From the Director

Welcome to the Purdue Comparative Literature Newsletter. We seemed to have missed a year of reporting as we were very busy with prelim exams and finishing dissertations. In the last two years we have managed to continue our tradition of holding monthly lunches and using much of our budget for student travel and co-sponsoring visiting speakers in the School of Languages and Cultures, English, and various IDIS programs. We have had two good years of recruiting and I’m pleased to welcome to the Program Wei Lu, Christian Felt, Ghaleb Alomaish, Ricardo Quintana Vallejo, Dong Yang, and Zihan Wang. Within the framework of the College of Liberal Arts, Comparative Literature now plays a key role in the new School of Interdisciplinary Studies, which should affirm our vision of Comparative Literature as a program constantly looking for new directions while maintaining our connections to various national traditions.

Comparative Literature: What is Missing from World Literature?

In the “Teaching World Literature” seminar in 2013, the class considered the problem of what major, underrepresented but culturally important works to include in undergraduate surveys of World Literature, such as Comparative Literature 266 and 267.

Authors and works proposed included Robert de Boron’s Merlin, Ibrahim Al-Koni’s Gold Dust, an anthology of Italo Calvino, Aya Kutlu’s Kadin Destani (The Woman’s Epic), Tolstoy’s Death of Ivan Ilyich, Eileen Chang, Snorri Sturluson, Cicero, and a replacement of Shakespeare’s Hamlet with Antony and Cleopatra.
Christina Weiler is a senator, committee chair, and executive board member in the Purdue Graduate Student Government, and she organizes a bi-weekly German Movie Night at Purdue. In the last two years, she was awarded two Teaching Awards of Outstanding Achievement from the School of Languages and Cultures as well as a Teaching Award from the Graduate School. Christina presented papers at numerous conferences, and she received the Lorraine K. Lawton Comparative Literature Award and Scholarship, an OIGP poster award, and two Literary Awards for best cultural and best literary analysis in Foreign Languages & Literatures in 2013.

Her article on Georg Kaiser’s Expressionist play Gas is forthcoming in the Literary Encyclopedia, and her article “The Mandate to Re-Live: Meta-Filmic (Anti-)Propaganda in the Recent German Movie The Wave (2008)” has been accepted for publication in the essay collection Art of the Real: Visual Studies and New Materialisms by Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Luyang Wang passed her prospectus defense in October 2013 and is working on her dissertation on alien women in ancient Chinese supernatural tales, especially Pu Songling’s Liaozhai Zhiyi, as well as figures of interfering women in English and German literature. Last year she assisted professors with class instruction and led class discussion in CHNS 280 (Chinese culture and civilization), CHNS 235 (Asian literature in translation), CHNS 342 (modern Chinese literature), and CHNS 241 (Introduction to ancient Chinese literature).

She was a volunteer at the 2013 American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language Convention in Florida, and she presented a paper, “The Progress of Women’s Gender Consciousness in Contemporary Chinese Cinema,” at the 2014 Southeast Conference Association for Asian Studies in Durham, NC.

Yuhan Huang was featured as one of Purdue’s 5 Students Who Move the World Forward in April 2014. Each semester, five students throughout campus, both graduate and undergraduate, are nominated for this honor. Please visit this website for the full interview with Yuhan Huang, http://www.purdue.edu/fivestudents/April-2014/huang. She is the co-editor with Angelica Dura of a multi-author collection of essays on the 2012 Chinese Nobel Prize in Literature Laureate, Mo Yan in Context: Nobel Laureate and Global Storyteller (Purdue UP, forthcoming Fall 2014). Congratulations!

Monica O’Neil and Christina Weiler were recently featured in the Lafayette Journal & Courier on June 27, 2014 while cheering on Germany in the World Cup. This photo appeared on the front page of the paper, with the caption, “Christina Weiler, from left, Joe Rockelmann and Monica O’Neil sport German face paint as they watch the US vs. Germany World Cup match Thursday, June 26, 2014, at the Egyptian Cafe, 130 Northwestern Avenue in West Lafayette. Germany defeated the US 1-0 and finished on top of Group G with seven points, but the Americans still advanced to the round of 16 on goal difference over Portugal.

Christina and Monica are Ph.D. Students in Comparative Literature. Joe earned a Ph.D. degree in German this year and will start a job at Hampton College in Virginia this fall.”
**Tribute to Professor Shaun Hughes**

Our special article this newsletter is a tribute to Professor Shaun F. D. Hughes, without whom the Comparative Literature Program would have hardly functioned for the past twelve years. A man of wide learning and wider readings from Old Norse to modern penny dreadfuls, from the Vikings of old to some of the worst (Viking) movies ever made, Professor Hughes has long been an invaluable member of the central steering committee, even while keeping up his obligations in various linguistics programs and directing the Medieval and Renaissance Studies program for the past several years.

An obsessive book-a-holic, Professor Hughes has what is believed to be the only set of moveable bookshelves in the area. It holds many treasures, among which is a world atlas “properly” aligned with New Zealand in the middle and the other continents fanned out wherever the Mercator projection squeezes them in. This vast book collection goes along with an intense interest in bibliography, as many a dissertation student has found out when presented with thirty or forty recent books on a topic, various translations and critical editions, to be worked into footnotes and works cited.

At last count he has directed thirty dissertations in English, five in Comparative Literature, three in Linguistics, in addition to serving on sixty-three other committees, for a grand total that now tops the century mark. Add to that another twenty-seven M.A. theses either as reader or director, and the result is a pillar of activity stretching back to 1972 at Purdue University, with more in the pipeline. In an age of narrow specialization—and Professor Hughes has his niches to which few outsiders venture into—even as valuable has been the sheer range of his reading and knowledge of Western and global literature that has allowed the Comparative Literature Program to remain current with the latest trends in teaching and research, particularly in the area of Postcolonial studies. We have been lucky at Purdue to have such a good “atlas” (source of geographical knowledge, willingness to bear burdens).

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**2014 OIGP Spring Reception**

Each spring semester, the Office of Interdisciplinary Graduate Programs (OIGP) in the Graduate School hosts a reception in celebration of interdisciplinary graduate student research. At the reception, a diverse array of student research posters and multimedia presentations are featured from across Purdue’s 15 interdisciplinary graduate programs.

Comparative Literature faculty, Charles Ross and Elena Coda served as judges for the reception. Pictured right with faculty are Comparative Literature graduate students Christina Weiler and Tulin Ece Tosun. Tulin also presented her research, “Production of Social Prejudice in Marlowe’s and Shakespeare’s Plays,” at the 2014 OIGP Spring Reception on Wednesday, April 2, 2014.

Graduate student, Yuhan Huang (not pictured) also presented her research on "Memories in Red: Remembering Chinese Cultural Revolution in Global Context” at the Reception. She earned a Certificate of Excellence Award.
Recent Comparative Literature Interdisciplinary Courses

**Fall 2012**
- CMPL 230/ARAB 280/ENGL 232-Magrebi Literature & Culture; Ahmed Idrissi Alami
- CMPL 230/ITAL 333/ENGL 232-Spirit of Italian Comedy; Elena Coda
- CMPL 230/MARS 220/ENGL 232-Vikings!; Shaun Hughes
- CMPL 650/ENGL 592-Postcolonial Literature of the City; Aparajita Sagar
- CMPL 650/ENGL 573-Tragedy; Sandor Goodhart
- CMPL 650/AMST 650/ENGL 673-Globalization & Post-Global Studies; Alfred Lopez
- CMPL 650/ENGL 642-Translation, Italian Renaissance; Charles Ross
- CMPL 650/ENGL 665/FLL 639-Gender & Nation: West African Fiction; Shaun Hughes

**Spring 2013**
- CMPL 230/ARAB 230/ENGL 232-Arabic Literature in Translation; Lynne Dahmen
- CMPL 230/HEBR 280-Modern Israel: Cinema, Literature, Politics & History; Alon Kantor
- CMPL 230/LC 230/ENGL 232-The Novels of Stephen King; Clotilde Landais
- CMPL 230/PHIL 275-The Philosophy of Art; ;Yubraj Aryal
- CMPL 630/CMPL 650/ENGL 696/LC 639-Teaching World Literature; Charles Ross
- CMPL 650/ENGL 633-Medieval Literature & the Islamic World; Dorsey Armstrong
- CMPL 650/AMST 650/ENGL 672/WOST 681-Reception, Gender, Race & Ethnic Literature; Patrocinio Schweickart

**Fall 2013**
- CMPL 230/ENGL 232/MARS 220-Pirates!; Manushag Powell
- CMPL 230/ARAB 239/ENGL 232-Arab Women Writers; Lynne Dahmen
- CMPL 230/ARAB 280/ENGL 232-Arabic Culture; Ahmed Idrissi Alami
- CMPL 230/PHIL 275-The Philosophy of Art; Daniel Smith
- CMPL 230/GER 230-Myth, Legends & Fairy Tales: From Elves to Elvis; Jeffrey Turco
- CMPL 650/ENGL 596/GER 554/THTR 590-Drama & Drama Theory; Beate Allert
- CMPL 650/ENGL 696/LC 650/PHIL 576/WOST 681-Women & Modernity; Elena Coda

**Spring 2014**
- CMPL 230/HEBR 280-Modern Israel: Cinema, Literature, Politics & History; Alon Kantor
- CMPL 230/LC 239/ENGL 232/WGSS 281-Contemporary Issues for Women Writers; Michelle Medeiros
- CMPL 650/ENGL 633-Shakespeare, Sidney & Arcadia; Charles Ross
- CMPL 650/AMST 650/ENGL 597/WGSS 681-Contemporary Black Feminist Literature; Jennifer Freeman Marshall
- CMPL 650/ENGL 569-Contemporary Criticism & Theory; Sandor Goodhart
- CMPL 650/ENGL 673-Biopolitics, Responsibility & the Postcolonial; Aparajita Sagar
Comparative Literature Faculty News

Professor Beate Allert has enjoyed teaching classes on drama, German cinema, German literature and culture, and several independent studies, including on metaphor in Comparative Literature and on Ekphrasis in German Romanticism. She is elected President of the International Herder Society (1/1/2013-1/1/2015) and organizing the IHS2014 Conference on “Herder: From Cognition to Cultural Science” at Purdue University September 8-10, 2014. She was awarded a Global Synergy Grant to sponsor this conference and the following book she will edit.

Among her recent publications is her essay “Vom Augenblick zum Anblick: Herders Beitrag zur Laokoondebatte” in Herders Rhetoriken / Herder’s Rhetorics, edited by Ralf Simon (Heidelberg: Synchon, 2014). She recently presented lectures in the Goethe-Museum in Dusseldorf, Germany, at GSA In Denver Colorado, and KFLC in Lexington, Kentucky and is on programs for lectures at Atkins Conference in Pittsburgh, the IHS at Purdue, and the Conference on Romanticism in Minneapolis in Fall 2014.

Comparative Literature Alumni News, Part 1

Jose Newton De Seixas Pereira Filho (2008) is an Assistant Professor of Foreign Languages and Literatures who has recently coordinated a research project at UFBA/CNPq-Brazil entitled: “RPHANS & WOR LDS”. His project investigates the literary representations of orphaned characters who are currently at risk, (i.e. emotionally wounded in terms of physical and psychological frontiers, barriers, and mobilities) present in master narratives worldwide, such as in novels, short stories, poems, paintings and films. His group also works with 1,500 public students, in partnership with the Secretary of Education in Bahia, to help them getting ready for events of the World Cup and the Olympic Games in Brazil in 2014 and 2016, therefore combining the role of the Federal University with the affirmation actions and Education in Humanities, Literature, Arts, and Science, as well as the reparation actions with governmental and non-governmental organizations, such as UFBA, UNICEF, UNESCO, and UN, in favor of the improvements of Human Rights.

Ya-chen Chen (2005) is an Assistant Professor of Foreign Languages and Literature and Director of Chinese Language Program at Clark University, and formerly affiliated with the City University of New York (with the same titles and Asian Studies Director). Her academic books include Higher Education in East Asia: Neoliberalism and the Professoriate; Women in Taiwan: Sociocultural Perspectives; and Farewell My Concubine: Same-Sex Readings and Cross-Cultural Dialogues.

Brady Spangenberg (2011) has been working the past three years in Ludwigshafen, Germany as a Global Communications Manager in the agriculture division of BASF, a leading chemical company. There he wrote press releases, staged press conferences and had the chance to meet farmers from around the world. He even traveled to Vietnam and Indonesia to take photographs of and blog about local rice, corn and pepper-corn farmers. As of July 1st, he will transfer to Raleigh, North Carolina, as the Market Intelligence Manager for BASF’s agriculture division in the U.S. He is looking forward to working more directly with U.S. farmers. It reminds him of his article, “Shakespeare in Iowa,” that was published in Comparative Literature in 2010.
Chao-Mei Tu graduated in the summer of the year of 2008. Since then, she has been working in National Taiwan Normal University, and life started to get hectic. The undergraduate program in her department, Department of Chinese as a Second Language, recruits international students only. She teaches the Chinese language, Chinese literature, Chinese cinemas, and Chinese history there. Diverse as the student body is, she enjoys observing the cross-cultural differences. In addition to some research papers published in the field of Taiwanese literature, she engaged in the research of Teaching Chinese as a Second Language. Currently she is putting her writing together for a book on Business Chinese, to be published in this coming fall. Chao-mei and her husband, also a Purdue graduate, live in a beautiful suburban house near Taipei City, and have three very active boys.

This term, Anna Flügge teaches a survey of American literature as well as "The Nineteenth Century American Short Story" at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität in Munich, Germany. She is working on a book project called "Waste Lands in Modern and Contemporary American Literature and Culture." Her article on "Ryan Bingham and Capitalism in Jason Reitman's Up in the Air" was published in Interfaces last fall and her essay "Problematic Mothers, Problematic Adaptations: The Descendants and The Help" in Weber: The Contemporary West this spring. She graduated from Purdue in 2009.

Catalina-Florina Florescu graduated from Purdue in 2007 and currently teaches American drama, theory, and writing at Wagner College. She is the author of the critical work, Transacting Sites of the Liminal Bodily Spaces. She has also written a memoir entitled Inventing Me/Exercitii de retrait. Her new book Disjointed Perspectives on Motherhood presents the accounts of mothers who have suffered a major physical and/or psychically traumatic accident, and, as a consequence, their minds and bodies have been drastically changed. She is the fellowship recipient of the Modern Language Association International Bibliography (2010-2013).

Steve Pierson earned his Ph.D. in 2010. In January 2013, he organized and presided over a Special Session on "The Question of a Dialogic Poem" at the 128th Annual MLA Convention in Boston, and contributed a paper to the Session; in March 2013 Pierson was invited by Professor Don L. Bialostosky to join a panel on Bakhtin and Poetry at the 15th International Bakhtin Conference, to be held in Stockholm in 2014. In May 2013 he was promoted to Professor of English and awarded the SUNY Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Scholarship and Creative Activities.

Yilian Liao earned her Ph.D. in 2010. She joined West Virginia University’s faculty as Assistant Professor in the Chinese program in the Foreign Languages Department in 2010. She teaches Business Chinese, Chinese literature in Translation and Chinese cinema. Her research interests include Chinese cinema and literature, comparative literature, Chinese cultural studies and Chinese calligraphy. Earlier this year, Yilian’s grandparents hosted a one-month party for her first born: Deena Kanglele Carlson. In China, many families have a party for the baby when s/he is one month old; Deena’s photo (left) was taken at the party.
This past year the English Department, in conjunction with several interdisciplinary programs, took a step forward in extending its work in modern fiction to include Chinese literature. During a trip to Beijing, Angelica Duran met Professor Wang Ning of Tsinghua University, who every few years selects an American University to host a Comparative Literature Conference. In the past this event has taken place at Harvard, Princeton, and Duke. This year, Purdue hosted the 6th Annual Sino-American Comparative Literature Symposium on the theme of “Comparative Literature, Religion, and Society.” As a result of the conference, in 2016 Modern Fiction Studies will devote its first special issue to twentieth-century Chinese fiction.

In her role as director of the IDIS program in Religious Studies, Professor Duran enlisted the cooperation of Charles Ross, also of the English Department and director of the Comparative Literature Program, to bring ten scholars from China for three days to meet with a variety of specialists in Chinese literature and culture, including Howard Goldblatt, who gave the conference keynote address on his work as the translator of Noble Prize winner Mo Yan. As there were several papers on Mo Yan, Professor Duran has been able to assemble the best ones into a volume titled Mo Yan in Context: Nobel Laureate and Global Storyteller, edited by her and Comparative Literature graduate student Yuhan Huang, which will be published by Purdue University Press. It includes Professor Ross’s paper, “World Literature, Religion, and Alexandre Dumas’ The Count of Monte Cristo, with Notes on Mo Yan.”

As a result of the conference, John Duvall, editor of Modern Fiction Studies and member of the English Department, agreed to a proposal for a special issue of the journal to be edited by Wang Ning and Charles Ross.

Joining the English Department in sponsoring the conference were Asian Studies, Asian-American Studies, the Confucius Institute, the School of Languages and Cultures, the College of Liberal Arts, Purdue University’s International Programs, Tsinghua University, the Center on Religion and Chinese Society, and the Purdue University Libraries, which provided a display of books relating to China, including a 1950 Purdue dissertation by a Chinese student who returned home as a professor of atomic physics.
Our Dinner Chez Mitch

It was Allen Mandelbaum, the National Book Award Winner for his translation of Virgil’s *Aeneid*, who remarked to me that just because someone likes the same books you do, that does not make him a good person. The converse is more obvious. There are plenty of good people who don’t read the books I do. The idea occurred to me after dinner with selected Comparative Literature students at Westwood, where a brief recitation of works covered in World Literature produced a vacant stare at Virgil and by Augustine had lost the audience. We never reached the middle ages, Renaissance, or the Russians. Perhaps it was just as well.

But why would someone not want to talk about an unusual book that both of you happen to have read with great enthusiasm? Not being a university president, I really can’t judge, but let’s just say what I felt was not that “stab of Joy” C. S. Lewis describes when one finds a friend who not only likes “the same thing, but the same parts of it” when it turned out Winston Churchill’s two volumes of *The World Crisis* on the origins of World War I were a shared passion.

The topic (I won’t say discussion) was about how to teach a short course on how WWI was preventable. How many pages of reading can one expect a student to cover? It was not my place to bandy words, as Samuel Johnson said of the time King George found him in the royal library. I might have suggested reframing the topic, make it a question with two sides, such as was the war preventable? And what’s the point of being president if you can’t assign as many pages as you want? Literature, too, has a place at the table, since history does not give up its lessons unaided, and *War and Peace* offers a brilliantly ironic chapter (Bk. 3, ch. 1) on whether the carnage of Napoleon’s invasion of Russia was preventable.

For the rest, the students were pleased by President Mitch Daniel’s hospitality, and later I found myself reading the chapter on Abbot Suger of St. Denis in Erwin Panofky’s *Meaning in the Visual Arts*. On the perennial topic of was there a break after the Middle Ages, the famous art historian contrasts “the Renaissance man’s thirst for fame and Suger’s colossal but, in a sense, profoundly humble vanity.” Comparative literature to his fingertips, and a good person, Allen would have nodded.

—Charlie Ross