

## The School of Visual Arts and Dance: 25 Years

Those of you looking forward to the witty, erudite, and sometimes ominous essays by *Athantor's* founding father, François Bucher, which normally fill this space will shortly learn that your thirst will not be slaked today. Rather, we mark a pause in time to say to all those associated with *Athantor* over the years, "A job well done!"

I remember as if it were yesterday the first few discussions held in faculty meetings of the Department of Art History regarding whether or not we should create *Athantor*, whether or not it would serve graduate students well, whether or not the slide would be worth the climb. That was back in 1980. A certain inertia had set in after the first presentation by Dr. Bucher. We all like "idea men" of course, but after the meal was announced, would he be there to help with the dishes? Year after year he brought his towel and rubbed the dishes clean.

If the XVth edition of *Athantor* had not already been dedicated to him, I'd offer this copy to that end. Ever since I met him as one of my first college professors (I'll give you a moment to digest that), up to the present day, I have been struck by his generosity of spirit and the childlike quality of mind that never fails to open itself to every worthwhile idea and sponge up its juices.

For all his longevity in the School of Visual Arts and Dance at Florida State, François has been here but a few years when viewed against the rich tradition and lengthy history of the School. Yes, 1998 marks 25 years! While that may not equate precisely with Oxford or even Yale, our traditions are building. *Athantor* is a journal designed to give graduate students a forum for their research not only because they need one but because the quality of their ideas deserves it. It has flourished under the stewardship of the SVAD as a reflection of that spirit of openness and inquiry which imbues its founder and characterizes every department of the School.

In 1966 when the mother of Art History at Florida State, Dr. Gulnar Bosch, fresh from her pioneering effort of establishing the department's Ph.D. program, gave birth to the Florence Study Center, she began a legacy of learning in Europe which has nurtured many art and art history students, predating the founding of the School. Her vision, like that of other artists and art historians over the years, was added to the alchemist's furnace. So, too, were those whose labor of love kept the journal afloat in lean years, such as Dr. Patricia Rose, and maintained its rigorous allegiance to quality, such as the Museum Press Editor-in-Chief, Dr. Allys Palladino-Craig, and Graphic Designer Julienne T. Mason.

*Athantor's* success also reflects a love of culture and diverse world views. In an earlier edition, Bucher remarked upon the wide range of art historical investigations which "reassert the role of art in breaking down rigid intellectual and political barriers" and how the students through their essays "display the search for a more widely-based interpretation of imagery. . . Above all, they display the dedication necessary for the survival of liberated minds. . ." The student scholars, who number over 100 authors represented by sixteen years of the journal, were no doubt motivated in part by a love for the richness of diverse cultures.

Twenty five years. A man once quipped that whenever he thinks of the past, "it brings back so many memories." It is time to revive some old ones and create some new ones. In the coming fall—October 2-4, 1998, to be precise—a great celebration will be held in Tallahassee. A celebration of mind and spirit, a walk down memory lane, a time to reminisce and reflect. . .and to appreciate our colleagues and students.

J.L. Draper, Dean  
School of Visual Arts and Dance