

THIRD VOLUME OF A BOOK OF MEDITATIONS RELEASED

When she was a young girl, Parnian Nazary '06 spent two years cloistered away in her family's home in Kabul, Afghanistan. With books and movies smuggled to her by male relatives, she taught herself and other girls English, despite the Taliban's decree that Afghan women were not worthy enough to receive schooling.

Nazary wrote of her stifled existence, and her unceasing quest for an education, in a Thursday morning meditation she delivered at Phillips Church in the spring of 2006. Her narrative, entitled "My Part of the World," was selected for inclusion in the third volume of *A Book of Meditations*—a collection of 35 readings by students, faculty and staff—published this summer.

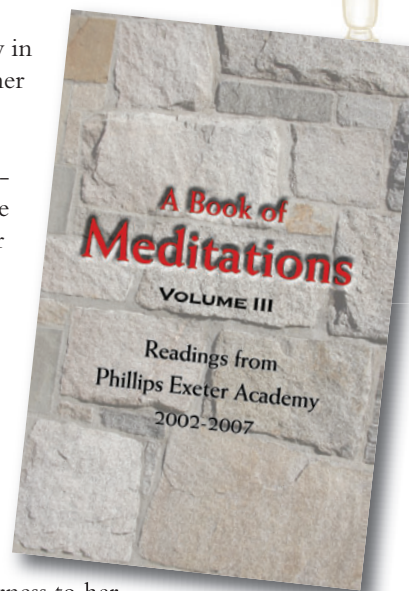
The new book features meditations delivered between 2002 and 2007 and is, according to co-editor David Weber '71, '74 (Hon.); P'92, a compilation of diverse, authentic voices that are vivid, reflective and honest. "Often in these pieces, the author will take a deep breath and be candid about unheroic moments," says Weber, emeritus instructor in English.

In her untitled essay, for example, Kimberley McLeod '05 writes about the difficulty of moving from Trinidad to the United States as a young girl, and the guilt she feels over abandoning her Caribbean identity for an American one. Along a similar thread, Lulu Li '06 writes about her own unfairness to her mother in the first years after their family emigrates from China.

There are other meditations: the magic of crew, life and its lessons on the Mississippi Delta, the intimate toil of a family orchard, and the challenge of living with a severely disabled sibling. There is no commonality of topic, but there is uniformity in the profound manner in which these stories are told. The book, Weber says, "is a way for the community to recognize, celebrate and support a high quality of writing and the idea that writing matters. . . . It is [also] a representation of the kind of writing that is done and taught at the Academy."

Weber edited the book with four other English instructors: Dean of Academic Affairs Jane Cadwell; Michelle Dionne P'12; Peter Greer '58; '71, '81, '83, '97, '00 (Hon.); P'81, P'83, P'94, emeritus chair of the Department of English; and Eimer Page. Together, they selected the final texts from 140 submissions. The book is not only an intimate read of these past meditations but also an inspiration for future ones; hundreds of students in 12th-grade English will reference the book in class as they experiment with narrative voice, style and themes. Many a Thursday meditation will result.

A Book of Meditations, Volume III can be purchased at the Exeter Bookstore by calling 603-777-3500 or by going online to <http://exeter.bncollege.com>. —K.I.



Blogging About Exeter's Past and Present

It's a place where the swingin' sounds of the Sau Seven's 1957 recording of "Jazz Me Blues" can be played alongside a new short film artfully depicting Louis Kahn's design of the Class of 1945 Library. It's where images of a bottle-cap mosaic composed by Summer School students are posted near images of two 110-year-old track trophies recently gifted to the Academy Archives.

The Class of 1945 Library's new blog—academylibrary.wordpress.com—launched in the spring, and it is a virtual treasure trove of video, audio and textual postings that highlight not only eclectic historical moments or items from the archives but also the current events and happenings of the library. The blog, according to Library Systems Coordinator/Reference Librarian Joe Montibello, provides a means of communication that is more flexible and conversational than the library's main website—the primary purpose of which is to serve as a research tool. The blog, Montibello says, "is being built to share certain kinds of information and to bring the community in. It gives us the ability to communicate about what's happening in the building, without getting in the way of people who are on the library's site looking for specific information, in an informal and accessible manner. We hope the community will enjoy it."

Where else, after all, can you find a movie clip of events leading up to an Exeter/Andover baseball game in the 1940s or a brief history of how KEP House on Elliot Street was once one of six PEA fraternities? Visit academylibrary.wordpress.com to learn more.