

Letter from the Editor

Veritas Review (VR) has been committed, for more than three years, to harmony – a key to the Abigail Adams Institute (AAI) and the VR. We have encouraged both individuality and community at AAI and have reached out to our growing community at Harvard and Cambridge, Boston and Massachusetts, in the United States and beyond. We continue to do so thanks to the alumni and to the contributors, editors, staff and students past and present. Understanding, thought, interpretation, inquiry, and expression continue to be central to VR and we welcome you to explore the humanities in relation to arts, science, and society. This issue builds on the previous issues but represents a change, a new direction.

The change begins with the cover and layout and is part of the original aim of the *Veritas Review*. That goal was to bring people together, to explore with civility and harmony, art, ideas, science and culture. An important part of that community was and is students. All those associated with AAI have contributed with much success to the journal, which also serves the humanities programs and events of the Abigail Adams Institute.

This new look to the *Veritas Review* is an innovation, a new reaching out, a welcome. This issue ranges from the paradox of Concord through a discussion of Oscar Wilde, a conversation about Christine de Pizan, poems, a close reading of a poem by George Herbert, a review of an exciting new film, photography, an examination of heavy metal music, an analysis of Empedocles and the archetype of Medea, an interview with Harry Lewis, a trip to the Harvard Art Museums to a consideration of *Timaeus*. Here is a mix of the classical past, the Middle Ages and the present, various modes of interpretation and a range of arts and genres. The contributors have distinct voices that intrigue and inform. This issue is a departure and continuation. It is bold – a bold invitation. Thanks to all the contributors and to the editors, colleagues at VR the past three years and to Danilo Petranovich and Maura Cahill for transforming the journal for its new phase. Continuity and change are a good combination for success.

Distinct voices and images in print and visual art speak to us in this issue of *Veritas Review* as they do from the past as we move into the future. The opening sentence of Thoreau's "A Winter Walk" is still moving: "The wind has gently murmured through the blinds, or puffed with feathery softness against the windows, and occasionally sighed like a summer zephyr lifting the leaves along, the livelong night." This image, even for those who have not spent a winter in or around Boston or New England, can be felt in the bones, resonate in our ears, eyes, all our senses in the mind, in memory. Another instance, this one from a letter from Abigail Adams, from Weymouth on 11 August 1763, to John Adams, also has staying power: "Humanity obliges us to be affected with the distresses and Miserys of our fellow creatures. Friendship is a band yet stronger, which causes us to [feel] with greater tenderness the afflictions of our Friends." There is a bond in feeling the afflictions of those close to us. This observation of humanity, friendship and friends speaks to us, stays with us. We might well extend feeling those afflictions of others close to us or not – our common humanity, our living in nature and culture. Abigail is wise and writes to John Adams, who along with Samuel Adams (and apparently the editor himself), is descended from Henry Adams, who arrived in Massachusetts in the 1630's from Somerset in England, and began to build something different and new. Humanity and friendship are always with us but can also be made in new contexts. Individuals and communities thrive on these foundations, and we need the human and friends more than ever in nature in all the seasons, to see the beauty in winter and not to make it "the winter of our discontent."

Best,



Jonathan Hart