

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

The Pandemic/Crystal Anniversary Issue

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Conceived, laid out and edited from a cloistered place in my faculty office in Provo, as the entire world continued to grapple with the Covid-19 pandemic, this “crystal anniversary” issue of *Lingua Romana* is one the editors feel especially fortunate to release. If we are able to do so, it is thanks to the persistence of the individuals who intrepidly contributed their texts and talents to the realization of what might have otherwise been an ill-fated volume.

Since initiating our efforts to “topple the ivory towers of the Humanities” with the introduction of our Outreach/Public Humanities module in *Lingua Romana* Vol. 13.1 (Fall 2016)—review Ilona Klein’s statement, “The Humanities: Our Human Journey” from that issue for an explanation and justification of this initiative—we have enjoyed highlighting the efforts of our allies and authors to elevate and render the humanities accessible to all. As part of the “Women’s Voices of the Middle Ages & Renaissance” symposium, co-sponsored by various colleges, departments and other entities at BYU, including *Lingua Romana*, we were able to frame this year’s outreach around the visit of independent scholar/actor Suzanne Savoy and her one-woman play *Je Christine*, on the life and writings of medieval luminary Christine de Pizan. In fact, since it constitutes a real focal point of this volume, our Outreach/Public Humanities section will lead things off, with an introduction to *Je Christine* by Shelley Williams, a retrospective essay by Suzanne Savoy, links to a website, trailer and podcast for *Je Christine*, and, finally, a photo album of this memorable weekend on campus, 13–14 March 2020, as Suzanne Savoy’s arrival on campus coincided with the beginning of shutdown efforts in response to the pandemic.

The articles featured in the subsequent section are from two BYU Art History MA students, who presented compelling papers at the aforementioned Women’s Voices symposium, both looking at iconography of saintly women in meaningful ways and examining how that can be interpreted for good and evil—and both of whom we are especially pleased to include in this issue. An additional two articles were accepted for publication from those submitted via the *Lingua Romana* submissions page—and, although not related to early modern women, the editors are pleased to include them as *Varia* in the current volume. Finally, two reviews, one of a recent novel with French interests and another treating an academic study of the nineteenth-century French short story, round out this pandemic issue of *Lingua Romana*.

We hope this issue, like crystal, the symbol traditionally adopted for a fifteenth anniversary, offers a prism through which we can view this most difficult year, all the while recognizing our place within a world in which humanity has always suffered but still found the courage to create.