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Summer session in Florence

last bow for WLU professor

Robert Langen, associate professor of philosophy who taught at Wilfrid Laurier University for 30 years, retires this summer when he returns from teaching in the third session of the Fine Arts Summer School in Italy that he inaugurated.

When Prof. Langen first came to the university it was 1934, the school's name was Waterloo College, and he was the sole member of the philosophy department and its first chairman, a position he's held on at least two additional occasions.

Now, after the university has undergone two name changes and growth far beyond most people's expectations, "Rob," as he is known to his colleagues, will become professor emeritus, a sign of the esteem in which he is held by the university community.

His last duties will entail teaching a course for a group of students attending the summer session, with classes held in Florence, a centre of Renaissance art, and in Rome.

Prof. Langen has always been interested in aesthetics and art and his interest led him to take the pioneering role in establishing a collection of art at the university.

And since he believed that students couldn't properly appreciate the philosophy of art without seeing an artist at work, he was instrumental in bringing artists to campus on a regular basis.

One of those was Paul Fournier, the well-established Toronto artist, who was Wilfrid Laurier University's first artist-in-residence.

At a retirement dinner on campus, a major original painting by Fournier was presented to Prof. Langen. And a spoof of philosophy in the form of an ink drawing was presented by Michael Manson, painter and senior fine arts lecturer at Laurier.

Students not only see much of the art collected because of Prof. Langen's continuing interest as they walk the halls on campus, but several sculptures on the campus were also added due to his interest and activity with the university's culture affairs committee.

Dr. J. Frederick Little, chairman of the philosophy department, said "Professor Langen's associates and students--past and present--know him as a dedicated teacher, reliable colleague, wise counsellor, and Christian 'gentil homme.'"

When he returns from Italy, Prof. Langen plans to take it easy, at least initially, at his home at 137 Mackay Cres., Waterloo, and at his "farm," a small rural retreat near Lucknow.