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On the Cover: *Acer palmatum* 'Osakazuki' 260-81*A, photo by Jon Hetman.

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From the Director



Kathleen Doohar

As an institution focused on building and stewarding eminent collections, the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University—like Janus, the Roman god with two faces—must look forward to the future while respecting the labor and legacies of the past. This makes good sense for a museum of living trees, particularly in view of the fact that the things we collect may live and develop over many decades or centuries, and their unique value to science extends far beyond their existence on the grounds. Studying an Arboretum tree today benefits greatly from a knowledge of where it came from as a seed, how it has fared as an individual in our landscape, and how management decisions today might affect it, good or bad, tomorrow.

This issue of *Silva* endeavors to illuminate a number of things currently or recently underway here with both footprints in the past and significant implications for the future. First up, a profile on the creation of our new solar power and battery array at the Weld Hill Research and Education Building—the biggest sustainability project ever at the Arboretum, and the largest solar initiative ever attempted at Harvard—reveals its roots in previous solar installations at our Hunnewell Building and Dana Greenhouses, as well as the belief that tomorrow's Arboretum must be ever more sustainable and less dependent on fossil fuels. A new initiative to expand access via mulched woodchip paths arose primarily out of concern for reducing the harmful effects of soil compaction in our collections, but is informed by the long history of seasonal path-making that has been employed in our landscape since Founding Director Charles Sprague Sargent's time. Returning to the example of our accessioned plants, this issue also provides a travelogue of Michael Dosmann's spring plant expedition in Japan in search of a rare maple (*Acer pycnanthum*), a taxon the Arboretum has attempted to cultivate without success numerous times since Sargent's first trip to Japan in 1892. Perhaps new approaches informed by past experience will reward our efforts to bring this elusive and now endangered species to Boston after more than a century of trying—and demonstrate again that we never give up!

Persistence, continuous experimentation, and rigorous documentation are ingrained in our identity and values as an international hub for research, horticulture, and education. It also takes form in the many programs, lectures, and landscape opportunities we offer each season—many free of charge, open to all, and detailed in these pages and on our website. I hope you are inspired this fall and winter to pursue your own curiosity, experiment with new ideas, and encounter novel pathways to knowledge and well-being. We're here to help. Innumerable possibilities await when you step into this landscape, and allow the past, present, and future to speak through the trees. ∞

—William (Ned) Friedman, Director of the Arnold Arboretum & Arnold Professor of Organismic and Evolutionary Biology, Harvard University