members' tour to Egypt in November of 2019, prior to the cessation of travel due to the global pandemic. Emily Teeter led a sold-out tour of Egypt that included an extensive exploration of Amarna and Middle Egypt, as well as a post-tour excursion to Alexandria. A highlight of the trip included a very special Thanksgiving dinner at Chicago House in



Photo: Charissa Johnson Photography.

Luxor, Egypt, hosted by W. Raymond Johnson, director of the Epigraphic Survey, and his staff. Travelers cruised the surreal landscape of Lake Nasser, explored sites of ancient Nubia, and wondered at the vast expanse of a desert landscape that once held Akhenaten's grand city; they were able to get up close to one of the world's most legendary monuments, with exclusive access to the base of the Sphinx enclosure; they approached Abu Simbel from the water; and they relaxed in style at the world-famous Old Cataract Hotel in Aswan. Tour participants received once-in-a-lifetime access to closed-off areas not available to the general public and to special on-site guided tours by scholarly luminaries in the field of Egyptology and archaeology. A pre-tour visit included an in-depth look at Islamic Cairo and ancient Saqaara, while a post-tour excursion brought travelers face to face with the Roman era and the modern stylings of coastal Alexandria. Our OI tour members bonded over their journey and were able to get together virtually over Zoom for tour-group reunions during the pandemic period, recounting their adventures in the ancient lands of the pharaohs.

OI travel programs are unique in that our tour participants experience exclusive site visits and on-site learning privileges unavailable to other institutions or travel groups. Our members learn directly from some of the most eminent scholars in the world associated with the OI, and they visit sites the OI has been excavating and researching for decades (and sometimes for almost a century). While our travels are currently on hold due to the global pandemic, do keep an eye out for some of our most ambitious tours yet, including an in-depth examination of Phoenician sites and culture that will take us from Beirut to Spain. OI tours often sell out quickly. To be placed on our early tour notification list, please email [oi-membership@uchicago.edu](mailto:oi-membership@uchicago.edu). We look forward to traveling with you in the future!





Photo: Charissa Johnson Photography.

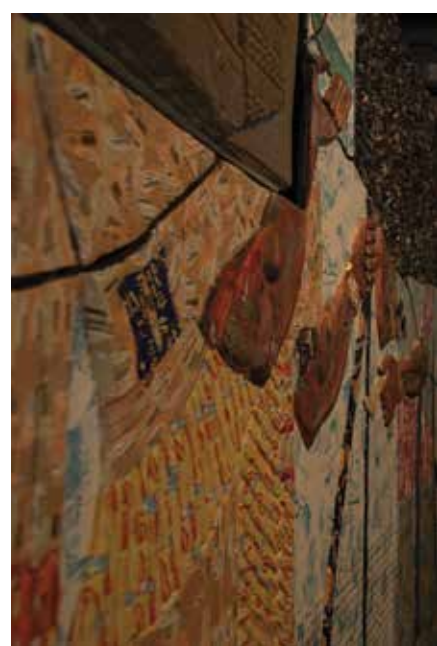
## SPECIAL EVENTS

The 2019–20 fiscal and program year saw us celebrating our OI Centennial, with a variety of special events offered for members, supporters, and the general public. Our Centennial Gala kicked off the year-long celebration in style, with our OI community coming together to commemorate the immense one-hundred-year impact that the OI has had on the scholarship of the ancient Middle East. In addition, and with the generous assistance of OI faculty and staff, the OI organized several centennial year events, some of which were unfortunately postponed or moved online due to the COVID-19 campus closure beginning in March of 2020. Please check our website, *News & Notes*, and various emails and digital notices for events and programs online and, eventually in the future, on-site at the OI. The previous 2019–20 program year included the following notable OI special events:

### ***OI Centennial Gala***

On September 14, 2019, the OI launched its centennial year with a formal gala on the University of Chicago campus. This became the largest gala event in the OI’s history, with more than four hundred guests in attendance and more than \$375,000 secured in sponsorships and ticket sales. Both the number of guests and the amount of dollars raised were more than double those of the previous OI gala in 2017. All event proceeds benefitted the OI’s ongoing research pursuits, archaeological expeditions, museum collections, and educational programs.

The event hosted the OI’s most important and prominent donors, senior executives and Board members of the University of Chicago, world-renowned archaeologists and researchers of the ancient Middle East, and other longtime and new supporters. Distinguished guests included: co-chairs John and Jeanne Rowe and Norman and Virginia Bobins; honorary chairs Ned and Miki Jannotta; University of Chicago leaders including President Robert J. Zimmer, Provost Daniel Diermeier, Vice President





## DEVELOPMENT | SPECIAL EVENTS

for Alumni Relations and Development Sharon Marine, and Vice President for Communications Paul M. Rand. The James Henry Breasted Medallion was awarded to Howard E. Hallengren, and he was joined at the gala by former Breasted Medallion recipients Lewis and Misty Gruber (2017), Thomas C. Heagy (2015), Jeanne M. and John W. Rowe (2013), O. J. Sopranos (2011), Janet Helman (2000), and Jill Carlotta Maher (1997, the first recipient of the Breasted Medallion).

The evening began with a lavish reception featuring cocktails and hors d'oeuvres in the historic and newly renovated OI museum. A dinner with full beverage service took place in a large tent enclosure on the main campus quadrangle directly across the street from the OI. Director Christopher Woods welcomed guests and spoke about the OI's history, founder James Henry Breasted's legacy, the OI's past one hundred years of research and fieldwork, and its vision for the next century. Following the remarks, Woods presented the 2019 James Henry Breasted Medallion to Howard E. Hallengren, the principal benefactor for the OI Museum's Gallery Enhancements Project and a Life Member of the OI's Advisory Council. Named in honor of the OI's visionary founder, the Breasted Medallion recognizes longstanding and distinguished volunteer service and philanthropic commitment to the OI. Woods also announced the inaugural Rowe Professor in Egyptology, which was awarded to OI professor Robert K. Ritner. The evening concluded with a sumptuous dessert and cocktail reception and dancing beneath the stars.

### ***Public Celebration of the OI Centennial***

On September 28, 2020, the OI continued its centennial programming with a free public celebration. Our faculty, curators, and staff greeted visitors in the newly renovated museum galleries and talked about artifacts from the collection, exhibition displays, current research projects, and past and current excavations conducted by

#### PREVIOUS PAGE:

Top Row: Photos by Anne Ryan.  
Middle Row: Photos by John Zich.  
Bottom Row: Left photo by John Zich; center and right photos by Anne Ryan.

#### BELOW:

Photo by Anne Ryan.



OI archaeologists in the Middle East. In addition to tours, family activities were also offered to inter-generational groups of attendees.

### ***Special Tour and Reception for the Friends of Louvre***

On September 26, 2019, we welcomed the Friends of the Louvre—a group of American supporters of the Louvre museum—to the OI’s museum galleries. OI Curator Kiersten Neumann led a special tour, during which she explored the OI’s connections with the Musée du Louvre. Of particular note, she featured the excavations carried out by the French and the OI at the site of Khorsabad (ancient Dur-Sharrukin) in Iraq, with several OI museum exhibits showcasing major artifacts from this archaeological work. She also spoke of collaborative projects between the curatorial and conservation teams at the OI and the Louvre, which also focused on the history and materials of Khorsabad. Following the tour, guests enjoyed a reception in the Edgar and Deborah Jannotta Mesopotamian Gallery.

### ***Special Programming for Chicago Architectural Biennial***

In the fall of 2019, the OI partnered with the Chicago Architectural Biennial to create special programming that featured the OI and attracted new audiences. On October 19, 2019, OI curator Kiersten Neumann led a public tour about the social imagery of an Assyrian imperial city. On November 16, University and Continuing Education Program coordinator Tasha Vorderstrasse gave a public lecture about Frank Lloyd Wright’s unrealized plans for Baghdad.

### ***The OI at 100: A Special Event for Members of Breasted Society and Library Society***

On October 15, 2019, members of the Breasted Society and the Library Society gathered at Regenstein Library for a special event co-sponsored by the OI and the University of Chicago Libraries. A special lecture was presented by OI professor Susanne Paulus that examined cuneiform tablet forgeries in both ancient and more modern periods and featured a reception celebrating the Library’s special exhibition, *Discovery, Collection, Memory: The Oriental Institute at 100*. The exhibition, curated by the OI’s head archivist Anne Flannery, was on view at the Special Collection Research Center of the Regenstein Library from September 13 through December 13, 2019.

### ***Special Lecture with James Osborne, OI, and Michel Massa, British Institute at Ankara***

The OI’s own James Osborne and the British Institute at Ankara’s Michel Massa joined us in Breasted Hall to present a lecture about exciting new archeological discoveries in Turkey. This special lecture presented new evidence for a hitherto unknown Iron Age kingdom in south-central Anatolia and provided an introduction to its mythic leader.

### ***Special Programming for the Chicago Humanities Festival***

The city-wide Chicago Humanities Festival chose the OI’s Breasted Hall as one of its venues on November 3, 2019. Following the lecture programming, University and Continuing Education Program coordinator Tasha Vorderstrasse led a special tour of the OI for attendees of the festival, where she talked about the history of early American engagement with ancient Egypt and Nubia through artifact examples from the OI’s collection.



### ***Braidwood Visiting Scholar Lecture***

Ian Hodder, professor at Stanford University and director of the Catalhöyük Archaeological Project, presented the annual Braidwood Visiting Scholar Lecture in Breasted Hall that looked at twenty-five years of research in Catalhöyük, the legendary site in modern-day Turkey. This lecture is currently available to watch on the OI YouTube channel. Ian also led several graduate-student workshops at the OI that explored his recent research.

### ***Special Art Installation Event with Ann Hamilton***

On December 11, 2019, world-renowned visual artist Ann Hamilton visited Chicago to give an exclusive presentation of *aeon*, her art installation in the Joe and Rika Mansueto Library at the University of Chicago. The installation was created in commemoration of the OI's centennial and featured large-scale translucent images of OI artifacts that were mounted on the Mansueto Library's domed glass ceiling. This special event included the artist's personal remarks before she led a tour of the installation, which was followed by a cocktail and hors d'oeuvres reception at the Edgar and Deborah Jannotta Mesopotamian Gallery of the OI Museum.

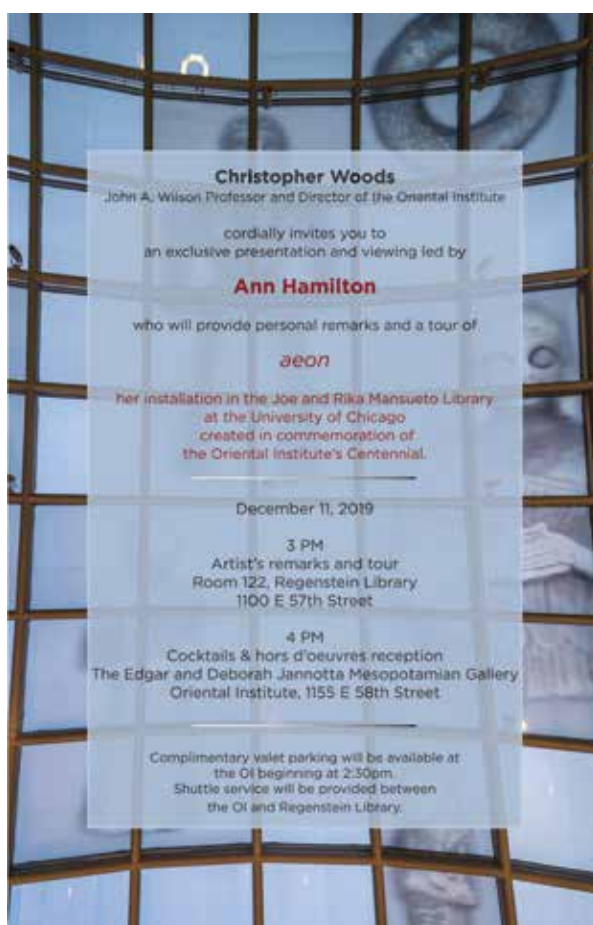




Photo: Charissa Johnson Photography.



Photo: Charissa Johnson Photography.

### ***The Marija Gimbutas Memorial Lecture***

For the second Marija Gimbutas Memorial Lecture, Petra Goedegebuure of the OI presented “Anatolians on the Move: From Kurgans to Kanesh” in Breasted Hall. This lecture—sponsored by Dr. Audrius Plioplys, a noted medical practitioner, neuroscience researcher, visual artist, and OI supporter—is currently available to watch on the OI YouTube channel.

### ***Dinner and Performance Event of An Iliad***

In commemoration of our Centennial Celebration, the OI planned an exciting collaboration with the Court Theatre—a limited run of its critically acclaimed and award-winning production of *An Iliad*, the one-man theatrical adaptation based on Homer’s *Iliad*. The distinctive feature of this show was that it was staged among the ancient artifacts and historic museum galleries of the OI rather than at the Court Theatre. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 campus closure and resulting restrictions for onsite programming resulted in the cancellation of most performances of *An Iliad*. Before this happened, a group of the OI’s supporters attended a special dinner and performance of *An Iliad* on March 7, 2020. This exclusive benefit event featured remarks made by Christopher Woods, director of the OI, and Charlie Newell, artistic director of the Court Theatre and director of the show. Following the performance in the OI Museum galleries, a cocktail and dessert reception was held for audience members to meet Timothy Edward Kane, the play’s exceptionally talented and award-winning actor.

### ***Breasted Society Salons***

OI Breasted Society Members were invited to attend a series of salons exploring current OI research in the ancient Middle East. Intended to take place in the director’s office, with dinner followed by a salon-style discussion, the events were moved online in the spring due to the COVID-19 campus closure. David Schloen’s inaugural salon was presented onsite at the OI on January 16, 2020, and featured his archaeological work in the Mediterranean concerning ancient Phoenician cultures. James Osborne presented the first at-home salon via Zoom on April 30, 2020, which focused on his recent archaeological discoveries in Turkey. Morag Kersel presented another at-home Zoom salon on June 24, 2020, discussing issues surrounding the Museum of the Bible and the related Hobby Lobby court cases. These salons are open exclusively to our Breasted Society Members.



**COURT** THEATRE

**oi**  
ORIENTAL INSTITUTE  
THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

*You are invited*

to an exclusive benefit event of the critically-acclaimed and award-winning production of

## AN ILIAD

the one-man adaptation of Homer's *Iliad*

SATURDAY, MARCH 7, 2020

5:30 pm dinner

The Edgar and Deborah Jannotta  
Mesopotamian Gallery

7:30 pm performance

The Robert and Deborah Aliber  
Persian Gallery

Cocktail reception with actor Timothy Edward Kane  
immediately following the performance

Only 34 seats will be available for this event  
Email [oi-centennial@uchicago.edu](mailto:oi-centennial@uchicago.edu) or call (773) 834-9775 to reserve your tickets today



## OI ADVISORY COUNCIL 2019–20

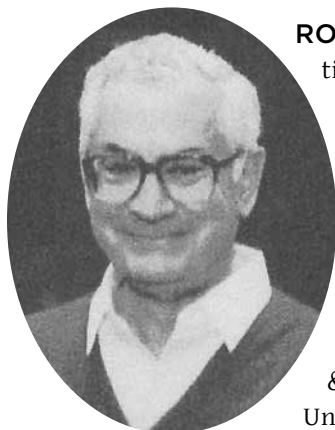
— John W. Rowe, Council Chair\* (EC) —

<p>Guity Nashat Becker Gretel Braidwood* Catherine A. Novotny Brehm Andrea Dudek (EC) Marjorie M. Fisher* Margaret E. Foorman* Isak V. Gerson* (deceased) Byron Gregory Lewis Gruber* Misty Gruber* Howard Hallengren* Deborah Halpern Rex Haydon Thomas C. Heagy* (EC) Janet W. Helman* Arthur Lee Herbst* (EC) Roger David Isaacs Barbara Schubeler Jillson Neil J. King John D. Lawrence Aldis V. Liventals Carlotta Maher* (EC)</p>	<p>John W. McCarter Jr. Susan Padula John Otto Peters III Kitty Picken* Crennan M. Ray Aimee Drolet Rossi Roberta Schaffner Robert G. Schloerb* (deceased) Lois M. Schwartz* Charles N. Secchia Coleman Seskind, M.D. O. J. Sopranos* (EC) Rebecca Wilson Stein Walter Vandaele Anna M. White Nicole S. Williams*</p>
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*\* Denotes Life Member  
(EC) identifies a member of the  
OI Advisory Council's Executive  
Committee*

## IN MEMORIAM

The Oriental Institute lost two distinguished life members of the Advisory Council during the 2019–20 academic year, and all of us at the OI gratefully honor and admire their many years of exceptional service and support.



**ROBERT G. SCHLOERB**, a life member of the Advisory Council and a longtime supporter and volunteer of the Oriental Institute, died peacefully at home on December 18, 2019, at the age of ninety-five. Bob was a University of Chicago trustee emeritus and held several other volunteer leadership positions at the university. Born in Naperville, Illinois, in 1924, he was a longtime resident of Hyde Park and a devoted supporter of the university. After earning a bachelor's degree from Oberlin College in 1948, Bob went on to serve as editor of *The Law Review* at the University of Chicago Law School, where he received his JD in 1951. Bob had a distinguished law career, serving as a senior partner at the firm Peterson, Ross, Schloerb & Seidel, and later of counsel for Peterson & Ross. Bob was elected to the University of Chicago Board of Trustees in 1983, becoming a life trustee in

1994 and a trustee emeritus in 2007. He first became a member of the OI's Visiting Committee (now Advisory Council) in 1994. Bob also served on the Medical Center Board from 1986 to 1999, becoming a life member in 1999. Like his father before him, Bob was a trustee of the Baptist Theological Union (BTU) Board at the Divinity School, serving from 1966 to 2019. He was named honorary trustee of the BTU Board in spring 2019. In addition to Bob's board service, he was a member of the Law School Council from 1983 to 1986 and also was a life member of the Divinity School Council and the Library Council.



**ISAK GERSON**, a life member of the Advisory Council and a longtime supporter of and volunteer at the Oriental Institute, passed away on April 19, 2020, at the age of ninety. Isak initially became interested in the OI when his late wife, Nancy, became a docent. The Gersons first joined the Visiting Committee (now Advisory Council) in the 1970s, when Dr. Gustavus Swift was director of the museum, and they were actively involved at the OI and the museum for the remainder of their lives. Isak was a designer of welding systems, some used in the Apollo Mission, and was a great supporter of the arts in Chicago. He was born in Athens, Greece, in 1929. As a teenager, he survived the Holocaust by escaping with his family from Nazi-controlled Greece to Turkey. After the war, he came to the United States to attend Union College, where he graduated with his bachelor's degree and then went on to earn a master's degree in engineering from Princeton University. He

began his career in Chicago, where he came to work as an electrical engineer for Sciaky Brothers. In 1964, he met Nancy at a Chicago Symphony Orchestra concert. They married and built a fulfilling life together, supporting the arts, traveling the world, and raising their children. They also continued to go to weekly CSO concerts for the rest of their marriage. In addition to the OI and the CSO, Isak was also a major supporter of The Art Institute of Chicago.



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Estate of Jean Marilyn Grant, Piedmont, California  
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