Faculty research and publications that shape their fields of inquiry remain at the heart of what the School is about—its work, purpose, values, fundamental significance and impact.

One of the ways that this is enshrined in the life of the Divinity School is a long-standing tradition of the Dean’s Forum, a conversation at a Wednesday lunch in the Common Room (immediately behind the bookcase in the foyer, a room that contains an actual hearth). Each Dean’s Forum focuses on a single recent faculty book or other publication; the usual format includes a brief authorial introduction to the book and then responses from one or more faculty colleagues who represent expertise and interests close to or far away from the subject in question. Despite the extraordinary range of faculty specialization, recurrent themes that define, inspire, haunt and embolden our work continually emerge for discussion and debate.

Discussion of Catherine Brekus’ Sarah Osborn’s World: The Rise of Evangelical Christianity in Early America went right to the heart of historiographic writing, and the role of empathy, criticism and moral evaluation in it (as raised by Sarah Hammerschlag), as well as the virtues of elegant prose writing (noted by both responses as an extraordinary quality of Brekus’ book). Like many of the faculty books and fora over the last several years the conversation on Brekus’ book raised—as underscored memorably by Susan Schreiner—the perduring question of who sets the parameters for the conversation between past and present that historical work represents: in this case about evangelicalism and liberalism and the role of religion and religious ideas in American public life. These issues and the ways in which an historian is and is not a diagnostican of her own age were keen in the discussion of Schreiner’s book, Are You Alone Wise? Debates about Certainty in the Early Modern Era, even as in conversation on Kevin Hector’s Theology without Metaphysics: God, Language, and the Spirit of Recognition and Kristine Culp’s Vulnerability and Glory: A Theological Account, studies of theological language, referentiality and metaphysics and the theology of suffering, respectively, the measured responsibilities to traditions and voices both past and present were pressed and engaged. For all four of these books the tasks of history and theology ineluctably involve serious reflection on the meanings of human suffering and human living.

Several of the fora involved powerful and evocative readings and interpretations of literary texts. In his response to François Meltzer’s Seeing Double: Baudelaire’s Modernity Michael Sells urged her to recite Baudelaire’s “À une passante” through to the final stanza:

Ailleurs, bien loin d’ici! trop tard!
jamais peut-être!
Car j’ignore où tu fusis, tu ne sais où je vais,
Ô toi que j’eusse aimée, ô toi qui le savais!

And then, after a pause, to read her own translation from Seeing Double:

Elsewhere, very far from here! Too late! Never perhaps!
I don’t know where you are fleeing, and you don’t know where I am going,
O you whom I could have loved, O you who knew it!

Continued on page 18
Divinity News and Notes

Stay up-to-date with news at the Divinity School: bookmark our website at divinity.uchicago.edu, find us on Facebook, and sign up for our weekly email on public events in Swift Hall.

Sun and Howell Join Staff

The Divinity School is pleased to welcome two familiar faces back to Swift Hall.

John Howell (PhD 2013, Religion and Literature) has joined the staff as Coordinator of Recruitment and Admissions in the Divinity School. John is traveling across the country to meet prospective students, is working on our communications to assist applicants to plan for their visit, and is working with our alumni and others to find the most promising students.

Wesley Sun (MDiv 08) has joined us as Director of Field Education and Community Engagement. An ordained minister in the American Baptist Churches, he received his MDiv from the Divinity School in 2008. After completing a two-year Lilly Residency specializing in pastoral care, Wesley became the founding Director of Hyde Park Union Church’s Gilead Ministry—a ministry field education and training program of his own design. While directing Gilead, Wesley also began teaching as a CPE Supervisor and served as both parish pastor and hospital chaplain on the South Side of Chicago.

Wesley’s interests in theology, storytelling, and the philosophy of language are also expressed creatively through art. Wesley co-founded Sun Bros Studios with his brother and is the co-author of Christiania, a surreal graphic novel that examines nihilism and the supernatural through the genre of magical realism. The Sun Bros are currently working on Monkey—an irreverent, postmodern retelling of the Monkey King stories from Chinese literature scheduled for publication in 2014.

New Linkedin Group

“University of Chicago Divinity School” is the official Linkedin Group for graduates, current students, faculty, and staff of the University of Chicago Divinity School. We invite members to connect, re-connect, and network with fellow alumni and affiliates. Our hope is that the group will function as a forum for meaningful interactions amongst persons committed to careful, nuanced, creative, and broad ranging thought on the role(s) of religion in contemporary life. Additionally, members should feel free to share resources as well as employment, internship, and volunteer opportunities.

Visiting Faculty

Visiting faculty to the Divinity School represent a broad range of academic expertise.

Dr. Issam Eido will be visiting instructor of Islamic Studies and Arabic in the Divinity School during the 2013-2014 academic year. Dr. Eido’s research focuses on the Qur'an in late antiquity, Hadith Studies, and Sun and Sufi Arabic literary and poetic studies. A 2010 PhD graduate of Damascus University, he also served that institution from 2010-2012 as Lecturer in the Department of Quranic Studies and History of Islamic Sciences. In 2012 he was a Fellow of the “Europe in the Middle East/ Middle East in Europe” Research program at the Forum Transregionale Studien in Berlin. A skilled teacher of Arabic, Dr. Eido will teach courses in Qur’anic Arabic while at the University of Chicago.

Annette Bourdieu Hulzenga (PhD 11) will join us as a Visiting Assistant Professor of New Testament and Early Christian Literature this year. She teaches a variety of New Testament courses at the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary. Her research and writing focus on the social contexts of early Christian literature, with a particular interest in the intersections of ancient educational practices, gender ideologies, and philosophical virtue-training. These topics are addressed in her first book, Moral Education for Women in the Pastoral and Pythagorean Letters: Philosophers of the Household (Brill, 2013), in the Novum Testamentum Supplements series. Recent articles include: “Simplesceptria: For Women in the Pythagorean Texts” (2010), “Epitomizing

Hector Honored with Teaching Award for Excellence in Graduate Teaching and Mentoring

Kevin Hector, Assistant Professor of Theology and of the Philosophy of Religions, received a Faculty Award for Excellence in Graduate Teaching and Mentoring during the Divinity School’s June 2013 diploma ceremony, as part of the University convocation. The ceremony took place on Saturday, June 15, in Bond Chapel.

Hector studies Christian theology and the philosophy of religions. A UChicago faculty member since 2007, he is the author of Theology Without Metaphysics (2011) and is currently at work on a new book, tentatively titled Modernism as a Theological Problem. The citation for his award, which was presented by Dean Margaret M. Mitchell, reads “With his engaging and rigorous classroom style and incisive critical attention to students’ intellectual work, joined by generous encouragement and personalized mentoring, Kevin Hector assists each student to find his or her own voice in the disciplined conversations that constitute the academic study of religion.”

The Faculty Award for Excellence in Graduate Teaching and Mentoring recognize regular, full-time faculty members in the divisions for exemplary graduate teaching.

David Carrasco Named 2014 Alumnus of the Year

The Board of Trustees of the Baptist Theological Union, upon recommendation of the Divinity School’s Alumni Council, has named David Carrasco, Thm 1970, MA 1974, PhD 1977 (History of Religions), as the Divinity School’s Alumnus of the Year for 2014.

Carrasco is the Neil Rudenstein Professor of the Study of Latin America at Harvard University, with a joint appointment in the Department of Anthropology in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and the Harvard Divinity School. A famed scholar, lecturer, writer, filmmaker, and expert on Mexican and Mesoamerican art and culture, he is a historian of religions with a particular interest in religious dimensions in human experience.

Of the award, Dean Mitchell said “David Carrasco is known for his field-defining scholarship on Meso-American religions. His dexterity with a range of literary, historical, visual, geographical, cartographic, archaeological and other sources, combined with an integration of methodological perspectives, makes him a wonderful exemplar of interdisciplinary work in the history of religions.”

Carrasco’s studies with Mircea Eliade, Charles H. Long, Jonathan Z. Smith and Paul Wheatley at the University of Chicago inspired him to work on the history of sacred cities, on the challenges of postcolonial ethnography and theory, and on ritual violence in comparative perspective. His work has included a special emphasis on the religious dimensions of the Latino borderlands, cultural and racial mixture or mestizaje, the myth of Aztlan and La Virgen de Guadalupe. Working with Mexican archaeologists, Carrasco has carried out more than thirty years of research in the excavations and archives associated with the sites of Teotihuacan and Mexico-Tenochtitlan. His research has resulted in publications on ritual violence and sacred mundane workers from Mexico. A 2004 recipient of the Mexican Order of the Aztec Eagle, the highest decoration that Mexico awards to foreign nationals, Prof. Carrasco was also the recipient, in 2006, of the Mircea Eliade Jubilee medal for contributions in the study of history of religion. Carrasco is a member of the National Academy of Arts and Sciences and in 2011 he was elected as a member of the Academia Mexicana de la Historia, Correspondente de La Real de Madrid.

Alumni of the Year Address

Professor Carrasco will deliver the 2014 Alumnus of the Year address (title TBA) on Thursday, April 24, 2014, at 4:30 p.m. in Swift Lecture Hall with a reception to follow. He will also deliver, at noon that same day, the Spring Quarter Dean’s Craft of Teaching Seminar.

Virtue: Clothing the Christian Woman’s Body” (2011), and “Paud as Pastor in the Pastoral Letters” (2013). At present, she serves as the lead author for the Pastoral Letters volume of the Wisdom Commentary series (Liturgical Press), which brings feminist and multicultural lenses to each of the biblical texts.

Dan Law is Visiting Professor of Modern Hebrew Literature in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations (NECL) and the Divinity School for the Winter and Spring quarters of 2014. Professor Law, Professor of Hebrew Literature and the incoming Jacob and Shoshana Schreiber Chair for Contemporary Jewish Culture, Tel Aviv University, is a well-known scholar of the contemporary Israeli novel. He is the author of six books, and editor of another seven, on modern Israeli fiction, and in particular the works of S. Y. Agnon. Professor Law’s Winter quarter course in NECL (“Representations of the Holocaust in Hebrew/ Israeli Literature”) is as Patinkin Professor of the Chicago Center for Jewish Studies, and the Spring course (“The Works of S. Y. Agnon”) is as Israel Studies Professor in the Divinity School in the area of Religion and Literature.
**Divinity News and Notes**

**Faculty Awards on the Academic Study of Buddhism**

Two Divinity School faculty whose work focuses on the academic study of Buddhism have recently won major book awards in recognition of their work.

The excellence of work at Chicago in the history, religions, and literatures of South and East Asia provides a rich contextual framework for in-depth consideration of particular developments in the Buddhist world, and the University’s strong commitment to interdisciplinary scholarship broadens the horizons for work in the area. We are pleased to announce that Professors Daniel A. Arnold and Christian K. Wedemeyer have recently been recognized for their scholarly publications, which focus on very different aspects of the study of Buddhism.

Daniel A. Arnold, Associate Professor of the Philosophy of Religion, has received the Toshihide Numata Book Prize in Buddhism, awarded by the Center for Buddhist Studies at the University of California, Berkeley for his 2011 title, Brains, Buddhists, and Believing: The Problem of Intentionality in Classical Buddhist and Cognitive-Scientific Philosophy of Mind. The “Toshi” Prize is awarded on an annual basis to an outstanding book in any area of Buddhist studies.

Professor Arnold comparatively and constructively engages Indian Buddhism, with a focus on integrating it into the larger tradition of Indian philosophy. Brains, Buddhists, and Believing centers on the philosophical category of intentionality as a way of thinking through central issues in Buddhist epistemology and philosophy of mind.

Christian K. Wedemeyer, Associate Professor of the History of Religions, has received the 2013 Award for Excellence in the Study of Religion: Historical Studies from the American Academy of Religion (AAR) for his 2012 title, Making Sense of Tantric Buddhism: History, Semiology, and Transgression in the Indian Traditions (Columbia University Press). The Awards for Excellence recognize new scholarly publications that make significant contributions to the study of religion, and honor books of distinctive originality, intelligence, creativity, and importance, books that affect decisively how religion is examined, understood, and interpreted.

Professor Wedemeyer’s research focuses on the esoteric (Tantric) Buddhism of India and Tibet. Making Sense of Tantric Buddhism challenges the idea that Tantras were marginal by rethinking the nature of transgressive theories and practices in Buddhist Tantric tradition.

Professor Wedemeyer will be offering Classical Theories of Religion, Buddhism in the Americas, and Ritual in South Asian Buddhism in upcoming quarters.

**Prize for Excellence in Teaching**

Last spring, Rick Elgeny, PhD candidate in Theology, was named the inaugural recipient of the Divinity School Prize for Excellence in Teaching. The prize, developed as part of the Craft of Teaching in the Academic Study of Religion and shaped by the Divinity School’s Task Force on Teaching, seeks to recognize and encourage the superior preparation of Divinity School doctoral students for careers in teaching. The award is given annually on the basis of self-nomination and the evaluation of a candidate’s teaching portfolio, a collection of documents that communicates the applicant’s teaching philosophy and experience.

Elgeny has served as a teaching assistant in the Divinity School, was the Border Crossing Teaching Fellow for the Senior Ministry Thesis Seminar, and has taught three stand-alone courses at Lake Forest College in Lake Forest, Illinois. His award-winning dossier included a syllabus for a course of his own design entitled, “Does God Exist?”, which Elgeny is again teaching this fall at the request of Lake Forest College. As he says concerning his teaching philosophy, “In teach in order to cultivate informed, thoughtful reflection on religious, particu- larly Christian, conviction and action. Because religious com- mitments are often seen as intensely personal, or simply non-rational, or merely vertical—even by those who hold them—most students who enter my classroom lack the ability to engage with religion critically and fruitfully. But religion is simply too important to be analyzed only by specialists or ecumenics: informed, thoughtful citizenship requires from all of us some facility with the methods and traditions of religious thought.”

All Divinity School students who have completed the Craft of Teaching Program are eligible to apply for the prize. The application deadline for the 2014 award will be April 25, 2014; please see the Craft of Teaching website for additional details.

For more information
Contact Brandon Cline (bdcline@uchicago.edu), Program Coordinator of the Craft of Teaching, with questions or comments about the program.

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**In Memoriam**

Jean Bethke Elshtain, one of the nation’s most prominent and provocative thinkers on religion, political philosophy, and ethics, died Sunday August 11, 2013. She was 72.

Elshtain was the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Professor of Social and Political Ethics in the Divinity School, Political Science, and the Committee on International Relations at the University of Chicago.

An agile and extraordinarily prolific scholar, Elshtain’s work touched on issues ranging from terrorism to bioethics to feminism. She also lectured across the world on these topics in an effort to bring the work of the academy to a wider public.

Jean Bethke Elshtain was a formidable intellectual presence in the academy and in American public life,” said Margaret M. Mitchell, Dean and Shailer M. Mathews Professor of New Testament and Early Christian Literature. “Her arrival at the Divinity School in 1995 came on the heels of the publication of Democracy in Troul, which was and remains a major statement of the crucial dimension of morality in American public discourse. We in the Divinity School and the University will miss Jean greatly.”

Elshtain’s work was characterized by a combination of “hard-nosed realism and a very humane heart,” said her close friend and colleague William Schwicker, the Edward L. Ryerson Distinguished Service Professor of Theological Ethics. “She was suspicious of regimes of power, and she was always concerned with political and social systems that wanted to remake human life without respect for our frailties,” Schwicker said. “She was very attuned to the needs and goods of everyday life, and through her work she always fought on behalf of these mundane, quotidian interests.”

Schwicker said many of these themes came together in Elshtain’s work on sovereignty, which was the topic of her 2005–2006 Gifford Lectures, “Sovereign God, Sovereign State, Sovereign Self.”

Elshtain was the author of many other influential works, including Women and War, an exploration of the traditional status of women as noncombatants; Augustine and the Limits of Politics, which applies Augustinian thought to contemporary politics and society; and Just War Against Terror, which made a vigorous and widely discussed moral argument for greater American military engagement abroad.

She was also the author of Public Men, Private Women: Women in Social and Political Thought, Meditations on Modern Political Thought, Democracy on Trial; Just Politics: At the Center of Everyday Life; Who are We? Critical Reflections, Hopeful Possibilities; and Jane Addams and the Dream of American Democracy.

Although Elshtain’s colleagues did not always share her views, she remained a trusted interlocutor whose challenging questions always helped to strengthen their work, according to Prof. Martin E. Marty. “She loved to provoke and, through provo-
cations, to stimulate conversation, argument and opportunities to learn,” said Marty, the Fairfax M. Cone Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus. “No doubt many commentators on her work will spend their energies discussing her from which she called ‘conservative’ or ‘lib-
eral’ stances. But to reduce her to categories of partisanship or ideology, would be to miss the scholar.”

“I recall the real Jean: friendly, buoyant, tireless, inquisitive, and faithful (and faith-full) …”

Elshtain was born in Windsor, Colorado, on January 6, 1941. As a teenager, she was struck with polio, but never let her physical chal-

 lenges stop her. “She was truly ‘abled’ as she made the rounds of conferences, lectureships and any setting, including a coffee shop, where original ideas were honored,” Marty said.

Despite her ambitious lecture schedule and commitment to her research, Elshtain never neglected her students or her teaching duties, according to Prof. Stephen Meredith, who co-
taught several courses with Elshtain and remembered her “broad and imaginative” approach to her work.

“She was a brilliant teacher who seemed to know everything about everything,” said Mer-
edeth, Professor in Pathology, Biochemistry, Molecular Biology and the College, and associ-
ate faculty in the Divinity School. “She cannot be replaced.”

Elshtain was a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, a Guggenheim Fellow and a fellow at the Bellagio Center of the Rockefeller Foundation, holder of the Maguire Chair in Ethics at the Library of Congress, and a fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, New Jersey, where she also served on the board of trustees. She was a Phi Beta Kappa Lecturer, and in 2002, she received the Goodrow Award, the highest award bestowed by the American Political Science Association for distinguished service to the profession. She served on the boards of the National Humanities Center and the National Endowment for Democracy, and was a member of the Council of the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Scholars Council of the Library of Congress.

Elshtain is survived by her husband Emel, her four children, Sheri, Heidi, Jenny and Eric; and her grandchildren, John Paul Welch, Roman, and Paul Bethke. Christopher Matthew Welch and Christiana Lind Elshtain.

Elshtain’s work was the subject of a four-part conference series at the Divinity School, “The Engaged Mind,” which began in 2010. The final conference took place on October 17th and 18th, 2013. It provided an opportunity for the Chicago community to come together in cele-
bration of Elshtain’s life and work. Tributes from the memorial service held on October 17th will be published in our journal, Criticism.
Professor Brekus, a scholar and teacher of American religious history, is the author of Strongers and Pilgrims: Female Preaching in America, 1740–1845, which won the Frank and Elizabeth Brewer Prize (for the best first book on the history of Christianity) from The American Society of Church History, and Sarah Osborn’s World: The Rise of Evangelical Christianity in Early America (Yale University Press, 2013), a book about the early evangelical movement based on an eighteenth-century woman’s manuscript diaries. She is also the editor of A Religious History of American Women: Revisiting the Past, a collection of essays that asks how women’s history changes our understanding of American religion, and the coeditor (with W. Clark Gilpin) of American Christianity: A History of Dominance and Diversity, an introduction to the multiple forms of Christian expression in the United States. She is the recipient of numerous awards, including a Henry Luce III Faculty Fellowship in Theology and a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship.

William Schweiker receives honorary doctorate from Uppala University

William Schweiker, the Edward L. Ryerson Distinguished Service Professor of Theological Ethics and the director of the Martin Marty Center for the Advanced Study of Religion at the Divinity School, was awarded an honorary doctorate for the degree of Doctor of Theology by Uppsala University at a ceremony on January 24, 2014, in Uppsala, Sweden.

Swedish scholars, a scholarship and teaching engage ethical and theological questions attentive to global dynamics, comparative religious ethics, the history of ethics, and hermeneutical philosophy. A frequent lecturer and visiting professor at universities around the world, he has been deeply involved in collaborative international projects. His books include Theological Ethics and Global Dynamics: In the Time of Many Worlds (2004), Religion and the Human Future: An Essay in Theological Humanism (2008, with David E. Klemm), and, most recently, Dust that Breathe: Christian Faith and the New Humanisms (2018). His present research is for a book on ethics and the integrity of life.

Among previous honors, Professor Schweiker has been Mercator Professor at Heidelberg University (2011–2012), a Phi Beta Kappa Lecturer (2011–2012), and, in 2012, recipient of the University of Chicago Faculty Award for Excellence in Graduate Teaching and Mentoring.

Catherine A. Brekus awarded Aldersgate Prize

Catherine A. Brekus, Professor of Religion in America and the History of Christianity at the Divinity School, has been awarded the 2013 John Wesley-Honors College of Indiana Wesleyan University’s Aldersgate Prize for her book Sarah Osborn’s World: The Rise of Evangelical Christianity in Early America.

The Aldersgate Prize for Christian Scholarship recognizes a published book’s ability to reflect the highest ideals of Christian scholarship, demonstrating how rigorous Christian thought is brought to bear on scholarly engagement.
“Methodological reflections on the study of religion are never far from any of these fora.”

Margaret M. Mitchell, Dean

“... the role of the scholar is not to shield the subject (religion) from criticism, nor to paraphrase what religious actors say, but to translate it.”

Philosophy of Mind sets up a philosophical conversation between contemporary philosophers of mind and medieval Buddhist thinkers, in particular on the issue of whether mental events can or cannot be reduced to physical events. He argues that one should be wary of the reductionist view that Buddhism is often taken to be confirmatory of cognitive scientific theories of religion. Martha Nussbaum admired the way in which Arnold’s work, not only in the accounts of modern and medieval thinkers, but in establishing philosophical commitments of his own. She understands his work to establish a fresh methodological paradigm, in that it is not seeking to prove historical influence, or to engage in either cross-cultural parallelism or condescending assimilation, but instead a work of philosophy of religion that thinks through the issues on the terms of each and in dialogue with the other in both together to understand and to seek to establish the conditions for entailment of one onto the other on such issues in the contemporary world.

Arielle Dobson derived the eye of an anthropologist who studies Islam to this argument, and asked why, given Arnold’s view of the irreducibility of mental phenomena to efficient causation, the brain event thus understood prioritizes reason rather than intention. He asked, is it the case that reasoning is always temporally or logically prior to intention? Furthermore, if Arnold is right that it is perilous for religious studies to leave belief out of consideration (as Doostdar agrees), that still leaves the question of what “belief” consists in; an anthropological concept of belief; he argued, cannot be reduced or merely anchored to the cognitive, but is also a social and material practice. Arnold concluded the session with a question about what constitutes progress in philosophy, arguing that philosophy is a history of “experiment,” whereby thinkers are involved in the entitlements of their views. The role of scholarship is to add to this history of experiments, he concluded.

The winter quarter included a Dean’s Forum on Christian K. Wedemeyer’s Making Sense of Tantric Buddhism’s History, Secrecy, and Transgression in the Indian Traditions, with responses by Jeffrey Stackert and Brook Ziporyn. You will be able to access videos of this, and all Dean’s Forums (and most Wednesday lunch presentations) henceforward on our website under “We Recommend for the Ethicists.”

“Methodological reflections on the study of religion are never far from any of these fora.”

Margaret M. Mitchell, Dean

Continued from the front cover
An Interview with Brook A. Ziporyn

**CIRCA:** You did your undergraduate studies at the University of Chicago. What do you look forward to most in your new role as faculty?

**ZIPORYN:** It’s definitely a little strange, returning after so many years to experience the U of C from the other end of the telescope. I suppose there is some danger that, just by staggering through the same physical space, I’ll constantly be activating the unseen old ghosts, specters of my former undergraduate self, which could well be scattered around the terrain like so many Praestugian homesteads. But this is also a source of excitement, a chance for renewed contact with the origins of my various preoccupations in their rawest and least disguised forms, to catch the sprouting of my present identity retrospectively in the act, as it were, but with expanded perspective. I’m looking forward very much to working with students on close readings of Chinese Buddhist and Daoist and Confucian writings, hopefully in many cases having an opportunity to explore in the original language the nuances and ambiguities of the texts with all their intricacy, in the full glory of their uncertainty. But, if it weren’t my job, I would probably pay for the privilege of teaching— it’s the only time I can pursue a topic down to the last detail of convolution while also feeling that I’m not importuning anyone’s patience.

**CIRCA:** You have written several monographs and have translated Chinese texts. Could you tell us a bit about the relationship between these areas of your academic work?

**ZIPORYN:** I have these two sides to my writings: on the one hand, a lot of close work with obscure and sometimes very tricky texts, and on the other hand a strong interest in constructive theoretical work. I would count it a great success if both sides of the endeavor managed to coexist and with nourish the other side—a balanced partnership between each role and its own internal evil twin.

“Tend to see both the philology and the philosophy in terms of this larger impulse, and thus as two wings of the same enterprise.”

“I would probably pay for the privilege of teaching—it’s the only time I can pursue a topic down to the last detail of convolution ...”

**CIRCA:** What are you working on now?

**ZIPORYN:** I have two big projects. One is a kind of genre experiment which is also probably the most purely speculative, as opposed to directly expository; work I’ve done since Being and Ambiguity. It’s tentatively titled Death Time Perception— naming some of the most interesting experiments in thinking about time, in literature as well as in philosophical and religious works, trying to think about finitude of lived time as simultaneously and projectively and retrospectively infinitely re-experiencible and differently experiencible, encompassing indelibly many alternate self-reconfigurations and others, the copresence of multiple identitites in and as each finite thing.

The other is a comparative monograph trying to ferret out precisely what is going on in those forms of nontheistic, pantheistic, atheistic and anti-theistic thinking which are also, in a specific sense, deeply religious, the nature of atheistic religious experience—while also establishing that such a thing exists and is important. It will hopefully end up covering Spinoza, Nietzsche, Bataille, along with a few surprise guests from German idealism, on the European side; on the Indian side, early Buddhism, Nagarjuna and then the apparently wildly polytheistic forms of Mahayana Buddhism, and in China, the early Daoists, Guo Xiang and again Tiantai Buddhist.

**CIRCA:** You have written several monographs pursuing a topic down to the last detail of convolution, in the full glory of their uncertainty. But, if it weren’t my job, I would probably pay for the privilege of teaching—it’s the only time I can pursue a topic down to the last detail of convolution while also feeling that I’m not importuning anyone’s patience.

“Tend to see both the philology and the philosophy in terms of this larger impulse, and thus as two wings of the same enterprise.”

“I would probably pay for the privilege of teaching—it’s the only time I can pursue a topic down to the last detail of convolution ...”
Ministry Program Update

“… these bold new vocations are most often nourished and launched from the midst of historic communities of faith …”

Cynthia Gano Lindner, Director of Ministry Studies

New faces, familiar places in ministry

Recent articles in this publication have reported on the evolving practice of ministry in these times of rapid cultural change and diversification. Current students and recent alumni engage ministry in some surprising contexts—managing an organic farm, for example; organizing theological education in Nicaragua; or designing programs that foster cultural competence and inclusion in the university’s office of multicultural affairs.

It is worth remembering, though, that even these bold new vocations are most often nourished and launched from the midst of historic communities of faith, in partnership with our MDiv program’s classic theological education. The celebration of a candidate’s ordination often portrays the collaboration of church and academy, tradition and innovation in profound ways, as faith leaders and congregations, teachers and fellow students gather to witness the vows that launch new ministers and anticipate new and transformed ministries.

Six recent MDiv graduates were ordained to the Christian ministry this summer: Pumspun Shim, McKenna Daughtery, Thaddious Gobbledale, and Aloysius Vaughan in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); Annette Thornburg in the American Baptist Church; and Jacqueline “Jack” Clark, to the transitional diaconate of the Episcopal Church in the USA. One of the newly ordained pastors, reflecting on that event, wrote that “the ordination service was an incredible celebration of the work of the church, and a humbling affirmation of my own call and gifts for service. I was surrounded by folks who raised me, mentored me, loved me, and challenged me. As everyone gathered around to lay their hands on me, I truly felt surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses.” Another spoke of that same moment in the ordination liturgy: “As my father (also a pastor) said, ‘Having God’s and a congregation’s hands upon one is not to be taken lightly.’ It is not, but while neither light nor to be taken lightly, the hands and hearts also lifted me up before and during my ordination, and I know they will continue to do so.”

In this year’s Update, we acknowledge the scholarship of those who contributed cash gifts during the 2012–2013 fiscal year (July 1, 2012–June 30, 2013).

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The Divinity School Honor Roll

The Divinity School benefits from the generous support of alumni, friends, and organizations. The Dean, the faculty, and the students of the Divinity School extend their sincere thanks to all who contributed cash gifts during the 2012–2013 fiscal year (July 1, 2012–June 30, 2013).

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The recent renovation of Bond Chapel was recognized on Designnight, the Chicago-area chapter of the American Institute of Architect (AIA)’s annual awards night. The Bond Chapel Reneker Organ installation received a Special Recognition in the “Divine Detail” category.

The Reneker Memorial Organ, a baroque-style instrument dedicated in honor of the late Robert W. Reneker and Betty C. Reneker, was moved from the Chicago Theological Seminary to the University of Chicago’s Bond Chapel in 2012. It was officially installed in Bond Chapel on February 2, 2013.

In its new home, the organ sits naturally in the structurally reinforced loft on the east side of Bond Chapel, set comfortably against a panel of stained-glass windows. One AIA Chicago juror called this “a considered approach—a subtle intervention without destroying what was there.” A sensitive integration of a giant piece into an intimate chapel setting,” another added.

Adding to the beauty of the organ installation, the University of Chicago Women’s Board generously funded new custom-made chairs in a style and finish honoring the traditions of the Chapel while making possible the flexible use of the building for new generations. Also new are meditation cushions and prayer rugs.

Thirty-five awards were presented in four categories: Distinguished Building, Interior Architecture, SustainABILITY Leadership, and Divine Detail. Juries of renowned architects from around the country selected the winners from a field of 269 entries. Legendary Chicago architect, Stanley Tigerman (who is also a member of the Divinity School’s Visiting Committee), received a lifetime achievement award.

The architect on the project was David Woodhouse Architects; the contractor was Scale Construction. Consultants Matrix Engineering, Anne Kustner Lighting Design, Carl Giegold, Threshold Acoustics, and organ conservators Jeff Weiler & Associates were also recognized in the award.

Founded in 1869, AIA Chicago represents nearly 3,000 licensed architects, architectural interns and allied professionals in northeastern Illinois. AIA Chicago is the second largest AIA chapter in the nation.