On May 27 we celebrated the outstanding Class of 2009 at Commencement ceremonies marking the 150th anniversary of Peter Cooper’s founding of The Cooper Union, an institution with a unique academic and philanthropic mission in higher education, an attribute that continues to this day. As always, this year’s graduating class represented a cross section of exceptional talent and extraordinary accomplishments.

A small sample of the prestigious national and international awards won by members of the Class of 2009 included two Fulbright Scholarships, whose recipients will study in Belgium and South Africa. Since 2001, an astonishing 31 Fulbrights have been awarded to Cooper Union graduates, approximately seven percent of all of those awarded in architecture, art and engineering. Our engineering school—a top producer of National Science Foundation Fellowships, with 13 since 2004—added a new one from the Class of 2009. Prizes in engineering, art, architecture and athletics abounded—ranging from the American Architectural Foundation’s 2009 RTKL Traveling Fellowship to the Concrete Industry Foundation’s Board Scholarship to the Harriet Hale Wooley Scholarship in Art and the Hudson Valley Conference Men’s Tennis and Cross Country Championships.

The 220 members of this diverse class came from 33 states and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. Forty were born outside of the United States. Sixteen were first introduced to the serious study of art, architecture or engineering through our high school programs. Six have siblings that are either graduates or current students. One was the grandson of a 1932 engineering graduate; another, the great grandson of a Cooper Union alumnus. The familial relationships are special at The Cooper Union because, unlike many colleges, our admissions policy does not permit legacy considerations.

This 150th anniversary year marks an important confluence of events for the college, as we celebrate both the 19th century founding and unprecedented philanthropic act of one man—Peter Cooper—at the same time as we structure the institution to meet the challenges facing us in the 21st century. From 1859 until today, the college has produced many of the world’s greatest designers, artists, architects, scientists, builders and innovators. As we move forward, the need for such talent will only increase. Technology is evolving at an accelerating rate, art and architecture continue to break barriers, and the arts and sciences intersect more and more. Our new building at 41 Cooper Square will welcome its first freshman class this fall, as well as the current students who have watched it rise at our urban campus. The new state-of-the-art learning environment will offer faculty an unprecedented opportunity for pedagogical innovation, research and scholarship, and in turn offer students the chance to better develop the skills to create, build, invent and improve the world in which they will live and work. This first green academic laboratory building in New York City, built to LEED Platinum standards, was designed to be adaptable to the educational and scholarly demands

continued on page 4
Top to bottom:
Michael Cerro (ChE’09)
His Eminence Edward Cardinal Egan
with Chairman of the Board of
Trustees Ronald W. Drucker (CE’62)
The class of 2009 process by
41 Cooper Square
Commencement Mace Bearer
Paul Bailyn (ME’59)

Student address speaker
Jacob Mautner (AR’09)

Presidential citation honoree
Evan Douglis (AR’83) with Trustee
Cynthia C. Weiler

Presidential citation honoree
Carin Goldberg (A’75) with Trustee
Audrey Flack (A’S1)

Trustee Mark Epstein (A’76) with
Presidential citation honoree
Kamran Mahbobi (EE’89/MEE’91)

Commencement address
speaker Amy Goodman

Kalle Lindgren (AR’09)
with his spouse Sika
and daughter Audrey

Photos Leo Sorel
of the 21st Century and beyond. In addition to satisfying our functional and programmatic needs, the charge to the architects was also to create a space that would stimulate, inspire and nurture the creative spirit of students and faculty while creating opportunities for interdisciplinary interactions. We believe that the architects lived up to the challenge. The Ribbon Cutting for the building is scheduled for September 15.

Since 2001 The Cooper Union’s most comprehensive and intense “building” process has been construction and reconstruction of a financial support system to see the college well into its next 150 years. The Trustees and administration of this institution remain unalterably committed to maintaining Peter Cooper’s legacy of an education as “free as air and water,” committed to providing a full tuition scholarship to every admitted student in perpetuity.

This year has seen a devastating shake-up in our nation’s—and, indeed, the world’s economy. As a result, we have experienced a decline in our endowment. The fact that our endowment performance is in the top five percent among university and college endowments, nationwide, however, is a real tribute to the exceptional skill of our Investment Committee, led by Trustee John Michaelson through 2008 and now by Trustee and alumnus Philip Trahanas. Even though our endowment has declined far less than the drop at most of our peer institutions, it represents a greater burden, since we do not collect any revenues from tuition.

This has also been a challenging year for fund raising throughout the cultural and educational communities, and we are extremely grateful for the loyalty and generosity of our alumni, donors, government, foundations and other supporters who continue to contribute. While contributions declined this year, The Campaign for Cooper Union has now reached $182 million toward our goal of $250 million by 2012. Raising $68 million in three years will not be easy in this climate, but it is essential to our success and we’d like to especially encourage our alumni and friends to be as generous as they can. The Cooper Union depends on you and we thank you.

President’s Message continued from page 2

News Briefs

Eagle Takes Flight!

The three-ton historic marble Eagle, a longtime resident and namesake of Cooper Union’s Eagle Garden, moved this summer to a new roost on the Green Roof of 41 Cooper Square. The Eagle, one of twenty-two original eagles sculpted by 1891 alumnus Adolph Weinman, guarded the McKim, Mead and White Pennsylvania Station from 1910 to 1963, and was acquired by The Cooper Union in 1965. A group of students from The Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture, led by Joe Zelvin (AR’65) and then Dean of Students Dr. Richard S. Ball, petitioned the Pennsylvania Railroad to receive and rescue this piece of New York City history. The 2009 class gift is helping to fund the Eagle’s flight from the engineering building to the south-east corner of 41 Cooper Square’s 8th floor.
Major Great Hall Renovations

Following months of analysis, planning and design, The Great Hall was closed on December 6, 2008 for a twelve week renovation. Thirty years had passed since any major improvements: chairs were noisy and uncomfortable, the audiovisual (AV) system often proved inadequate and acoustics were poor. Funded by a generous grant from The Peter Jay Sharp Foundation, the project brought together many people—including many Cooper alumni—to address these issues while maintaining the Hall’s significant architectural integrity. Involved in leading the renovations were Cooper Union Vice Presidents Ronni Denes and Robert Hawks; associate dean of The Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture Elizabeth O’Donnell (AR’83); director of Continuing Education and Public Programs David Greenstein; director of The Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture Archive Steven Hillyer (AR’90) and planning director of the Business Office Clark Wieman.

Sam Anderson (AR’82), Edward Gormley (AR’90) and Sean Khorsandi (AR’04) of Sam Anderson Architects served as architects for the overall project. They coordinated all design issues, including a new AV booth, improved wheelchair accessibility, acoustic treatments for walls and ceilings, locations of AV equipment and new carpet and finishes throughout.

The Irwin Seating Company of Grand Rapids, Michigan designed a new chair that would replicate the signature double curvature of the 1906 version. Jesse Douglas of Source One, Inc. coordinated all the consultants, fabricators and trades. The firm ArupAcoustics was contracted to perform a full acoustic analysis and schematic design report. Gruzen Samton was also involved in the early stages of the renovation. Paul Tummolo, Supervisor of The Cooper Union Audio-Visual Resource Access Center oversaw the upgrading of the AV systems, digital projectors, microphones, video cameras and a system for assisted listening devices for the hearing impaired.

The Great Hall was formally reopened by President Campbell on March 3 on the occasion of the inaugural lecture of the Institute for Sustainable Design at The Cooper Union. Beautifully refurbished, but visually familiar, The Great Hall is now well equipped to continue its tradition as a site for lectures and performances of historic importance.

Rose Auditorium Seat Naming

The Cooper Union’s Frederick P. Rose Auditorium will provide a superb new space for public programs that serve New York City, including conferences, lectures and seminars for the academic community. Multimedia enabled and perfectly situated adjacent to the Gallery and the Menschel Board Room, the Rose Auditorium will be the focal point for a full program of internal and external events.

It is now possible to make your mark on this lively and innovative space by “naming” one of the 198 seats. The possibilities—and benefits—of naming a chair are many: honor a friend or relative, memorialize a family member or classmate, give an unusual and original birthday or graduation gift, and demonstrate your support for The Cooper Union in a tangible and recognized way.

For more information, please contact Claire Michie at 212.353.4171 or michie@cooper.edu.

41 Cooper Square Sneak Peek Event

On Wednesday, February 11, The Cooper Union hosted a “Sneak Peek” event for members of the Board of Trustees and President’s Council along with major building fund donors and friends to preview our new academic building before it opens to the public later this year. Taking advantage of a great opportunity to talk with project principles including architect Thom Mayne, and see the amazing construction progress first hand, approximately 200 guests enjoyed refreshments in our new gallery and tours throughout the building led by members of the construction management team. The first official event of The Cooper Union’s 150th Anniversary Celebration, the Sneak Peek also served as an opportunity to unveil the college’s new institutional identity.
New Lifetime Giving Society Named for Sarah Amelia Hewitt

On Wednesday, November 19, 2008, President George Campbell Jr. and members of The Cooper Union’s Board of Trustees hosted the founding members of a newly established lifetime giving society—The Sarah Amelia Hewitt Society.

Sarah Amelia Hewitt (1830-1912) was the daughter of Peter Cooper. She married Abram S. Hewitt in 1855, and together they were influential in the world of public service. Sarah Amelia shared her husband’s dedication, as an economic and civic leader, to uncompromising excellence and access to education. The Society that bears her name celebrates the many individuals and families whose lifetime support of The Cooper Union has reached $100,000 or more. The College is deeply indebted to the many members of its lifetime giving societies and The Cooper Union was pleased that many of the 85 inaugural members of The Sarah Amelia Hewitt Society attended this very special event held in their honor.

Family Visits: 41 Cooper Square

Daughter of Engineering School Benefactor Visits New Building

On Friday, March 27, together with husband Robert Karpinski and high-school-student daughter Samantha, Sara Nerken toured 41 Cooper Square, accompanied by Associate Dean of Engineering Simon Ben-Avi. The new academic building will house The Albert Nerken School of Engineering named for Sara’s father, once it moves from the old Engineering Building in Astor Place.

Albert Nerken (ChE’33), who expressed his deep gratitude to The Cooper Union by making an extraordinary gift to name the School of Engineering in the late 1980s, was co-founder in 1945 of Veeco Instruments Inc. (Vacuum Electronic Engineering Corporation), now a leading global provider of metrology and process equipment solutions. But as Sara told us, her father was virtually penniless when he attended the college. In fact, she said, on schooldays, his parents allotted him just 10 cents for roundtrip subway fare and another nickel for coffee.

All three members of the Nerken-Karpinski family were fascinated with the building—and they were particularly interested in the eighth-floor Green Roof, because it turns out that Albert, besides being an outstanding engineer and amazing entrepreneur, was an amateur horticulturalist, and someone who, way ahead of his time, experimented in his home’s basement and backyard with organic chemical compounds and gardening techniques. It is therefore fitting that the Green Roof adjoins the Alumni Roof Terrace, where Albert will be recognized on a paver.

Cooper Alumnus and Trustee Stanley Lapidus Tours 41 Cooper Square

Stanley Lapidus (EE’70) with his wife Ruth, his two sons and daughters-in-law, visited from New Hampshire to see 41 Cooper Square on Friday, April 17. Stan, an alumnus and member of The Cooper Union’s Board of Trustees since 2002, was an early proponent of, and one of the lead donors to, the new academic building.

Stan’s extraordinary generosity is being recognized in the Ruth and Stanley N. Lapidus EE’70 Laboratory, a state-of-the-art lab on the east side of the seventh floor, as well as on the Alumni Roof Terrace. Two large faculty offices on the northwest corners of the third and fourth floors will be named in honor of his sons David and Joel.

Stan is founder and chairman of Helicos BioSciences Corporation, a Cambridge, Massachusetts-based life science company focused on innovative genetic analysis technologies for research, drug discovery and diagnostic markets. Earlier in his career at Cytyc Corporation, a company he also founded, he invented the breakthrough ThinPrep Pap Test, the most widely used procedure in the United States today to detect cervical cancer.

Stan notes, “Four decades ago, when I attended The Cooper Union, the study of life sciences was in its infancy and not part of the engineering curriculum. Nonetheless, the rigor and flexibility of my education enabled me to move in that direction and have the good fortune to be able to contribute to healthcare and cancer prevention.”

From left: Samantha Karpinski, Sara Nerken, Simon Ben-Avi, Robert Karpinski

From left: Stanley Lapidus with his spouse Ruth, daughter-in-law Michelle, sons David and Joel, and daughter-in-law Tiffany
Art, Architecture and Engineering Students Mount End of Year Exhibition ’09

1) A performance view of Jun Hayatsu’s (AR’09) project Kantan, a reinterpretation of the noh theater. Pictured, Hayatsu is performing on a sound-making stage she designed and built.
2) Design II Studio Class Project “Terra-Tectanics; small scale architectural proposals for an imaginary site”
3) Abigail Nedelka (A’09)
4) Dmitri Hertz (A’09) and Alex DeCarli (A’09)
5) Andrew Francis (A’09)
6) The Cooper Motorsports Team’s Formula SAE racer. The team’s graduating members this year include Adam Vaughan (ME’09), Dennis Robertson, James Cole-Henry, Mark Baldisserotto, Burak Kanber, Anina Stanton (all ME’09) and Kwame Wright (EE’09).