Marian Donnelly’s Legacy of Scandinavian Architectural History

A mere glance at the 20 years that Friends has been promoting Scandinavian Studies at the UO reveals that Marian Card Donnelly (1923-1999) had a formative influence in the life of the organization. Among the multitude of academic and professional accolades for which she is better known – as an architectural historian and author of five books, as a respected educator, and as historian of the Oregon Bach Festival – her contributions to Scandinavian Studies as a founding member of Friends and author of our bylaws are sometimes overlooked.

As an undergraduate, Marian took a zealous interest in Scandinavia. During her first visit to the Nordic countries, she touched down in a biplane on Gotland, a Swedish island in the Baltic Sea. That was just the beginning of the adventures that pervaded her adult life and fueled her academic passions for Scandinavian studies.

Within 21 months, Marian completed her Ph.D. in Architectural History at Yale. On that campus, she met Russell Donnelly, who became her husband, traveling partner and architectural photographer – in addition to his day-job as an accomplished physicist. Marian, Russell and their son Jim traveled annually to the midieval town of Visby on the west coast of Gotland.

“Surely, lutefish (dried cod prepared with lye) is the strangest culinary effort...the devotees defend it vehemently while others call it a national disgrace.” (Astrid Karlsen Scott, Ekte Norske Jul Traditional Christmas Foods).
From the President's Desk

Dear Friends,

Although spring marks infancy, freshness and early growth in nature, I sense strongly that fall is a time of new beginnings. This is a time to assume new commitments, to make career adjustments, and to make mature decisions of many kinds. How good it is to be given the opportunity to evaluate our past actions and then proceed to the best of our abilities.

For Friends of Scandinavian Studies this fall marks the beginning of a new mandate period for many members of the Board. I have been your President for three years and it is time for me to step down. A new President will be elected at our next general membership meeting on November 13 (see calendar). The Board welcomes suggestions for who might fill this position. Please come with recommendations for new officers and Board members! With all my heart, I urge you to become an active member of Friends of Scandinavian Studies. Serving on the Board has been a delightful, educating and inspiring experience. I am confident that those selected to fill these openings will treasure the opportunity to work with others and build new friendships in the process.

Wishing you all a healthy and productive Fall!

Harriet

Marian Donnelly

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Scandinavia for twenty-five years. Although Russell’s career has brought him in contact with many Nobel prize winning physicists, he easily considers Marian to have been the most interesting person he ever met. Russell left his professorship at the University of Chicago to follow Marian to the UO. Here Marian made her mark in Architectural History and in Scandinavian Studies. She shared her keen understanding of the rich and sometimes neglected traditions of Scandinavian art and architecture. During her tenure at the UO she published Architecture in the Scandinavian Countries (MIT Press, 1992), which is said to be the definitive survey of Nordic architecture available. This book contains hundreds of photographs taken by Russell. At the UO, Marian initiated courses in Scandinavian art and architecture within the art history curriculum. She also dramatically expanded the UO’s collection of slides, teaching materials, and books about Scandinavian art and architecture.

With a vision to preserve Scandinavian Studies at the UO, she helped forge the seminal Board of Friends of Scandinavian Studies in 1985 with community members and colleagues including Ingrid Weatherhead, Virpi Zuck, and Tom Mills. Marian wrote the first bylaws for Friends, which enabled the group to become a recognized non-profit organization.

Marian’s role as an unassuming trailblazer of Friends is not surprising, given her tendency to take the lead and give freely of her time, energy, and knowledge.
Calendar of Scandinavian Events

Tuesday, November 8 • 7:00 pm • International Resource Center, EMU

Scandinavian Film Series, part I: Family
The 28 year old Arab-Danish filmmaker documents the gripping process of finding his father in the face of fear, insecurity and doubt. Using his camera as the most important witness, he exposes the humour and emotions of his search. (dir Sami Saif & Phie Ambo, 2001, 85 min, Danish with English subtitles)

Scandinavian Film Series, part II: Boogie Woogie Pappa
As a kid, your father seems heroic, particularly when he’s mysterious, always the life of the party and can play boogie woogie piano. What made the music stop — were troubles with work and booze in the 1950s enough of an explanation? (dir. Erik Bäfving, 2002, 13 min, Swedish with English subtitles)

Tuesday, November 8 • 12:00 noon • Grant Conference Room, 330 Hendricks Hall

CSWS Lecture by Professor Ellen Rees: The (Trans)Gendered Body in Contemporary Norwegian Documentary Cinema.
Professor Rees will discuss how two films, Margareth Olin’s Kroppen Min [My Body], and Even Benestad’s Alt om min far [All about my father], represent the gendered or transgendered body. Referring to these films and the text What is a Woman? And Other Essays by Norwegian feminist scholar Toril Moi with, Rees draws some insights about the contemporary status of women in Norway. This lecture is part of International Perspectives on Women, Gender and Sexuality - An Interdisciplinary Colloquium.

Thursday, November 13 • 5:00 pm • Sons of Norway Lodge 1836 Alder Street

FSS Fall Potluck Supper!
- We’ll bring homemade pea soup, ham, cheese, and knäckebröd
- Bring a Scandinavian dish of your own to share, or a donation
- Elect new officers for this year’s FSS board

Fall & Winter Courses

The following Scandinavian literature courses are offered fall term:

SCAN 250 - Masks and Ecstatic Experience (Prof. Michael Stern)
This class prompts an interrogation of mere appearances by exploring texts and films that highlight the difficulty of interpretation. Through these works that use masks and tell tales of ecstatic experiences (traumatic events, religious passion, sexual desire, and the like), the students develop critical thinking skills to more accurately read their own experiences and environments.

SCAN 325 - Autobiography and Other Fictions (Prof. Michael Stern)
We arrive at our notions of self by approaching an intersection of many narratives. This course investigates the relationship between narrative and the crafting of identity. The interaction between the stories we inherit and those that we create is of primary concern.

The following course is offered winter term:

SCAN 341 - Revisions of the Scandinavian Dream (Prof. Ellen Rees)
During the latter half of the twentieth century the Scandinavian countries became known as the “third way” of social democracy, balanced between east bloc and west bloc ideologies. This course examines the development of the Scandinavian countries from impoverished kingdoms on the European periphery to modern, multicultural welfare societies. The course analyzes patterns in the arts, social and political structures, and ecological issues. The course is conducted in English.

Events are free and open to the public. Check updates at http://scandinavian.uoregon.edu.
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**FRIENDS MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL**

**Membership Renewal**
Please continue your support of Scandinavian Studies at the UO. Nonprofit contributions are tax-deductible.

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☐ $1000 Benefactor (lifetime membership)
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**FRIENDS OF SCANDINAVIAN STUDIES**

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