This spring the program in Comparative Literature celebrates Bob Hegel who will become Professor Emeritus of Chinese Language and Literature and the Liselotte Dieckmann Professor Emeritus of Comparative Literature as of June 30, 2018. A long-time stalwart of the program (forty-three years to be exact), Bob chaired the unit from 1997 to 2002 and in 2006 became the first to hold the Liselotte Dieckman Chair in Comparative Literature, a chair financed in perpetuity by the estate of William H. Matheson. For an overview of Bob’s career at Washington University and a portrait of our esteemed colleague, we refer you to John Moore’s wonderful piece in The Ampersand, “Never Done Learning” https://artsci.wustl.edu/ampersand/youve-never-learned-enough-robert-hegel-looks-back-career-chinese-literature.

Those of us fortunate enough to work with Bob in many capacities will miss our loyal friend and colleague, the learned scholar, and the generous student mentor. I would like especially to remember this third piece of the picture. In my experience, Bob does not easily give up on any student committed to his care and mentoring, supporting them in countless ways from editing their writing, to sending off dozens of letters of recommendation, to offering sage advice and encouragement. On the eve of retirement Bob has agreed to chair yet another examination/dissertation committee in Comparative Literature, and we know that this fortunate student too will be well served.

It has been a very good year for Comparative Literature. Please have a look at the rest of the June 2018 Newsletter and our website to read about the achievements of our students and faculty.

May 2018 Graduates

Congratulation to Melody Yunzi Li (Ph.D. Comparative Literature)
Dissertation: “Home Sweet Home”: Displacement and Belonging in Post-1960s Diasporic Chinese Literature

Professors Mike Lützeler and Bob Hegel (Professor Joe Loewenstein in background)

Lynne Tatlock, Director, Comparative Literature and Hortense & Tobias Lewin Distinguished Professor in the Humanities

May 2018 Graduates

Congratulations to Melody Yunzi Li (Ph.D. Comparative Literature)
Dissertation: “Home Sweet Home”: Displacement and Belonging in Post-1960s Diasporic Chinese Literature

Congratulations to Jin Hao (Ph.D. Chinese/Comparative Literature)
Dissertation: In Search of Shangri-La: (Anti-)Utopian Representations of China’s Frontiers in the Post-Mao Era

Congratulations to four graduating undergraduate seniors:
Louise DiMarco (Comparative Arts major)
Hilah Kohen (Comparative Literature major; winner of the 2018 Emma Kafalenos Prize for Excellence in Comparative Literature)
Elizabeth Levinson (Comparative Arts major)
Griffin Reed (Comparative Literature major)
Congratulations! Faculty, Student, and Alumni/ae news

Baba Badji (Ph.D. student in Comparative Literature’s track for international writers) published English translations of several poems by Francophone authors Mohammed Kair-Eddine and Léopold Sedar Senghor in the journal *EuropeNow*.

Aaron Coleman (Ph.D. student in Comparative Literature’s track for international writers) was interviewed on NPR’s All Things Considered for a piece on poetry and translation on April 15. Aaron’s book of poetry, entitled *Threat Come Close* (Four Way Books), was released earlier this year.

Tili Boon Cuillé (Associate Professor of French and Comparative Literature) has published an article, “Of Mind and Matter in Duclos’s *Acajou et Zirphile*,” that will appear this fall in a special issue of the journal *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* dedicated to material fictions edited by Eugenia Zuroski and Michael Yoran.

Matthias Göritz (William Gass Fellow; Ph.D. student in Comparative Literature’s track for international writers) has published a novel, entitled *Parker*, Parker was recently selected as “book of the month” by a major media broadcaster in Germany (ARD/NDR).

Vivek Gupta, who graduated with a double major in Comparative Literature and Arabic in 2010, has published an article entitled “Interpreting the Eye (‘ain): Poetry and Painting in the Shrine of Ahmad Shāḥ al-Walī al-Bahmanī (r. 1422–1436),” which appeared in the October 2017 volume of Archives of Asian Art.

Emma Kafalenos (Honorary Senior Lecturer in Comparative Literature) reports two recent publications. Her article “Ekphrasis as Misrepresentation: From Balzac’s *Sarrasine* to Cortázár’s ‘Graffiti’” appears in *Poetics Today* 39:2, a special issue on Ekphrasis. *Style* 52:1-2 is devoted to a “target essay” by James Phelan, 25 invited responses, and his rejoinders. Kafalenos’s response is titled “The Story/Discourse Distinction.” She also presented a paper at the Narrative Conference in April in Montreal: “Affordances and Constraints of Existing Photographs vs. Objects Available to Photograph in Bimodal Fiction by Leanne Shapton and W. G. Sebald.” Fascinated by the effects of bimodality for cognition, she expects to continue thinking and probably writing about bimodal fiction – fiction in which each of two media (in her work, image and language) brings some information that the other medium does not.

Marshall Klimasewiski (Senior Writer in Residence in English) has a piece called “William Gaddis and the Thoughts of Others” appearing in “The Preservation Issue” of *Conjunctions* magazine (May 2018).

Melody Yunzi Li, a May 2018 Ph.D. graduate in Comparative Literature, has been hired by the University of Houston as an Assistant Professor of Chinese Literature.

Janelle Neczypor (Ph.D. student in Comparative Literature) was awarded the SQCC Summer Arabic Language and Media (SALAM) scholarship from the Sultan Qaboos Cultural Center to study Arabic in Oman during the summer.

Anca Parvulescu (Professor of English and Director of Graduate Studies for Comparative Literature) has been awarded a Collaborative Research Fellowship from the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) for the 2018-2019 academic year.

Heidi Pennington (Ph.D. English/Comp Lit ’13) has written a book entitled *Creating Identity in the Victorian Fictional Autobiography*, which was published in April by the University of Missouri.

Katja Perat (Ph.D. student in Comparative Literature’s track for international writers) has published a novel entitled *Mazohistka* (The Masochist) in Slovenia (Beletrina Academic Press).

Erika Rodriguez (Ph.D. student in Comparative Literature) was inducted into the Edward A. Bouchet Graduate Honor Society. Erika was also one of several graduate students honored at an Association of Women Faculty reception at Washington University.

Gerhild Williams (Barbara Schaps Thomas and David M. Thomas Professor in the Humanities, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Provost) participated in an international workshop at the Skokloster Castle in Sweden. She also presented a paper entitled “Crossing borders, bridging cultures: Speer’s Pseudo *Simplicissimus* on his way from Breslau to Kairo and back” at the Sixteenth Century Studies Conference in Milwaukee, WI. With Christian Schneider (Assistant Professor of German), she organized the triennial meeting of the Frühe Neuzeit Interdisziplinär at Washington University. The two of them also edited a volume of the *DAPHNIS* journal on “Knowledge in Motion: Constructing Transcultural Experience in the Medieval and Early Modern Periods” (vol. 45, 3-4).

*If you have news to share with the Comparative Literature community, please e-mail Rebecca O’Laughlin (rolaughlin@wustl.edu).*
Capstone Options for Comparative Literature/Comparative Arts majors

Students majoring in Comparative Literature or Comparative Arts must complete a capstone for the major (although students with double majors may opt to complete a capstone for their other major). Capstone projects can take several different forms: students may take a two-course capstone cluster, in which they take two classes, at least one of which is at the 400-level. The student must then submit a paper from each course as well as produce an essay evaluating how the two classes informed each other.

Students may also create a mentored creative project in the arts, working closely with at least one faculty member to oversee the project. They also have the option of completing an internship in a related field. Finally, students who are eligible can complete the honors program, by writing an honors thesis, honors by coursework or honors by creative project. The variety of options as well as the individualization of the Comparative Literature/Comparative Arts majors allows capstone/honors projects to take a multitude of forms and encourages majors to choose projects or options that enhance their interests and talents. For example, Elizabeth Levinson (pictured above), a May 2018 graduate who majored in Philosophy and Comparative Arts, chose to complete her capstone by doing a creative project that combined several areas of interest. “Transmutations: a brief study of art and the body” combined Elizabeth’s photography, poetry, artwork and study of dance. Elizabeth worked with Associate Professor Tili Boon Cuillé and presented her project to a group of students and faculty in April.

Congratulations to Asher Gelzer-Govatos, winner of the 2018 Dean’s Award for Teaching Excellence

Asher Gelzer-Govatos is a fourth-year student in the Ph.D. program in Comparative Literature whose research interests include twentieth-century British literature, Kierkegaard, film & literature, philosophy & literature, and religion & literature. He is the first Ph.D. student to have his mentored teaching experiences systematically tagged to required sequences in Text & Tradition and the Interdisciplinary Project in the Humanities and he has distinguished himself through his versatility and engagement in every course in which he has co-taught in these related programs. His students praise him as “intelligent,” “thought provoking,” “helpful,” and “respectful of our opinions.” Their evaluations paint a picture of a caring, subtle, and encouraging teacher, one who, in the words of one student, renders “the class environment warm, welcoming, and fun.”
Focus: An Alt-Ac Experience
By Jessica Hutchins (Ph.D. in Comparative Literature, ’14)

When I started an administrative position in the Division of Biology & Biomedical Sciences (DBBS) at Washington University in 2015, I had no idea I was embarking on a scholarly journey tailor-made for a comparatist. My Ph.D. in Comparative Literature trained me to think interdisciplinarily and systematically, to take creative risks, and to look for the intellectual conversations happening at the edges of established fields. Today I am the Director of Curriculum and Graduate Programs in DBBS, where I teach two graduate-level courses, oversee degree requirements for eleven interdisciplinary Ph.D. programs, and co-chair a task force on DBBS curriculum modernization.

My training as a comparatist allows me to see the value of humanistic practice within the context of scientific culture and discourse, and to translate it for target audiences in STEM fields. My dissertation research on “difficult” texts has been helpful in providing a vocabulary for notoriously dense scientific research discourse and to situate it within a cultural context that increasingly demands transparency from scientists. I discovered that I can fill a gap by teaching Ph.D. scientists-in-training how to write and communicate their research. In the classroom, my work operates at the intersection of textual analysis, culture studies, and science (my newest language). For example, I use my expertise in narrative theory to help scientists identify and tell the story of their research for a variety of audiences and purposes.

Here is my advice to Ph.D. students looking to find their career niche:

- Treat this process like research: collect evidence, think analytically, look for gaps that you can fill, and get feedback.

- Talk to everyone about their career: this is the best way to collect reliable evidence (and people like to talk about themselves).

- Be your own advocate and know what is most important to you. You can’t go wrong if you follow your values.
Fall 2018 courses

L16 1710 Literature, Spirituality and Religion (Abram Van Engen)
L16 200A Introduction to African Literature (Maya Ganapathy)
L16 201A Classical to Renaissance Literature (Robert Henke; Christian Schneider; Zoi Stamatopoulou)
L16 211 World Literature (Ignacio Infante)
L16 301A Greek Mythology (Grizelda McClelland)
L16 3040 Introduction to Digital Humanities: Cultural Analysis in the Information Age (Anupam Basu)
L16 3071 Caribbean Literature in English (J. Dillon Brown)
L16 313E Introduction to Comparative Arts (Dolores Pesce)
L16 331A Topics in Holocaust Studies: Children in the Shadow of the Swastika (Erin McGlothlin)
L16 343A Literature and Science: One Culture or Two? (Steven Meyer)
L16 352 Introduction to Literary Theory (Guinn Batten; Steven Meyer)
L16 375 Finding “China”: From Sojourners to Settlers in the Chinese Diaspora and Chinese American Literatures (Letty Chen)
L16 385 Points of Intersection (Harriet Stone)
L16 4101 Medieval Women’s Writing (Jessica Rosenfeld)
L16 4300 Data Manipulation for the Humanities (Douglas Knox)
L16 449 Magic and Fantasy: Exploring the Supernatural in European Literature (1500-present) (Gerhild Williams)
L16 450C The Intellectual History of Mass Incarceration (Jami Ake)
L16 455A Narrative Theory—a Critical and Analytical Toolbox (Erin McGlothlin)
L16 4647 Ancient Madness (Philip Purchase)
L16 474A Frankenstein: Origins and Afterlives (Amy Pawl, Corinna Treitel)
L16 498 Spenser (Joe Loewenstein)
L16 498A Spenser Lab (Joe Loewenstein)
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 among literature and painting, sculpture, architecture, music, drama, and film.

Recently published books by Comparative Literature graduate students include (from left) Aaron Coleman’s Threat Come Close (Four Way Books), Matthias Göritz’s Parker (C.H. Beck), and Katja Perat’s Mazohistka (Beletrina)