

UPFRONT

BILL BURKHART



Lily Lung '02, playing a Chinese stringed instrument called the pipa, was among more than 1,000 participants at Wesleyan in a meeting of the Society for Ethnomusicology.

“What happens to the great hopes and plans of my first year as president? I believe we must continue to be ambitious, and that we must develop new programs...”

—PRESIDENT MICHAEL S. ROTH '78

PAGE 6

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

Ethnomusicologists from Around the World

A Public Project for Architecture Students

Coming of Age in South Boston

The Long Descent of Presidential Rhetoric

PRESIDENT’S LETTER

By Michael S. Roth ’78



I spent a significant part of my first year as president planning changes to the economic foundation of the university so as to ensure that we develop the capacity for enhancing our leadership position in higher education. We have been planning a fundraising campaign to increase our endowment, and we have been examining our budget to ensure that our spending reflects our deepest priorities. Of course, the extraordinary economic crisis of the last several months has put our ongoing planning process in an even sharper perspective.

The impact of the global recession is significant for Wesleyan. A good portion of our annual budget comes from the generosity of our alumni and parents, as well as from tuition and the return on our endowment. Fundraising may be difficult this year, but as I've traveled the country I've been struck by the enormous outpouring of spirit from alumni who understand that Wesleyan needs support now more than ever. Our endowment, already down around 4 percent in the last fiscal year, declined about 11 percent in the first quarter of this one. Although our investments have outperformed the broad market indexes, the decline continued in October and November. We fully expect these investments to recover over time, but there will be a period of smaller returns from the endowment to support the operating budget. We recently presented the Board of Trustees with a plan to achieve savings of \$15 million over the next three to five years.

We have already made significant cuts in the budget, and we have delayed all major construction projects. We are protecting as best we can teaching, research, and the student experience from the impact of our cost cutting measures. Over time, we will shift more of

our fundraising efforts toward building the endowment, rather than supporting current spending. This will allow us to build economic capacity for the long term. We will continue to offer our community the very best liberal arts education, but we must do so in a more cost effective way. We are also looking for revenue opportunities, particularly in the summer months. I believe that as a result of these measures, Wesleyan will emerge a stronger institution. We have reason for confidence. Early decision applications are up about 38 percent, demonstrating that Wesleyan continues to have great appeal to prospective students.

What happens to the great hopes and plans of my first year as president? I believe we must continue to be ambitious, and that we must develop new programs through reallocations of resources. We will continue to offer a robust financial aid program, and we remain committed to hiring and retaining a faculty dedicated to advancing their own fields while they make a powerful impact on the lives of their students. I believe we can continue to internationalize our campus while furthering creativity and civic engagement in the curriculum and in the community. We will continue to focus attention on enhancing the experience of our students, especially in their frosh and senior years. The delay in building a new Molecular Life Sciences building will not stop us from advancing Wesleyan's scientific enterprise in many other ways. I am confident, for example, that we will be able to launch a College of the Environment, and that this broad-based, interdisciplinary environmental studies program will become a key aspect of our curriculum. Our dreams may take longer to become a reality, but we will work to have them unfold in sustainable ways.

In challenging economic times, it is more important than ever to develop one's core competencies and build a platform for innovation. These next few years will be difficult ones, but with the talent, energy, and generosity of the Wesleyan community, we will emerge from this economic turmoil an even stronger, more dynamic institution. A Wesleyan liberal arts education prepares students for a rapidly changing economic and cultural environment. With your continued support, we will provide our graduates with the resources they need to shape the changes that will define our future. UPFRONT

Ten New Courses

(A sampling of course titles from 165 new courses in the curriculum)

Political Theologies: Contemporary Christian Engagement In The Public Sphere (Mary-Jane Rubenstein, religion)

The Past on Film (Michael Roth, president)

Biomedical Chemistry (Erika Taylor, chemistry)

The U.S. & the Middle East: From the Shores of Tripoli to Baghdad (Bruce Masters, history)

Pollock / Warhol: Two Sides of the Same Coin (John Paoletti, art)

Moral Responsibility (Elise Springer, philosophy)

Economies of Africa (Peter Kilby, economics)

Myth, Magic & Movies (Robert Steele, psychology)

Animation in the Digital Age (Film Studies staff)

Discovering the Person (Jill Morawski, psychology)

A WEB STARTUP

Love of Lacrosse Leads to New Business Venture

Chris Meade and Matt Wheeler are both members of the class of 2005. After graduation, Meade worked as an associate at Cushman & Wakefield in a group representing top financial clients, and Wheeler worked as a senior risk analyst for Guy Carpenter, the world's leading reinsurance intermediary.

The tie that binds them, however, is not the New York business world—it's lacrosse. They have left their careers in New York behind to launch LacrosseRecruits.com, a Web site dedicated to bringing college lacrosse coaches and high school players together in a more efficient manner.

Their backgrounds reveal their love of the sport. At Wesleyan, Meade and Wheeler were both four-time letter winners and team captains. During their senior year, Wesleyan received its first-ever bid to the NCAA tournament, advancing to the quarterfinals.

The idea for LacrosseRecruits.com was hatched in October of 2007 after Meade spent a weekend coaching the Utah U19 lacrosse team at a tournament in New Hampshire. While speaking with college lacrosse coaches at the tournament, Meade kept hearing the same complaints. Primarily, there are too many high school players to evaluate and there must be a better way to recruit lacrosse players. On the flight from New York to Utah, Meade wrote Wheeler a long e-mail, which ended up being the groundwork for LacrosseRecruits.com. Matt immediately jumped on board and the planning for LacrosseRecruits.com started.

After months of preparation, the site went live on July 1, 2008, for male lacrosse players. Five months later, they launched LacrosseRecruits.com for female lacrosse players. Meade and Wheeler are constantly making improvements to the Web site and the lacrosse community has taken notice, with over 100,000 page views in the first six months.

"What we have done is provide every high school lacrosse player with an efficient way

to be seen by college coaches," said Meade. "After creating a profile and uploading video, players are immediately receiving interest from college coaches. The coaching community has been very receptive to the tool because it allows them to find and communicate with recruits in a more efficient manner." UPFRONT

ATHLETICS HALL OF FAME



HENRI SALAUN '49

Born in Brest, France, before coming to the United States in 1940, Henri Salaun '49 graduated from Wesleyan as a two-time All-American on the soccer field while he also captured regional titles in tennis. But it was his squash talent that brought him the greatest fame after he left the university. Rising to the top in a sport he lettered in at Wesleyan, Salaun captured his first of four United States Open squash tournament titles in 1955. While repeating the feat in 1957, 1958, and 1961, he had a string of five consecutive appearances in the national championship match (1954–1958) and nine in total over a span of 14 years.

Also bringing home eight Canadian Open crowns during his heyday, Salaun was the inaugural winner of the North American Open Championship in 1954. He was inducted into the Squash Hall of Fame as a member of its first class in 2000.

Continuing his tennis game well into his 70s, he held the number-one ranking in New England at each level over more than a 50-year period, starting with Boys 15-and-under and continuing through Veterans 70-and-over. The United States Tennis Association New England inducted Henri into its Hall of Fame in 1991. His accomplishments in squash mirrored his success in tennis as he won at least four national squash titles at each playing level from Open Division through 70-and-over.

Salaun established Henri Salaun Sports, Inc., in 1969, a family business.

Future issues of Wesleyan magazine will profile other inductees into the University's Athletics Hall of Fame in Freeman Athletic Center.

Do you have an opinion about our UPFRONT section? Please write us at letters@wesleyan.edu.

ALUMNI ESSAY

Exploring New Terrain

By Alissa Greenberg '08

When I first met Lin-Manuel Miranda '02 in 2006, he hadn't won a single Tony. I was writing a story for the *Wesleyan Argus* about a theater industry panel at the Career Resource Center, and he was a presenter. He radiated excitement as he spoke about the play he had been working on since his Wesleyan days, one that was about to open for a short off-Broadway run. "I wrote *In the Heights* because I wanted to write a musical featuring Latinos who weren't having knife fights," he told me with a wry smile.

Almost three years later I found myself at the Richard Rodgers Theater in New York City, surrounded by Wesleyan supporters of all ages. The Wesleyan Cardinal threaded his way through the throng, stopping occasionally to pose with his wing around someone's shoulder. Four Tony Awards, thirteen nominations, and one wildly successful move to Broadway later, we had gathered to celebrate Lin-Manuel's creation.

And celebrate we did. The audience applauded enthusiastically when Lin-Manuel made his first appearance, and they gave him an extended ovation when he made his curtain call in a WesWings shirt.

"We ate at WesWings and now we have the Tony for best musical, how cool is that?" he yelled jubilantly, then led the crowd in a raucous version of the Wesleyan fight song. Moments later, President Roth revealed that the benefit had raised money for 38 scholarships.

That night was the first time I was able to truly grasp what it means to be a Wesleyan alumna. In the months since my graduation in May of 2008, I had been struggling to compre-

hend what it means to leave college and the familiarity of "studenthood" behind.

"It has been almost effortless to remain blind to everything but campus issues. Without realizing it, my student identity has slowly infiltrated my sense of self....Who are you, who are we, if not students?" I had written years before in an *Argus* column. Settling into my seat as the lights went down to start the play, I was faced again with that question, intensified by my recent departure from campus. I had spent my life working toward a college degree and in the process had become accustomed to the academic and creative challenges education provides. What would happen to my drive and intellectual interest when opportunities to create and explore were no longer within easy reach?

While an undergraduate, I went to lectures by authors, filmmakers, or scientists visiting their alma mater, but until that night I had never seen the potential of those Wesleyan alums as *my* potential, had never really believed that I could reach for, and experience, similar successes. Seeing Lin-Manuel perform helped me make that connection. His accomplishments were more to me than just another news story: I had seen his transformation for myself. The remarkable results of the fundraiser buoyed my spirits, as well, as I saw up close the power a Wesleyan graduate can have to bring his community together and to do something profoundly good for that community. That night I was finally able to include myself in the same group as the people I had admired from afar. And that meant that all the ways they had found to continue learning and creating on their own terms were paths that I, too, could follow.



BILL BURKHART

Wesleyan's night on Broadway with *In the Heights* inspired Alissa Greenberg to think about where a Wesleyan liberal arts education can lead.

As we milled around the lobby at the beginning of the night, it seemed that almost the entire class of 2008 had turned out. "It's a big Wesleyan party!" someone near me crowed. Later, as the crowd sang gleefully along with Lin-Manuel, I understood that graduation doesn't mean that the party has to end. The venue may change as we trade dorms and dining halls for apartments and

cubicles, but the world can be our university now, if we let it, even without a fight song to sing or a cardinal to pose and preen. We ate at WesWings and now it's our turn to make our mark. *In the Heights* reminded me of the peaks one can scale as a Wesleyan graduate. This new terrain is a scary, profoundly unfamiliar, and intensely exciting one to begin to explore. **UPFRONT**

MUSIC

A Vibrant Ethnomusicology Conference

By David Low '76

Canterese Pop Songs of 1960s Hong Kong. Czech Bluegrass Gospel. Spectacle and Performance in the New York City Subway. The Function of Song in Egyptian Musical Film. These were four of more than 400 subjects presented, dissected, and discussed during the 53rd annual Society for Ethnomusicology (SEM) Conference held at Wesleyan in October. More than 1,000 scholars, musicians, students, and administrators from around the world attended the event, the most ever to attend an academic conference on campus.

A scholarly organization, SEM is dedicated to the interpretation of music in all its contexts, and its members study a range of disciplines, including music, anthropology, folklore, cultural studies, linguistics, and education to encourage multidisciplinary cooperation.

"It was significant to have the conference at Wesleyan this year because of its strong connection to the field of ethnomusicology," says Associate Professor of Music Eric Charry, who was the chair for the Local Arrangements Committee. "The late David McAllester, emeritus Wesleyan professor of anthropology, was one of the co-founders of

SEM in the 1950s, and he also helped found Wesleyan's World Music Program in the 1960s."

Wesleyan University Press was also the initial publisher of the journal *Ethnomusicology* from the 1950s to 1971. This year's conference is the third one to be held at Wesleyan; the last one occurred in 1975.

Hundreds of papers were presented continuously for five days across the campus, providing nonstop intellectual challenges.

The Pre-Conference Symposium, *Toward a 21st-Century Ethnomusicology*, introduced something new to the annual SEM program—webcasting and videoconferencing that enabled participants in Middletown to have live discussions with students and professionals in designated sites in China, Taiwan, Indonesia, and Africa.

The use of this technology to reach colleagues who were often isolated in the past proved to be inspiring and successful, setting a new paradigm for the field of ethnomusicology.

Associate Professor of Music Su Zheng, chair of the Music Department, notes that the symposium made Chinese and Taiwanese scholars aware of the excellence of Wesleyan's PhD program; before, most of them only knew about the graduate program in ethnomusicology at UCLA.

Concerts presented during three evenings featured Asian, African, Irish, Middle Eastern, Latin American, and Caribbean music in a variety of styles. Charry introduced an online blog in the months before the conference where musicians



BILL BURKHART

Eliot Bates of the University of Maryland plays the Oud, a Middle-eastern instrument; (right) Gleide Cambria of Brazil leads Afro-Brazilian dance.

could sign up to perform in concert. The performances allowed musicians to hear each other's music and play with each other. Adjunct Professors of Music Abraham Adzenyah and B. Balasubrahmanian were among the more than 100 performers. One of the concerts featured the rare opportunity to hear a number of Ghanaian drummers who are teaching across the United States perform together.

Faculty and alumni joined in offering workshops, including South Indian Solkattu with Artist in Residence David Nelson PhD '91, Javanese Gamelan with Artist in Residence I. Harjito, Shape Note Singing with Professor of Music Neely Bruce and current ethnomusicology graduate student Tim Eriksen MA '91, Peking Opera Percussion with PhD candidate Po-wei Weng, and Hollywood Film Music with Professor of Music Mark Slobin and Corwin-Fuller Professor of Film Studies Jeanine Basinger.

"One of the things participants liked most were the concerts and workshops," says Professor Zheng. "They found it stimulating, refreshing, and endearing to play music together."

Rob Lancefield '82, who received a PhD in ethnomusicology from Wesleyan in 2005, has been regularly attending SEM conferences since 1990. "For me, the best thing about being at each SEM meeting is the opportunity it provides to have informal, face-to-face conversations with other scholars working on topics of shared interest," he says.

Slobin comments, "I talked to one veteran ethnomusicologist who has been to many conventions who said that this was the best meeting she had been at anywhere, ever."

And Charry adds: "The introduction of teleconferencing and the amazing variety and number of concerts and workshops contributed fresh elements to the program. Having the conference at Wesleyan renewed our status as a leader and an innovator in the field." **UPFRONT**

Homecoming/ Family Weekend 2008



NICK RUSSELL '08

Homecoming/ Family Weekend

In addition to athletic contests and outdoor fun, this year's Homecoming/Family Weekend offered special events ranging from a Schumann Symposium on climate policy and the annual Dwight L. Greene '70 lecture with NPR senior correspondent Juan Williams, to a benefit concert at Green Street Arts Center and a ceremony for the second group of inductees into the Athletics Hall of Fame.

HISTORICAL ROW The Once and Future President

One small aspect of Barack Obama's rise to the White House is actually not groundbreaking: he is far from the first future president to find his way to Wesleyan. Middletown has played host to four sitting presidents and several presidential candidates or future presidents. Long before Wesleyan was a gleam in Willbur Fisk's eye, at least four members of this illustrious group had made their ways to Middletown.

America's first four presidents—George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and James Madison—all traveled to Middletown during the late 18th century. Only Washington was president of the United States at the time of his visit. The occasion was a tour of the Eastern states, so that the new president, just six months in office, could get better acquainted with the land and people of his country.

Washington's visit to Middletown was brief: he arrived at one in the afternoon, walked around the town, ate dinner, and left about three o'clock. The president was impressed with the beauty of the surroundings and the productivity of the farmers. Amazingly, the sources are quite clear that George Washington did not sleep here!

Future presidents John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and James Madison did spend the night in Middletown, resting at Bigelow's Tavern in August 1774 (Adams) and June 1791 (Jefferson and Madison). Adams was *en route* to a Continental Congress, while Jefferson and Madison were traveling together on their "Northern Journey." Madison identified his reasons for the trip as "health, recreation, and curiosity," but it was widely assumed, then and now, that political purposes were at the root of the trip.

The first United States President to visit Wesleyan was Andrew Jackson. On May 20, 1833, as part of a tour of New England cities, he traveled by boat to Middletown from Hartford. Jackson disembarked and traveled up the hill to the college, where he met President Willbur Fisk and the Wesleyan faculty.

Four years later, future president Rutherford B. Hayes, then a boy of 15, attended Isaac Webb's school in Middletown on the northeast corner of High and William streets (site of Wesleyan's power plant today). The future president's letters home show a keen interest in politics and marvel at the delicious Thanksgiving dinner he ate. Hayes graduated from Kenyon College in his native Ohio.

The future president with the strongest connection to Wesleyan was Woodrow Wilson, who taught political economy here from 1888

to 1890. He founded Wesleyan's debate club, and his staunch support of Wesleyan's football team was well-remembered by students of his day.

President William Howard Taft came to Wesleyan in November 1909 for the inauguration of Wesleyan President William A. Shanklin. Franklin Delano Roosevelt drove by Wesleyan during a trip through Middletown in October 1936. Unfortunately, few students were able to see Roosevelt's motorcade, since its route was unexpectedly changed from High Street, where students waited in front of Fisk Hall, to Church Street, where a few students glimpsed the President from Olin Library.

Over the years, numerous presidential and vice-presidential candidates have given lectures and made campaign stops at Wesleyan. One of the most frequent visitors was Norman Thomas, the perennial candidate of the Socialist Party of America, who spoke at Wesleyan at least three times during the 1930s and 1940s. Richard and Pat Nixon held a rally here in 1956, campaigning for the Eisenhower/Nixon ticket.

The 1984 presidential campaign was a period of fierce political activity at Wesleyan. Before Walter Mondale was chosen as the nominee of the Democratic Party, Senator Chris Dodd, himself a future candidate for president, held a rally for presidential hopeful Gary Hart. Middletown and Wesleyan strongly supported Hart in primary voting. In March 1984, Jesse Jackson drew a crowd of "close to 500" (according to the *Argus*) for a campaign speech at Crowell Hall. Finally, on Sept. 21, 1984, former independent presidential candidate John Anderson campaigned at Wesleyan for the Mondale-Ferraro ticket. Anderson's rally on the steps of North College drew a crowd about half the size of Jackson's. Of course, Ronald Reagan, who did not campaign at Wesleyan, won the election.

In more recent election years, there have been fewer visits than in 1984. Vice-presidential candidate (and future candidate for president) Al Gore held a campaign rally for the Clinton/Gore ticket at Freeman Athletic Center in October 1992. Senator Bill Bradley spoke at a Democratic campaign rally at Memorial Chapel in November 2000, but by then he was out of the race and endorsing the Gore/Lieberman ticket.

Most recently, the government's interpretation of the laws surrounding the nonprofit status of colleges has become more strict, and campaigning on campus has diminished. Barack Obama's Wesleyan Commencement address last year was clearly defined as outside the presidential campaign. No other hopefuls visited Wesleyan.

Special thanks to Paul DiSanto '81 and others who wanted to know if Barack Obama was the first president-elect to visit Wes.

—Suzy Taraba '77, University Archivist



Andrew Jackson, the seventh President of the United States, and the first to visit Wesleyan. Image from Library of Congress Presidents of the United States Web site.



ARCHITECTURE

A Platform to Architectural Innovation

By David Pesci

The designers were presented with a considerable architectural challenge. Create a structure to fit a unique site—a former cranberry bog covered in three feet of water—on a modest budget, make it durable and use sustainable materials and technology as much as possible.

Oh, and most important: it must be a good place to observe red-winged blackbirds, scarlet tanagers, hooded mergansers, and the occasional great blue heron or painted turtle.

It was a charge that would challenge seasoned architects, but to design it the Mattabesek Audubon Society chose a group of Wesleyan students who were only a few weeks into their second college-level architecture class.

The result is “SplitFrame,” a bird-viewing platform in the Helen Carlson Wildlife Sanctuary in Portland, Conn., that is at once fresh and welcoming without being obtrusive in its surroundings.

The ambitious project was undertaken during the 2008 spring semester by students enrolled in Architecture II, the second in a sequence of undergraduate design studios taught by Elijah Huge, assistant professor of art. The project was carried out under the auspices of The Architecture Research-Design-Build Studio, a new initiative at Wesleyan.

“The class was basically an academic triathlon composed of design research, real world testing of conceptual work developed in the studio, and community-based learning,” Huge says. “The process exemplified a successful collaboration involving wonderful clients, talented and committed students, and an incredible site.”

The president of the Mattabesek Audubon Society, Alison Guinness, says the platform fills a significant need: “We had been struggling with a way to provide an optimal experience at our sanctuary, especially since a colony of beavers had changed the site to such a degree that access was a serious challenge.”

The structure was created after meetings with the client, study of the site, and extensive research on sustainable construction technologies, building materials, and design precedents. Students constructed SplitFrame using only hand-held power-tools, and all on-site construction was completed without the use of heavy equipment.

The finished work consists of two integral pieces, a floating observation deck and an elevated viewing station, that are connected by a hinged staircase. It provides an immersive site experience, bringing visitors out onto the water, and offering an overview of the sanctuary from the maple tree canopy above.

By using an innovative, pre-cast concrete pin-foundation system for the elevated viewing station and a floating aluminum frame assembly for the observation deck on the water, the project was designed to minimize its impact on the site.

“Elijah Huge and his students have not only created a sustainable project but put in long hours under adverse conditions,” Guinness says. “The architecture class was knee deep in mud and water, swatting mosquitoes, and dripping with sweat or rain. We were impressed by their architectural skills, professionalism, and dedication to the project, and we are very grateful that our sanctuary is once again available for a unique environmental experience.” **UPFRONT**

ELIJAH HUGE

