



# Newsletter

Spring 2012

## Center for the Study of World Religions

Harvard Divinity School



### Director's Message



As you will see from this newsletter itself, we had a very productive spring indeed, with a wide range of events involving faculty, staff, and students, and visitors from around the

world. Some weeks our events schedule was very full, yet quite successful in reaching out to a wide range of students, staff, and faculty on a wide range of topics, so that no one (other than myself!) was in a position of having to attend all of these events. The Center flourishes in a de-centered fashion.

But where are we now? In a very interesting conversation here in April, Amir Hussain, Professor at Loyola-Marymount University and Editor of the Journal of the American Academy of Religion, identified several key themes evident in submissions to the journal today: 1. the deeper study of traditions other than Christianity, yet in an interreligious and interdisciplinary fashion; 2. as ever, issues of method, particularly new interesting work on how to think about the body, food, and religion; 3. the interface of the cognitive sciences and religion; 4. art, aesthetics, and religion; 5. interdisciplinary work as "the new normal;" 6. pedagogy and religion. As I finish the second year of my term as Director, my sense is that the Center is engaging these and other

issues from the ground up, as it were. Faculty, staff and student interests, often arising from study and teaching, have given us a full program during 2011-12, and we anticipate even more in 2012-13. Much of this has to do with religion in its myriad forms, studied in theory and practice, in different traditions, and in relation to classical and contemporary challenges. But we will also be having a number of more concerted programs in the year to come, including a conversation on religion and the presidential election, a series of presentations – already in planning elsewhere on the faculty, but we will collaborate – on the body in religion, and finally, a small international conference on the Song of Songs in April. More on these events after the summer (be sure to check our online calendar) and in our next newsletter.

### Faculty Grant Recipients Announced

The Center has awarded two faculty research grants for the upcoming academic year:

Andrew Teeter, Assistant Professor of Hebrew Bible, will sponsor a series of speakers entitled "The Textualization of Religion, Intertextuality, and the Composition of the Hebrew Bible." Professor Teeter writes: "Among the most stimulating developments in the field of Hebrew Bible scholarship in recent years is a pronounced interest in understanding the dynamics of the 'textualization' and/or 'scripturalization' of religious practice within Judaism during the final centuries before the Common Era, and the role that this played in the formation and reception of the literature of the Hebrew Bible. In conjunction with two Hebrew Bible courses this fall that will study the character of textual encounter



Andrew Teeter

Part of the Center's significance is its living connection to its roots. In recent weeks we have witnessed panels and celebrations at HDS marking the retirements of Dean William A. Graham and Academic Dean Jane I. Smith, after their years of service at HDS. Both, of course, have long histories with the Center. Bill lived at the Center as a doctoral student in 1966-67, and as a junior faculty member from 1973-75. Jane Smith was a student of the Center 1964-70 and lived there 1964-67. Jane was later the Associate Director of CSWR, 1974-80. It was also a boon to have with us for Jane's event Yvonne Haddad, professor of the History of

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# News and Notes

## Director's Message *continued...*

Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations at Georgetown University. Professor Haddad was a very early resident of the Center, arriving here in 1963. I am happy to note that another long-time friend of the Center will be lecturing here on September 26th – Thomas Coburn, previously professor at St. Lawrence University and then Director of the Naropa Institute. He will be speaking in our ongoing "Intellectual Worlds of Meditation" series.

Former students or affiliates of the Center have recently donated books to us, and we are grateful to them for their gift: Paula Richman, *Women, Branch Stories, and Religious Rhetoric in a Tamil Buddhist Text* (1988), and *Extraordinary Child* (1997); William Jackson, *Heaven's Fractal Net* (2004), *Vijayanagara Voices* (2005), and *Worldviews Kaleidoscope Stories* (2007); and Nancy Lusignea Schultz, *Mrs Mattingly's Miracle* (2011). Such books go into the Center's small library. If you were an affiliate of the Center, and particularly if during your time here did significant research on a recently published book you've now published, we welcome a copy of your book for the Library.

And for readers with long memories, the elegant, chiming clock is back. The dedication on it is simple: "G.A. Griscom, Jr. President, the Griscom-Russell Company. From his staff, 1912." It is, we think, a gift received in the very early years of the Center, and for decades was in the Director's apartment at the front of the building. It is a lovely piece and, we are happy to say, back in working order.



There is much more we can do, as our financial situation improves. We still need to maximize the resources of the Center as building and as residential, scholarly community. See the "Giving to CSWR" note in the next column of this newsletter.

With best wishes for the summer,



Francis X. Clooney, S.J., Director

## Giving to CSWR

As always, there are more things we would like to do than our financial resources allow, but here we highlight just three priorities. We are eager to subsidize the residential community by lowering the rent. Currently, we lose some very good prospects each year because the rent, though low by Harvard standards, is too high. Please think of endowing an apartment or supporting one or more residents by a residential fellowship. We would also like to be able once more to bring visiting scholars to the Center on a regular basis, something we have not been able to do since 2008. Finally, to restore our building to full capacity, we still need to restore the third floor space – the original Meditation Room and then Library/Seminar Room – by bringing it up to contemporary fire code and disability requirements, extending the elevator to the roof and adding a second staircase. For this costly but important project, we are seeking a major donor. All three needs are essential for the well-being of the Center as a resource for the Divinity School, the Study of Religion, and the University, so please help us either directly by your gift, or through your kind advice.

## Advisory Committee

This year the Advisory Committee was comprised of Janet Gyatso, Anne Monius, and Kimberley Patton, plus the Director and the Associate Director.

During 2012-14 we will be trying a new format, with the faculty having offices at the Center serving in this capacity: Michael Jackson, Anne Monius, Diane Moore, Jacob Olupona, Ahmed Ragab, and Charles Stang. One faculty member from outside HDS will also be a Committee member; for 2012-14, it will be Luis Girón-Negrón, Professor of Romance Languages and Literatures and of Comparative Literature.

The Center also hosts each semester a dinner with a wider group of faculty to discuss matters of general concern and to generate fresh ideas.



## Residential Community 2012-2013

The residential community has always been key to the Center's identity and life, and this year was no exception. Most Wednesday evenings, residents – visiting faculty and students – gathered in the Common Room with the Director, and took turns presenting work in progress – a course paper, the fruits of summer research travel, new methods of interpretation, the interface of meditation and theory, and a host of other topics. In other formal and informal venues, at potlucks and around the coffee pot, residents interacted in many other ways too. These formal and informal contacts are surely part of everyone's education and, we hope, a step toward contacts and conversations that will continue for years to come.

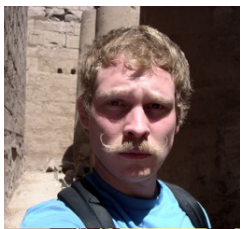
Residential applications were up substantially this year and it was wonderful to hear from so many talented and interesting people who wanted to be a part of our community. With many excellent applications there were some

difficult decisions to be made, but we are thrilled to welcome twenty-one new and returning community members who will take up residence in mid-August.

This year we will house a significant number of students: twelve masters level students as well as six doctoral candidates, all with extensive and varied experience. Simultaneously we bid farewell to this year's community in the hope that their time here has enriched their lives and their studies. We are grateful for their participation and collaboration on a multitude of events, from resident organized potluck dinners, to attendance at monthly director's suppers and annual events such as our pumpkin carving. Their academic contributions have been no less welcome, as have the casual interactions that are the true foundation of CSWR community. We look forward to the year ahead and the new conversations, collaborations, and friendships that will emerge.

## Resident Profile: Charlie Carstens

Charlie Carstens has just completed his fourth year of residency at the Center and will return next year for his fifth. He arrived at Harvard and the Center in 2008 as a Master's student at Harvard Divinity School.



Majoring in Buddhist studies, he worked closely with former CSWR director Donald Swearer. After graduating HDS in fall of 2010, he continued his study of Buddhism as a PhD student in Harvard's Committee on the Study of Religion. Charlie researches notions of prosperity and social welfare as expressed in Burmese Buddhist literature of the early 20th century.

Charlie has actively embraced the Center's commitment to inter-religious work. For the summer of 2009, the Center awarded him the Greeley

International Internship, granting him the opportunity to work with the "Institute for Religion, Culture, and Peace" at Payap University, Chiang Mai, Thailand. The following spring, Charlie, along with three other HDS students, attended the Parliament of the World's Religions in Melbourne, Australia. There he met with religious persons from around the world to consider the future of global interreligious collaboration.

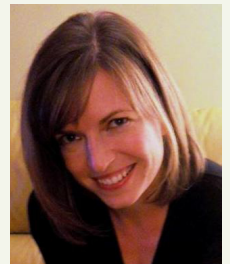
Among his more recent projects at the Center, Charlie has been involved with an interreligious scriptural reading group and efforts to invigorate the community of PhD students studying religion at Harvard. "Among all of the Center's unique contributions," he says, "the residential community is by far the most valuable to me. Life in this community has not only nurtured many meaningful, lasting relationships, but also opened new horizons of intellectual inquiry."

## Staff News

Susan Abraham, Assistant Professor Ministry Studies, has been Associate Director of the Center for the past two years, 2010-12. She now returns to full time teaching. The Center would like thank Susan for her work at the Center these past two years, and wish her well in her teaching.

## Staff Spotlight: Alicia Clemente

Alicia just completed two years of coursework for her EdM in Policy, Planning and Administration at Boston University and will graduate on May 19th. A



native of the rural hills of western Massachusetts, she traveled and lived across the US and abroad before settling back in her home state. Now that her spare time won't be filled with homework, Alicia is thrilled to think of all the hiking, camping, baking and other activities she'll be able to pursue. She just purchased her first two "fun" books for summer reading, both combining her favorite topics: culture and food. She has been part of the CSWR for five years, and previously spent several years at the Harvard School of Dental Medicine.

At the CSWR Alicia manages all aspects of housing, works to foster a vibrant community for residents, and coordinates international programs. Over the summer she looks forward to renewing and expanding ties with organizations for CSWR internships; if you are part of an international organization working with issues of faith and social justice and would like to host an HDS intern please let her know!

## Visiting Fellows

While current financial constraints do not allow the Center to fund the stay of visiting scholars, we do occasionally welcome to the Center visiting scholars whose work intersects with the research interests of a faculty member in HDS or Religion, who serves as her or his sponsor during the time at Harvard. In some cases it is possible for visiting scholars to rent apartments at the Center for the period of their stay. Inquiries may be directed to Alicia Clemente, Coordinator of Residential Life and Fellowship Programs. This spring we welcomed to our community Dietmar W. Winkler, Professor of Patristic Studies and the History of Christianity at the University of Salzburg, and director of the Mayr-Melnhof Institute for Eastern Christian Studies in Salzburg. Professor Winkler was here with his wife, Henrike, a biologist and researcher at Paracelsus Medical University in Salzburg, and their sons, Gunther (12) and Gerolf (10). We anticipate having two or three visiting fellows during 2012-13.



The Winkler Family: Henrike, Gerolf, Gunther and Dietmar

## 2012 - 2013 Junior Fellows

Established in academic year 2011-12, "Junior Fellow" is an honorary position marking a significant contribution to the mission of the Center, its community, and interreligious and intellectual projects. While all residents are full members of the community and participate fully in its life and activities, successful applicants for junior fellow status propose a plan for exceptional service to the Center and its community, or assistance in its outreach to the wider community of HDS, the Committee on the Study of Religion, and the University. These fellowships include a 25% reduction in rent and are offered to a maximum of four students at the master's or doctoral level.

The Center is happy to announce four

junior fellowships for 2012-13:

Leslie Hubbard (MTS 1st year), "Beyond Words: Intersections of Meditation, Visual Arts, Sacred Music, and Dance across Religious and Cultural Boundaries"

Axel Takacs (ThD 2nd year), "Comparative Theology: lectures and conversations"

Konchok Tsering (Visiting PhD candidate), "Studying Religions in the Minority"

John Winter (MDiv 2nd year), "Diversity and 'Diversity Troubles' Across Religious Traditions"

## Faculty Grant Recipients *continued...*

within the constitution of both literature and religious identity (one on 'Inner-Biblical Exegesis' and another on 'Scribes and Scribalism'), this CSWR grant will support bringing a group of scholars to Harvard in academic year 2012-13 who will lead individual seminar sessions, participate in small symposia, and offer lectures to the broader Harvard community. The constellation of topics handled in these lectures (e.g., the significance of writing and writtleness, texts and intertextuality, canon 'consciousness' and formation, exegesis as a religious habit, etc.), while centering on Judaism and the Hebrew Bible, will engage a range of interests and perspectives."

Michael Jackson's project, "Ethics and Migration,"

is based on extensive recorded conversations with, and ethnographic fieldwork among, African migrants in three European cities (London, Copenhagen, Amsterdam).

It explores the ethical preoccupations and quandaries of migrants struggling to make a life for themselves in alien and often forbidding social environments. Why do migrants assume the right to seek their fortune in places where, strictly speaking, they have no place? What kind of human right leads them to ignore the fact that they often have no legal or moral right to live and work in the country on which they have pinned their hopes for a better life? What sense of 'natural justice' justifies their claim for a right to life in a country where many locals aver that they owe the migrants nothing?

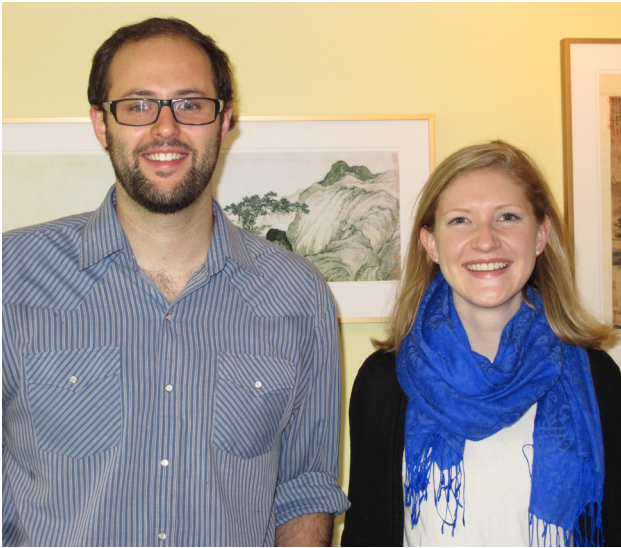
Professors Teeter and Jackson will share the results of their research with the Center community later on in the upcoming academic year.



Michael D. Jackson



## 2012 Greeley International Internship Recipients



Zachary Kerzee and Melissa Nozell

The Greeley International Internship honors the Reverend Dana McLean Greeley, AB '31, STB '33, who believed that people of all backgrounds and faiths are deeply connected to one another and should work together for

positive social change. The internship is intended to foster interreligious understanding and supports students who wish to intern with an organization outside of the United States that is dedicated to the promotion of interreligious understanding, peace, and social justice.

This year, we have awarded two internships:

Melissa Nozell (MTS '13) has been selected for proposed work with the Jordanian

Interfaith Coexistence Research Center (JICRC), an organization based in Amman, Jordan that promotes religious pluralism in the Middle East. The JICRC, under the leadership of its co-founder, The Very Reverend Father Nabil Haddad, uses Christian-Muslim encounters as a

medium through which to encourage peace. Melissa is excited to contribute to the JICRC's mission of peace-building through religious dialogue while gaining insight into the daily functioning of an international interfaith organization in regions where interreligious encounters are inevitable and essential.

Zachary Kerzee (MDiv '14) was also selected for an internship award and will travel to Hyderabad, India to work with the Daya Center for Peace, a newly formed NGO committed to the development of programs which promote peaceful reconciliation in India and South Asia. The Daya Center incorporates literature, theatre, and sports, to strengthen urban and rural schools and bring youth together to learn about peace building strategies. They also network and collaborate with local and international actors to increase peace building capacities.

## 2012 Undergraduate Summer Research Grant Recipients

Each spring the CSWR awards an undergraduate grant for summer senior-thesis-related research. Eligible to apply are undergraduate religion concentrators in their junior year, whose proposed senior thesis has as its key focus an interreligious, cross-cultural, or comparative theme.

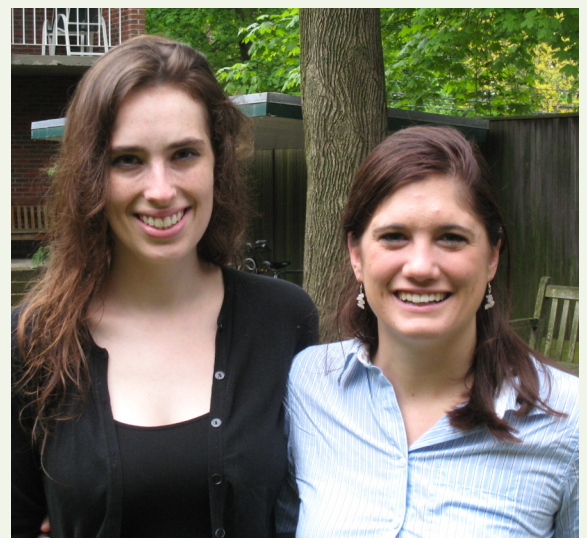
This year, we had many strong proposals, and were pleased to be able to select two grant recipients, Marjorie Gullick and Sara Lytle.

Marjorie will travel to Kisumu, Kenya, to conduct research on the relationship between religion and maternal health, focusing on a comparative approach between Christianity and indigenous beliefs, the two most prominent belief systems in the country. She will be living at a site supported by Massachusetts General Hospital, which also oversees

The Initiative to End Child Malnutrition, with which Marjorie interned in 2011. During the eight weeks that she will be in Kisumu, she will be traveling to remote islands on Lake Victoria to interview mothers, physicians, midwives and religious figures, as well as to local health care centers and clinics in the region.

Sara Lytle will spend half of the summer in Penang, Malaysia and the other half in San Francisco, California to study how Buddhist models of spiritual care are used in contemporary end of life care and hospice programs. With time and with travel, Buddhism takes on new forms and merges into new settings around the world. Sara will therefore conduct research with hospice organizations in both Asia and

America that use Buddhist models of care to develop two comparative case studies for her senior thesis.



Harvard College Juniors Sara Lytle and Marjorie Gullick

# Events

## Sacred Healing and Wholeness in Africa and the Americas



Funlayo Wood with ceremonial leader, Awo Ifakunle, and keynote speaker, Luisah Teish

On April 13th, a wonderful group of scholars, practitioners and scholar-practitioners gathered at Harvard for “Sacred Healing and Wholeness in Africa and the Americas,” a symposium organized by CSWR Junior Fellow, Funlayo Wood.

The symposium was the culmination of Funlayo’s project of engagement with African, African Diasporic and Indigenous religions at the CSWR, which has included a meditation group, film screening, and talks from special guests including Frédérique Apffel-Marglin, a former WGS fellow and author of the recently released *Subversive Spiritualities: How Rituals Enact the World*.

Attracting over one hundred attendees, the symposium focused on healing in traditions including Haitian Vodou, Dagara and High Amazonian shamanism, and Orisa traditions like Lukumi and Candomble, and featured dynamic presentations by graduate students at Harvard, BU, Emory, UC Berkeley, Florida State and NYU. Highlights included a keynote by popular author and educator, Luisah Teish, an opening plenary by CSR alum Tracey Hucks, now chair of Religion at Haverford College, and a welcome address by CSWR director, Francis Clooney as well as libation and other ceremonial aspects presided over by Chief Babalawo Oluwole Ifakunle Adetutu.

## The Multireligious MDiv: A Conversation

The changing nature of seminary and divinity school studies is an interesting and urgent topic today. What does multireligious theological education look like at its best? What are the challenges and problems arising when people of different faith traditions study side by side for the MDiv degree?

In February, scholars from Hartford Seminary, Union Theological Seminary (NY), Claremont School of Theology,

the University of Chicago, and Seattle University came to the Center to meet with some of our faculty and students to discuss theological, curricular, and practical matters related to the multireligious MDiv. One session was open to the public, while a second day was dedicated to a more in-depth conversation among the invited participants. Working closely with the Office of Ministry Studies, we expect to follow up on this initiative next year.

## Annual Greeley Lecture

The Dana McLean Greeley Lecture for Peace and Social Justice Endowment Fund supports an annual lecture at Harvard Divinity School on issues of peace, social justice or inter-religious dialogue that will reach a broad audience in the Harvard community and beyond.

On March 28th, Marshall Ganz gave the lecture on “Self, Us, Now: Hillel’s Three Questions.” Professor Ganz is Senior Lecturer in Public Policy at the Kennedy School of Government and author of the recent well-received book, *Why David Sometimes Wins: Leadership, Organization, and Strategy In The California Farm Worker Movement*. His lecture combined erudition, masterful teaching, and the rich fruits of his long experience in community organizing, in the South in the 1960s, with grape workers in the California in the 1970s,

and thereafter with a wide variety of grassroots organizations.

On October 25th, the 2012-13 Greeley Lecture will be given by Eboo Patel, Founder and President of the Interfaith Youth Core and author of *Sacred Ground: Pluralism, Prejudice, and the Promise of America*.



Marshall Ganz

## Faculty Book Discussions

The Center hosted six faculty book discussions this year: Susan Lloyd McGarry and Donald Swearer (editors), *Ecologies of Human Flourishing*; Rachel McCleary, *The Oxford Handbook of the Economics of Religion*; Leila Ahmed, *A Quiet Revolution*; Dan McKanan, *Prophetic Encounters: Religion and the American Radical Tradition*; David Carrasco, *Cave, City, and Eagle’s Nest*; and David Hempton, *The Church in the Long 18th Century*.

While these events first of all celebrate

our colleagues’ work, it has been invariably the case that the authors’ reflections on the process of writing the book, and the expert discussants’ friendly but often probing questions, in fact also opened up a wider range of issues about how we study history, read texts, and do detailed research, and still contribute to issues of concern today. Since discussants are more often than not from outside HDS, the books are also occasioning wider discussions of religion from different perspectives.

## Intersections of Religious, Spiritual and Ethical Food Practices

Reported by Seth Ligo

On April 17th, the CSWR was kind enough to host a lunchtime discussion about traditions of food and eating. Designed by Grace Egbert (MTS '12) of the Food Literacy Project, and Seth Ligo (MDiv '12) who is interested in creating shared space and points of reflection for inter-religious dialogue, the program brought together Muslims, Jews, Hindus, Buddhists, Humanists, Pagans, Christians, and people with hybrid religious and cultural identities to discuss what food meant to them in their lives. Some spoke

of their tradition's views regarding the ethics of what is eaten. Some spoke of how food made them feel a part of a wider community, while others spoke of how they noticed their distinction from their neighbors when it came time to eat. Some even spoke up to voice opinions that differed from the prevalent discourses of their traditions. We all had time to speak, and time to eat, and we were able to move smoothly and comfortably through vast and varied landscapes of thought and behavior while remaining oriented by pivoting

around the plates we found before us. When it comes to something as universal as eating, there is still so much diversity, both within and across communities. Finding threads of similarity and difference – and following them – might not provide any answers or resolutions for differences which are often sites of friction; but it does remind us that we can share and enjoy one another's presence and humanity even when we are, and remain, different.



## 2012-13 Calendar of Events

**We already have several events planned for fall 2012 & spring 2013. All events take place at CSWR @ 5:15 pm:**

Wed. Sept. 26 <b>Thomas Coburn</b> of Naropa University, part of our ongoing "Intellectual Worlds of Meditation Series"
Wed. Oct 17 <b>Amy-Jill Levine</b> of Vanderbilt University, coeditor of <i>The Jewish Annotated New Testament</i> , delivers the annual Comparative Theology Lecture
Thurs. Oct. 25 <b>Eboo Patel</b> , founder & President of Interfaith Youth Core & author of <i>Sacred Ground: Pluralism, Prejudice, and the Promise of America</i> , delivers the annual Dana McLean Greeley Lecture for Peace & Social Justice
Tues. Nov. 6 <b>Sung-Bae Park</b> of Stony Brook University delivers the Ahnkook Fund for Korean Buddhism Lecture, an event sponsored by Harvard's Asia Center and Korea Institute
Thurs. Apr. 4 2013 <b>Louis Newman</b> of Carleton College delivers the Albert and Vera List Fund for Jewish Studies Lecture
Mon. Apr. 15 2013 A Panel entitled, "Song of Songs: Translation, Reception, Reconfiguration" as part of the CSWR spring conference on the same topic, featuring international and domestic scholars

**Faculty book events to be held 2012-2013 (dates TBD):**

<b>Harvey Cox &amp; Stephanie Paulsell</b> , <i>Lamentations and the Song of Songs: A Theological Commentary on the Bible</i>
<b>Diana Eck</b> , <i>India: A Sacred Biography</i>
<b>Charles Stang</b> , <i>Apophysis and Pseudonymity in Dionysius the Areopagite</i>

# Building News

## Summer Projects

One of the great resources of the Center is the building itself, a unique design by the distinguished architect Josep Lluís Sert. At fifty-two years old, it is in need of continuing care. Under the able management of Charles Anderson, in cooperation with Ralph DeFlorio and Roy Lauridsen of HDS Facilities, the building is in very fine shape.

Small but important improvements have taken place in recent months, some projects continuing into the summer: the completion of the installation of new carpeting through the common spaces, new drapes (with a splash of color, a rich saffron) for the Conference Room, new chairs and couches for the Common Room, rain sensors for all irrigation systems on the CSWR grounds, and a feasibility study regarding the installation of solar panels on the CSWR roof.

Our Meditation Room, pictured below, continues to be well-used by individuals and groups.



## The CSWR Gardens



Landscaper Elizabeth Ludvik and Charles Anderson, CSWR's Assistant Director for Administration and Finance

The CSWR grounds celebrates thirteen years of care under the discerning eye of Elizabeth Ludvik of New World Landscaping. Elizabeth's passion and keen eye have contributed to softening the envelope of the CSWR complex and enticing visitors to take a moment to enjoy the space surrounded by her innovative and thoughtful plantings.

In 1999 Elizabeth remembers having to convince the Center staff she could indeed run a lawnmower (!) and was hired to do exactly that – mow the Center lawn. Her talent for landscape design quickly became apparent and the Center soon came to rely on her expertise to re-imagine and renovate the grounds.

Elizabeth implemented a design plan to build a berm and waterfall in the interior courtyard, lending a sense of terrain to

the space along with the hypnotically enticing and inviting sound of a gentle waterfall. She then added her “perennial wisdom” to the garden beds, bringing a sense of color vibrancy and variety to the interior periphery.

A Zen garden was imagined by the then Center director Donald Swearer and designed by Elizabeth, amplifying the meditative attributes of the space, recognized now as a special oasis in the area of Harvard's North Yard. The backyard bed was planted providing definition and texture to the property line, drawing visitors' eyes out into the space.

Charles Anderson and Elizabeth designed a plan to remove a barrier privet hedge wall in the CSWR front yard, opening up and transforming the space to a world of possibilities including inviting stone walkways and foliage that flower and produce bursts of color throughout the seasons. A similar plan was put in place for the residents' backyard.

Elizabeth's mastery continues to bring a sense of beauty and joy to the Center each and every day, eliciting accolades from our many visitors.

When you are in the neighborhood, please stop in.

