**Ovatio: Joseph Russo**

**Hodie laudamus virum doctissimum qui effecit ut viveret Maeonides, aere perennior, etiam si Tenedos et Ide non commemorantur[[1]](#footnote-1). Etsi bonus Homerus etiam dormivit[[2]](#footnote-2), in suis laboribus tamen hic numquam erravit. Natus in municipio ubi concordia creat robur,[[3]](#footnote-3) adeptus est gradum Baccalaurei Artium apud universitatem ubi nihil fit sine magno labore.[[4]](#footnote-4) Gradus Magistri Artium Doctorisque Philosophiae adeptus apud universitatem plenam lucis veritatisque[[5]](#footnote-5), illustrem propter canem formosum.[[6]](#footnote-6) Scripta sua tunc incipiebant, serius perseverabant hunc poetam versutum illustrare[[7]](#footnote-7). Sed est quoque eruditus in originibus Siciliae, terrae transformatae fabulis iraque Cyclopis[[8]](#footnote-8), qui quoque cursum Ulixis flexerat. Hic adeo fabulis Siciliae fruebatur ut Polyphemus ipse cursum a Sicilia flectere non posset. Sic erat amor domus. Annos triginta docuit prope urbem conditam ab Amicis[[9]](#footnote-9) ut vir non solum doctior, sed etiam meliore doctrina imbutus[[10]](#footnote-10), locupletans animos iuvenum, luculenta studia pariens, et semper benignissimus discipulis suis. Plaudamus igitur Joseph Russo.**

Today we honor a most learned man who has helped guarantee the immortality of Homer’s works. Although even the good Homer nods, this man never faltered in his career. Born in Brooklyn, he received his BA from Brooklyn College. After earning both his MA and PhD from Yale University, his writings then began and later continued to illuminate “the poet of many turns.” But he is no less knowledgeable about the origins of Sicily, a land shaped by myths and the anger of a Cyclops, who had bent the course of Odysseus. Yet he so savored this lore that Polyphemus himself could not divert his attention from Sicily. Such was his love for home. For thirty years he taught at Haverford College in the Philadelphia suburbs, enriching young minds, producing brilliant research, always the soul of kindness to his students. Let us thus applaud Joseph Russo.

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1. Ovid, *Amores* 1.15.9-10 *vivet Maeonides, Tenedos dum stabit et Ide,/dum rapidas Simois in mare volvet aquas* and Horace, *Odes* 3.30 *exegi monumentum aere perennius* [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Horace, *Ars Poetica* 359 *indignor quandoque bonus* [*dormitat*](https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/dormitat) *Homerus* [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Eendraght Maeckt Maght, Dutch for “Unity makes strength,” official motto of Brooklyn [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. *Nil sine magno labore*, motto of Brooklyn College. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. *Lux et veritas,* motto of Yale University [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Handsome Dan, the bulldog and mascot of Yale University [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Homer, *Odyssey* 1.1 [πολύτροπον](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=polu%2Ftropon&la=greek&can=polu%2Ftropon0&prior=mou=sa), much-turned, rendered into Latin as *versutum* by Livius Andronicus [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 13.870-897 Acis was crushed with a giant boulder by a jealous Polyphemus, but became the Acis river. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. The Religious Society of Friends, also known as the Quakers [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. *Non doctior, sed meliore doctrina imbutus*, motto of Haverford College [↑](#footnote-ref-10)