

Memorial Resolution

W. Eugene Kleinbauer
(1937-2019)

W. Eugene Kleinbauer, professor emeritus in the Department of Art History, died on June 3, 2019, in Bloomington, Indiana. During his long and prolific career, Gene led the fields of Byzantine architecture and art historiography, and served in many leadership roles, both on the Bloomington campus and within his discipline.

Gene was born in Los Angeles, California, in 1937. After earning his bachelor's degree in economics at the University of California, Berkeley, in 1959, he transferred his focus to the field of art history. He completed a Master of Arts in history of art at Berkeley before moving to Princeton, where he completed a Master of Fine Art in 1964, and then a Ph.D. in 1967, with a study of the aisled tetraconch church form, a Christian architectural genre that appeared in Italy, Armenia, Syria, and Northern Mesopotamia and then just as quickly disappeared. Gene returned to California to teach at UCLA from 1965 to 1972, before moving to Bloomington to become associate professor and chair of fine art in 1973. He spent the remainder of his career at Indiana University, interrupted by brief stints as San and Ayala Zacks Visiting Professor of the History of Art at Hebrew University (1978) and Frederic Lindley Morgan Visiting Professor of Architectural Design at the University of Louisville (1996). Gene served as editor of the scholarly journal *Gesta* from 1980 to 1983, and then as president of its parent professional organization, the International Center of Medieval Art, from 1987 to 1990. He retired from Indiana University in 2006.

While Gene continued his work on Byzantine architecture, publishing monographs (*Saint Sophia at Constantinople: singulariter in mundo*, 1999, and *Hagia Sophia*, 2004) and research tools (*Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture: An Annotated Bibliography and Historiography*, 1992), his scholarly reputation was defined by his work on the historiography of art history. A first foray into historiography, "Geistesgeschichte and Art History," *Art Journal* 30 (1970/71) was quickly followed by his *Modern Perspectives in Western Art History: An Anthology of Twentieth Century Writings on the Visual Arts*. First published in 1971 to provide a required graduate class with English translations of key readings and an interpretive framework, it was expanded and republished repeatedly, becoming the standard text for historiography courses in the discipline over the subsequent decades. Once joined by his coauthored *Research Guide to the History of Western Art* (1982), these works cemented his reputation as perhaps "the father of art historiography in the United States and much of the English-speaking world," in the words of Lee Sorensen, editor of the modern historiographic clearing house *Dictionary of Art Historians* (June 18, 2019).

A popular undergraduate teacher, each class meeting of Gene's A101 *Introduction to Ancient and Medieval Art* was preceded by a pop music prelude. Late in his career, each Halloween saw an A101 costume contest with prizes. He was awarded the Indiana University President's Award for Teaching in 1999.

Gene's legacy was also built through the many graduate students he supervised, who continue to advance the field through their scholarly pursuits at universities, research centers, and presses throughout North America. Supervising projects that ranged across Europe and nine centuries of medieval history, he gently pushed his students to the highest level of achievement. Former student Henry Schilb reported in the November, 2019, ICMA Newsletter, "I can attest to his skills as a lecturer, but I am also aware that, with his intellect and demeanor, he could intimidate some of my fellow graduate students, albeit unwittingly and often with a mere waggle of his famous eyebrows. He could also baffle those undergraduates who came into his classrooms unprepared for the wryly erudite yet playful humor that punctuated his lectures. For the patient student who paid attention, however, the reward was a rich intellectual journey...and the occasional medley of Madonna's latest hits." In the words of Ph.D. graduate Janice James, "He was a warm, caring, supportive, humorous, dedicated, inspiring and strong individual, a true treasure to have had as an advisor, mentor, and teacher."

Gene is survived by his husband, Richard Aebersold, his sons, Christopher and Mark, Mark's wife Susan, two grandchildren, Nicki and Cassidy, and his brother, Thomas Kleinbauer.

We request that this memorial tribute to Gene Kleinbauer be presented to the members of the Bloomington Faculty Council, that it be preserved in its minutes and archive, and that after its presentation copies be sent to members of his family.

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