

Comparative Literature newsletter

December
2015

News from the Director

The new academic year began well. We were pleased in particular to welcome back members of our senior class, six of whom had been studying abroad this past spring, namely in France, Ghana, Jordan, Italy and Spain, as well as to greet four new Ph.D. students, all of whom have diverse international connections and two of whom are in our track for international writers. New Ph.D. students in Chinese, English, German, and Spanish joined us as joint Ph.D. students. Meanwhile our undergraduate and graduate classes are full and we thank our colleagues across the literature departments for working closely with us to offer a diverse curriculum. This year's Matheson speaker, Johanna Drucker (UCLA), author, book artist, visual theo-

rist, and cultural critic, challenged us to think across disciplinary boundaries with the aid of new digital tools and methods. We hope that with this event, our courses and degree and certificate programs, and other initiatives we assert and model the critical importance of humanistic inquiry and literary-cultural endeavor.



Lynne Tatlock, Program Director

December Graduates

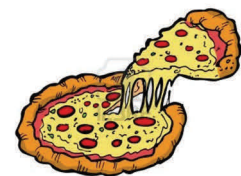
Congratulations to **Aysegul Turan**, who is a Ph.D. December graduate. Her dissertation was entitled "National Narratives, Comparative Moves: Tracing Literary Connections between Anglophone Postcolonial Literatures and Modern Turkish Literature."

Congratulations also to **Anastasia Sorokina**, who is a Comparative Arts major graduating in December. Anastasia wrote her Honors thesis on "The 'Racist' Camera: Photographic Technologies and the Aesthetic Politics of Lensing Skin Color."

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Save the date: Annual potluck to take place on Thursday, January 21 from 6-8 pm in McMillan Café. All Comparative Literature, Comparative Arts and IPH students, graduate students and faculty are welcome!



Congratulations! Faculty news

J Dillon Brown (Associate Professor, English) co-edited a collection called *Beyond Windrush: Rethinking Postwar Anglophone Caribbean Literature* (University Press of Mississippi, 2015). <http://www.upress.state.ms.us/books/1790>

Robert Hegel (Professor, Chinese and Comparative Literature) organized a group of Chinese and Comparative Literature doctoral students and alumni to translate the twelve stories in a collection of short stories published in China around 1660, *Doupeng xianhua (Idle Tales Under the Bean Arbor)*. The collection is now being reviewed for publication.

Robert Henke (Professor, Drama and Comparative Literature) published *Poverty and Charity in Early Modern Theater and Performance* (University of Iowa Press, 2015). <http://muse.jhu.edu/books/9781609383626>

Ignacio Infante (Assistant Professor, Comparative Literature and Spanish) wrote a co-translation (with Michael Leong) of Vicente Huidobro's *Temblor del cielo*, which has received a 2016 Literary Translation Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts. Additionally, he has recently published an article in *The Comparatist* (Vol. 39, October 2015) entitled "Locating Rosalia de Castro within European Romanticism: Sympathetic Reading, 'Immediate Knowledge,' and the Vernacular Poetics of John Clare."

Emma Kafalenos (Honorary Senior Lecturer) gave an invited lecture, "Facets of Ekphrasis," at a workshop on Ekphrasis in the Digital Age in Berlin, Germany. A paperback edition of her book, *Narrative Causalities*, has recently been issued.

Joe Loewenstein (Professor of English, Director of Undergraduate Studies in Comparative Literature, Director of the Digital Humanities Workshop and the Interdisciplinary Project in the Humanities) has been awarded the 2015 Emerson Excellence in Teaching Award. The Emerson awards are presented to educators throughout the St. Louis region who demonstrate excellence in their fields.

Timothy Moore (Professor, Classics) has several recent publications, including two in *Classical Journal* vol. 111 (2015): "The 2012 NEH Summer Institute on Roman Comedy in Performance: Genesis and Reflections" (with Sharon L. James and Meredith Safran) and "Using Music in Teaching Roman Comedy" (with T.H.M. Gellar-Goad).

Congratulations! Student news

Current Ph.D. student **Matthias Göritz** gave a keynote speech in the form of an Artist Talk at a conference on memory and literature on November 13; on December 8, he participated in a reading with Efe Duyan, an Istanbul-based author who is translating some of Matthias's poetry. Both events took place in Turkey, where Matthias is currently an artist in residence at Villa Tarabya. <http://www.inenart.eu/?p=20126>

Current Ph.D. student **Deniz Gundogan Ibrism** will be presenting a paper at the MLA (Modern Language Association) Convention in January, 2016. Her paper is entitled "Other Spatial and Temporal Arrangements: Bilge Karasu's Night (1985) as a Queer Historical Fiction." Additionally, Deniz will present "Ethical and Relational Witnessing in Samar Yazbek and Ahdaf Soueif: Expanding the Contours of Grievability and Livability Under Political Violence" at the ACLA (American Comparative Literature) convention in March, 2016.

Current Ph.D. student **Julia Leverone** has published several translations of poems by Pac Urondo in *Beltway Poetry Quarterly*, *The Massachusetts Review*, *Witness*, and *The Brooklyn Rail* (which nominated "Body of Crime" for The Pushcart Prize).

Current Ph.D. students **Melody Yunzi Li** and **Ling Kang** have organized a panel to be presented at the ACLA convention in March, 2016. The panel is on "Reconsidering Sinophone Literature and its 'Politics Recognition.'" For this panel, Melody's paper is entitled "Imagining the 'South': Exploring the symbolic 'South' in Sinophone Literature through the works and life of Yu Dafu." Ling's paper is entitled "A Non-Local Sinophone Literature: Kim-chew Ng's Writings of Malayan Communists."

Current Ph.D. student **Matthew Miller** will present "Embodying the Beloved in Textual Performance Contexts: A Queer Reading of Medieval Bio-/Hagiographical Accounts of Poetic Performance" at the ACLA convention in January, 2016. In December, 2015, he will present papers at the Digital Arabic and Persian Research Workshop at the University of Leipzig.

Comparative Literature major **Shelby Ozer** ('16) is the current editor-in-chief of *Spires*, the Intercollegiate Arts and Literary Magazine. The current issue features a poem by Comparative Arts major **Elizabeth Levinson** ('18) and can be found here: <http://spires.wustl.edu/current-issue/>

The 2015 Matheson Lecture

On November 12 and 13, Professor Johanna Drucker (UCLA) visited Wash U as this year's Matheson lecturer. Professor Drucker is a digital humanities scholar who has published and lectured widely on topics related to digital humanities, aesthetics, book history, graphic design and art. She has also created her own artist's books and projects, displayed in museums and libraries throughout the United States and Europe.

Her talk was entitled "Generative Tension: Forms and Formats in Literary and Digital Works." She also led a workshop with current graduate students and participated in a faculty discussion.

The Matheson lecture series is given in honor of the late William H. Matheson, a venerable member of the Comparative Literature faculty for thirty years.



Johanna Drucker (center) with Professors Matt Erlin and Lynne Tatlock

Spring 2016 courses

Home-based courses:

L16 306 Modern Jewish Literature Saul Zaritt

L16 331C Tragedy Robert Henke

L16 358 Modern Near Eastern Literature in Translation: Women's Writing Nancy Berg

L16 402 Introduction to Comparative Literature Anca Parvulescu

L16 449 Topics: Humanism
Robert Henke

L16 511 Seminar: Literary Pluralism: Unleashing Meaning While Expanding the Canon
Stamos Metzidakis

L16 512 Seminar: Literature in the Making Lynne Tatlock and Matthias Göritz

L16 552 Methods of Literary Study: The Theory and Practice of Literary Translation II
Ignacio Infante

Cross-listed courses:

L16 176C Freshman Seminar: Aesop and His Fables: Comedy and Social Criticism
Kristin Mann

L16 201A Classical to Renaissance Literature
Philip Purchase

L16 3003 The Ancient Novel (Writing Intensive)
Cathy Keane

L16 301C Greek Mythology
Kathryn Wilson

L16 3023 Jazz in American Culture Patrick Burke

L16 3050 Literary Modernities: Text and Tradition
Anca Parvulescu

L16 3263 Topics in East Asian Studies: Modern China on the Silver Screen Chris Tong

L16 355A Topics in Literary Criticism and Theory: Computation and Literary Form
Anupam Basu

L16 3721 Topics in Renaissance Literature: The Renaissance of Doubt Joe Loewenstein

L16 4225 European Utopian Settlements in the American Midwest (1814-1864): Diversity and Antislavery
Mike Lutzeler

L16 554A Seminar on East Asian Print Culture and Society: Women in Print
Jamie Newhard and Ji-Eun Lee

The Comparative Literature and German Languages and Literatures graduate student symposium will take place on **February 26, 2016**.

Since 2016 marks the 25th anniversary of graduate student symposiums in both Comparative Literature and German, the departments are joining together for this year's event. Graduate students in all related fields at Washington University are encouraged to submit abstracts by December 31st.

Possible questions to address in this symposium include but are not limited to:

- comparative approaches
- the division of literatures, cultures, and languages
- translation and adaptation
- canon formation
- genre, media, intermediality
- print and media technologies (including digital spaces)
- spatial theory
- narratology and storytelling
- temporality and historicism
- intersectionality, identity, and diversity
- literature and the national
- border-crossing and/or diaspora
- gender and sexuality
- disability studies
- globalization and multiculturalism

*Save the date, be on the lookout for additional information, and address all questions to:
germancomplitsymposium2016@gmail.com



December 2015

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Just as, historically speaking, Comparative Literature arose from the emergence of nationalism (borders can't be crossed if none exist) the field today cannot prosper without strong national literature departments. But for both students and faculty, Comparative Literature appeals to the pervasive desire to transcend the merely national point of view, to engage with great imaginative works of literature from different places and times. Mandating an intense immersion in at least one foreign language and literature, and with courses on literature in translation that seriously engage non-western literature as well as western texts, Comparative Literature provides to its students a serious, sustained understanding of cultures beyond their own and helps them become better global citizens. Comparative Literature is well situated to study, as no single national literature department can, relationships between literary cultures as they involve influence, encounter, exchange, and translation.

Historically, Comparative Literature's transnational orientation has made it the home for literary theory, which has transformed the study of literature since the 1960s. For the benefit of all literature majors at Washington University, Comparative Literature therefore offers courses on literary theory at both the undergraduate and graduate level. We also uniquely offer an interdisciplinary major in Comparative Arts, founded on an introductory core course, in which students explore relationships between literature and painting, sculpture, architecture, music, drama, and film.



Life Imitating Art (Moma, NYC) by Ph.D. student **Gabriella Martin** (Spanish and Comparative Literature). This is the winning photo of this year's photography contest.