

Alex Hadley

For the spring semester of my junior year, I studied Latin and Roman history in Rome. I was able to travel and visit many of the great Classical sights of Italy in this time, travelling around Latium, Sicily, and Campania. This semester was incredible, but it pales in comparison to my time in Monteverdi. Never have I ever experienced a place of such beauty or serenity. It is impossible to express my thanks to the Cioffi family, both for their generosity in allowing me to study at Monteverdi, but also for their magnanimity in creating such an extraordinary center for the arts. Monteverdi is more than a beautiful place; it is an artistic celebration of the culture and land of Tuscany.

At Monteverdi, through the generosity of the Cioffi family, I was able to begin my senior thesis research on the Latin poetry of the Renaissance. My work has focused on the poetry of Angelo Poliziano, a Renaissance humanist from the town of Montepulciano, only a few miles from Monteverdi itself. During the summer I began my work translating a poem of his dedicated to Vergil, the *Manto*. In addition to a translation, I have also researched the source material used by Poliziano for this poem, a process which has helped me better understand the importance of cultural heritage. Over the course of my study of the *Manto*, I became interested in notions of originality in poetry, and was able to lead a few seminars with the hotel guests on the place of originality and imitation in art. These discussions were wonderfully enlightening experiences for me, and have helped me consider the importance of this Renaissance Latin poetry today.

Outside of my thesis work, my time at Monteverdi also proved extremely rewarding in a number of other ways. My sincerest thanks to the staff of Monteverdi, who took care of me, became my friends, helped me with my Italian, and taught me so much about Italian culture. Thank also to the visiting artists and musicians whose paintings and music broadened my cultural experience even further. Monteverdi is blessed with a wonderful group of people who make it the welcoming, enriching place it is. I was also able to visit and appreciate the art of Italy, most importantly that of Florence and Venice, the two cities where Angelo Poliziano did his scholarship.

My summer at Monteverdi was a once in lifetime experience, and it is one that will remain with me for the rest of my life. The beauty of the Val d'Orcia, the conversations I had there, and the poetry I studied have all left a deep impression on me. Thank you again to the Cioffi family and to the Program of Liberal Studies for this incredible opportunity.