

# Princeton University

Honors Faculty Members  
Receiving Emeritus Status



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The biographical sketches were written by colleagues in the departments of those honored, except where noted.

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# Contents



## *Faculty Members Receiving Emeritus Status*

Leonard Harvey Babby	1
Mark Robert Cohen	4
Martin C. Collcutt	6
John Horton Conway	10
Edward Charles Cox	14
Frederick Lewis Dryer	16
Thomas Jeffrey Espenshade	19
Jacques Robert Fresco	22
Charles Gordon Gross	24
András Peter Hámori	28
Marie-Hélène Huet	30
Morton Daniel Kostin	32
Heath W. Lowry	34
Richard Bryant Miles	36
Chiara Rosanna Nappi	39

Susan Naquin	42
Edward Nelson	44
John Abel Pinto	47
Albert Jordy Raboteau	49
François P. Rigolot	54
Daniel T. Rodgers	57
Gilbert Friedell Rozman	61
Peter Schäfer	64
José A. Scheinkman	68
Anne-Marie Slaughter	71
Robert Harry Socolow	74
Zoltán G. Soos	78
Eric Hector Vanmarcke	81
Maurizio Viroli	83
Frank Niels von Hippel	85
Andrew John Wiles	87
Michael George Wood	89

# John Abel Pinto



With the retirement of John Pinto after twenty-five years of service, both the Department of Art and Archaeology and the University lose a professor of distinguished scholarship and international reputation, inspired teaching and committed mentoring, compassionate collegiality and utter fair-mindedness. John will be irreplaceable.

The Howard Crosby Memorial Professor of the History of Architecture since 1996, John came to Princeton in 1988, after twelve years of teaching at Smith College. He received his B.A., *summa cum laude*, in 1970 from Harvard University, where he remained to complete his Ph.D. in 1976, with a dissertation on the eighteenth-century Italian architect Nicola Michetti. The architecture of eighteenth-century Italy, with a special focus on Rome (his childhood home), would remain central for John, yet he was capacious not only in his teaching—he anchored the departmental offerings in architectural history, including our introductory survey—but also in his scholarship, with publications ranging from a book on nineteenth-century photographs of Rome and its environs to a volume on a key monument of classical antiquity, Hadrian's Villa. Published in 1995, *Hadrian's Villa and Its Legacy* was received with great praise, winning multiple prizes, including the Book of the Year Award from the American Institute of Architects and the George Wittenborn Memorial Award from the Art Libraries Society of North America. (Indeed, John has a CV full of prizes and fellowships, including a recent Guggenheim Award and multiple grants from the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C.) In his most recent publication, *Speaking Ruins: Piranesi, Architects, and Antiquity in Eighteenth-Century Rome* (2012), which was initiated as the distinguished Jerome Lectures at the University of Michigan, John returns to his preoccupation with the afterlife of ancient Roman architecture in the post-Renaissance age.

Commanding deep respect across the entire discipline of art history, John is very highly regarded at Princeton, and nowhere more so than in his own department. No one has influenced art and archaeology more effectively than John has; he is the most valued colleague in our midst, mentoring junior faculty with great wisdom and empathy and advising senior faculty with great tact and experience. Whenever a service was required—John was acting chair for two years, associate chair for seven years, and director of graduate studies for five years—he stepped up with grace, performing each task with enormous skill. John was asked to take on the trickiest jobs, whether a senior hire or a tenure case, because we all trusted him so absolutely. Over the last decade the department passed through a generational change, and John was a consistent voice for the enlightened transformation of our curriculum and outlook alike. And he has carried this spirit of service well beyond the walls of Princeton: John was long a trustee of the American Academy in Rome as well as of the Princeton Day School, and he has served the College Art Association and the Society of Architectural Historians in a number of capacities.

What his colleagues and students most admire about John as a scholar is his equal commitment to both tradition and innovation: as an architectural historian, he cares deeply about the past, of course, especially as registered in the built environment, but he is also very forward-looking, leading the use of advanced technologies in the teaching of our discipline. Brilliant mind, consummate professional, skilled bureaucrat, inspiring teacher, warm-hearted mentor: “only John,” a recent advisee concludes, “displays all those traits.” Another adds: “With great intellectual enthusiasm, lasting care to his students, and a personal touch in conversation, Professor Pinto has demonstrated that teaching is an art, an art that deserves cultivation.” We all have learned from his example, and we all will miss him sorely.