Editor's Introduction

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Dear Reader,

Composing my editorial after attending a performance at the theatre has turned out to be an inspiring choice. I am writing this after being immersed in the beauty of the Royal Ballet School's *A Centenary Celebration* at the Royal Ballet and Opera House (RBOH).[1] During the intervals of the show, I took notes and, on my way home, I reflected on how the performance spoke to this edition of *Amicus Curiae* and invited me to make connections between what I have seen on stage and this issue of the journal.

Let's start with the title of the performance—*A Centenary Celebration*—which mirrors two celebratory sections of this edition. The first is the Special Section, "Celebrating Carrie Menkel-Meadow … The Researcher, the Lawyer, the Woman, the Brilliant Friend!", with contributions from Sara Berman, Naomi Creutzfeldt, Letizia Coppo, Faina Milman-Sivan, Orna Rabinovich-Einy, Michael Palmer, Nicolás Parra-Herrera, Ulrike Schultz, Ana M Silva, Michalyn Steele, and myself. The authors—who are Carrie's former students, colleagues, and friends—heartfeltly engage with Carrie's work and its impact but also celebrate the "woman" by sharing personal memories of their relationships with Carrie. An interview with Carrie opens this Special Section, offering the reader new insights into her work, her new projects, her reflections on the challenges that students, teachers and researchers are facing nowadays, and her passion for the arts, including dance. To put it in the words of Dame Ninette de Valois: "Respect the past, herald the future, but concentrate on the present."[2] This is what Carrie does!

The second celebration, included in our Visual Law series, is "In Celebration of the Work of Simon Roberts (1941–2014)" by Chulwoo

[1] See "A Centenary Celebration" and "Insights: The Royal Ballet School – A Centenary Celebration".

[2] Royal Ballet School, "History".



Centenary (picture by Giovanna Lamboglia).[3]

Lee, Marian Roberts and Michael Palmer. This piece draws upon Chulwoo Lee's translation into Korean of Simon's *Order and Dispute: An Introduction to Legal Anthropology* (1979; 2013). The three essays rightly suggest that: "*Order and Dispute* endures because it asks fundamental questions about how humans create and maintain social order, and it refuses easy answers rooted in Western institutional assumptions." During the show at RBOH, Vadim Muntagirov's[4] perfect execution of the male role in the Act III *pas de deux* from *Swan Lake* (the "*Black Swan*" *pas de deux*) that he performed with Fumi Kaneko[5] made my thoughts turn to Simon. Much like a principal dancer, Simon shaped his research and teaching with precision, presence, passion, and generosity towards his students—always adding something unique.

Moving on, the performance offered a balance of classic ballet repertoire and more modern choreography, and, in between *Unforgettable* by Joshua Junker[6] and the *Black Swan pas de deux*, I pondered how a similar contrast can be discerned in this issue of *Amicus Curiae*. The immediate answers seem to be offered in the reflections on the ways and extent to which the role of the judge can be innovated, challenged, and preserved that

[3] See Dance Connections Agency and Giovanna's Instagram.

[4] See his profile page.

[5] See her profile page.

[6] See his Instagram post.

is addressed in these pages by The Rt Hon Lady Wise in her "Sir Henry Brooke Lecture 2026: The Twenty-First Century Judge–Privileges, Pitfalls and Potential" and by Jwalika Balaji, Anshul Dalmia, Sann Elfving, Laura-Theresa Godau & Claerwen O'Hara, Carolynn Gray, and Salomé Lannier & Hoko Horii in the Queer Judgments Project Special Section, edited by Alex Powell, Yerram Behara & Joanne Stagg, which follows a previous one published in Amicus Curiae 7(1).

During the intervals at the Royal Ballet, it was natural to exchange, with the other members of the audience, comments about the choreography, the music, the dancers and the overall scenography, and I realized that, in this issue, the role of commentators is ably delivered by Amy Kellam, Kfir Lapid-Mashall, and Geoffrey Samuel in their book reviews.

To watch the final piece of the performance (see picture on page vii), titled *Centenary*, by Valentino Zucchetti,[7] would be invaluable to law students, lecturers and researchers because it offers many insights into law, and, coincidentally, into this issue, speaking as it does to the importance of relations. Likewise in this issue, in the introduction to the Special Section on "Relations and Health—Interdisciplinary Reflections", its editor, Marianna Iliadou, writes that:

> The theme behind this Special Section is that relations are fundamental to health and healthcare. They shape how care is provided and received, how decisions are made, how vulnerability and autonomy are understood, and how rights and responsibilities are distributed.

Centenary also demonstrates that the creation of a magnificent choreography that brings on stage hundreds of dancers from all levels, all together, requires knowledge and expertise from diverse backgrounds. Likewise, in this *Amicus Curiae*, the note "Reflections of a Mediator on Inheritance Mediation: Are Family Inheritance Mediators Receiving Appropriate Training and Adequate Practice Support?" by Andrew Sims—based on the author's personal practical experience as a mediator—suggests what mediation training should encompass to support practitioners in mediating inheritance disputes effectively and safely.

On social media, Zucchetti wrote "everyone asked me how I did manage to move all these people, that wasn't the hard part, the hard part was condensing this monumental amount of talent in a 12min piece".[8]

[7] See his website and profile page.

[8] See his Instagram page.

This prompted me to think about Shuo NIE and Yang LIN and their Visual Law contribution, "Making Authority Visible: Bodily Discipline and the Political Appropriation of the Visual Grammar of Judgment in *Farewell My Concubine*" in which they examine "how bodily posture, costume, voice, space and spectatorship render roles and authority socially legible and distinguish legal authorization from embodied legibility" and argue that "the visual grammar of judgment is portable across institutional settings".

Further, the choreography by Valentino Zucchetti majestically shows that it is possible to share the stage with many people as a group in harmony while still giving space to each dancer to shine. This brought me to think about Neemah Ahamed's article in which she argues how, in the context of workplace sexual harassment, recognizing and addressing the inequalities that Black women face in seeking access to justice remains a pertinent issue. This contribution discusses aspects of the author's empirical work on the role of Black women's intersectional identities in influencing their tendency to seek redress for these harms in England and Wales.

The Royal Ballet School's *A Centenary Celebration* powerfully represented the significant role of a school in nurturing intergenerational collaborations, and the importance of empowering—through teaching/school—young generations. A quote in the programme of the performance puts it beautifully:

> At the core of the Royal Ballet School's work is the belief that artistic excellence is inseparable from human excellence, and that the greatest artists are built by investing in the whole person. (2026: 33).

Likewise, we, the law teachers and researchers, in this time of artificial intelligence, inflated social media profiles, and normalization and spectacularizing of violence, can make a difference when we go into the classroom to teach; there we not only transfer our knowledge to our students, but we do so in the awareness of the importance of being good people.

As at the end of every show, this editorial also signs off with a *révérence*, thanking all the contributors to this *Amicus Curiae* 8:1, the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, my co-editors Amy Kellam and Pablo Cortes, the consultant editor Michael Palmer, the production editor Marie Selwood, the digital manager Narayana Harave, the news compiler Eliza Boudier, and, of course, all the readers!

Enjoy your reading.

References

Roberts, Simon. *Order and Dispute: An Introduction to Legal Anthropology*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1979 (2nd edn, New Orleans LA: Quid Pro LLC, 2013).

Royal Ballet School. *A Centenary Celebration.* London: Royal Ballet & Opera, 2026.