

NOTED

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Contents

Letter from the Editor	1
Note from the Director	3
Staff News	6
Fun in the English Department	7

FEATURES 8

Interviews with New Staff	9
Blathering Wit's Writing Lab Corner	15
Rereading Austen	18
The Scarlet Stain: Understanding Trauma and Desire in the Scarlet Letter	21
Liberation from Sodomasochism:	24
The Treatment of Marriage in	24
"The Bloody Chamber"	24
Reflections on St. Gallen	28
31st of May 2013, approximately 18.00	31
Massimo Marino's Reading of Diamones	34
Making up Excuses	35

FILM AND THEATRE 38

News from the Film Club	39
Barbe-à-Papa Metamorphoses	41
into Emmet	41
Theatre Programme for Fall 2013	43

CREATIVE WRITING 44

Deep South	45
Take a Walk	46
Joyce's Lost Lectures on Hamlet	47
I hate	50
Self for Others	51
Candied Bacon	53

Letter from the Editor

BRYN SKIBO-BIRNEY

This summer, as I worked together on a project with a colleague, I mused aloud that I couldn't pin-point a word that conveyed a sentiment I often feel as a student of the English Department. I had tried everything, I explained, but nothing really expressed that feeling. "What about 'the collective creative spirit'?" she responded.

The collective creative spirit. Yes! It was so perfect and yet so elusive. But what do I mean by this and why is it the highlight of this edition of *Noted*?

Writing is a solitary sport, we so often think, the struggle within ourselves to singularly build inky castles of our thoughts. When we read or write, we often find ourselves alone, working in some dark corner of the library, late into the lonely night. Facing a blank sheet of paper or an equally blank screen, the tapping pen or the blinking cursor can seem like the only other form of life within the vast mental space around us. At times like this, I, for one, often forget that those glorious, yet too-rare epiphanies come most often when we talk to each other, when we try to explain, and thus solidify, the ephemeral cloud that is Our Idea. More than just explaining, however, by discussing our theories, laughing over a character, or complaining about our writers' block, we fuel and inspire each other. These seemingly haphazard, "free-range" conversations provide new perspectives so that when we find ourselves before that blank page, we no longer struggle to escape the corner into which we have painted ourselves, but instead see new, yellow-bricked roads of possibilities.

This edition of *Noted* seems particularly couched in the collective creative spirit. Nearly every piece speaks indirectly, if not directly, to the importance and influence friendships, debates, and conversations have on our creativity. **Nicholas Weeks** is no stranger to this collective artistic spirit, as seen in his insightful review of the productions – past, present, and future – of the English Department Theatre Group, Emmet (né Barbe-à-Papa). Likewise, the ever-expanding Film Club, led by **Sylvère Guyonnet**, continues to build upon on the previous semesters' successes, bringing in a great roster of films and events as well as a few fun surprises; I'll leave it to him to fill you in. In speaking with **Ben Seyfert** about his fantastic in-class essay, "The Scarlet Stain," he mentioned the many people who had helped him along the way towards its current published state. Both his and **Honor Jackson**'s essays came to *Noted* via multiple recommendations, so thought-provoking were they for multiple members of the department. **John Curry**,

Aleida Demartin, Chantal Rossi, Alexander Roth, and **Cristina Simoni** report on how a shared excursion changed their understanding of medieval texts in “Reflections on St Gallen” while **Olivia Lindem**’s “Rereading Austen” offers insight into how her appreciation and understanding of the works of Jane Austen has changed over the years with her own personal growth. After attending a reading by Massimo Marino, **Anna Augousti** discusses how the inhabitants of Geneva influenced the author’s latest work, *Daimones*. More directly, **Géraldine Donaldson**’s hilarious review of the Léman Poetry Workshop’s “Open Mic Night” explicitly shows the benefits of stretching one’s poetic wings, at the literal nudging of your peers. A regular *Noted* contributor of short prose fiction, **Paloma Lukumbi** stretches her own creative style in the profoundly musical poem “Deep South,” offering ample inspiration to any budding poets. Personally, I had the good fortune to be creatively pushed by co-writers **Liz Baessler, Jayne Brady,** and **Mark D’Arcy** as we drafted the deliciously bizarre “pass-along” short story, “Candied Bacon” while, on a more intimate note, Manon Guignot’s moving piece “Self for Others” demonstrates the long-lasting bonds built upon shared creativity.

What’s more, this edition itself would not be possible without the generous support of the English Department staff: **Deborah Madsen** offers sage council on authentic voices in her “Note from the Director” which neatly coincides with **Anna Iatsenko**’s timely exploration of why our reasons for *not* writing fiction or poetry ultimately provide ample reasons *to* write. Responding to these calls for creativity, **Sam MacDuff** boldly forays into a Joycean-Shakesperian “hotch-potch” of ghostly fathers and algebra. As you will also soon find out, the Department is expanding and **Kimberly Frohreich** introduces these new members of staff in a highly entertaining series of interviews while **Oliver Morgan**’s superb proofing brought out the best in every piece. Finally, you have the professors’ and assistants’ combined efforts to thank if *Noted*’s “Fall-ing” crossword puzzle is a little tricky; maybe a combined effort with your classmates will help you win the prize.

In closing, I hope you find this edition of *Noted* as motivating and entertaining as I did but, perhaps more so, I hope that this edition reminds you of the collective nature of creativity. Read. Write. Share. Discuss. Then write again; better yet, write *together*. Perhaps the next time you find yourself in the deepest corners of the library, stuck on a word, you turn not to thesaurus.com, but to your classmates and colleagues. You never know, in helping you find your inspiration, you may help them find their own.

Happy writing,

Bryn

Note from the Director

DEBORAH MADSEN

I am very pleased to extend a warm welcome to all students joining the English Department this autumn and to say to returning students that we are very glad to have you back with us.

Something I have been thinking about recently is the concept of authenticity and how it relates to the intellectual life of the English Department. I have spent some time this summer evaluating an essay for publication in the academic journal PMLA. The essay is about racial and cultural authenticity in relation to Native American Literature. Reviewing this essay while at the same time preparing my classes for the autumn semester has made me wonder about the ways in which authenticity describes the mission of our department. In fact, authenticity is an idea that I encounter frequently in my research on Native American Literature: what is a “Native American”? How does a Native American write that is distinctive or different from other kinds of writing? What is a Native American literary “voice”? These specific questions raise fascinating sociological, psychological, and historical issues as well as the kinds of aesthetic problems with which we, in the English Department, routinely deal. In fact, I have edited a whole book of essays on this subject (and the book is in the library should you be interested in learning more) so I won’t go into possible answers to these particular questions here. What I do want to discuss here is how the issue of writing in an authentic voice is relevant to all members of our department.

Academic writing in literary studies, and in the humanities more generally, is not about empirically correct answers. The kinds of questions with which we engage cannot be answered in a single correct fashion (though that’s not to say there are no wrong answers!) in part because our writing is as much about how our ideas are expressed and our analyses are presented as it is about answering a question. Academic essays seek to persuade rather than prove; language is our rhetorical tool as well as the object of our inquiry and bringing together the medium and the message is the hard work that we all have to learn to do if we are to become effective and “authentic” writers.

Perhaps it is useful to approach this problematic initially in negative terms. While the characteristics of an authentic voice may be complicated, what constitutes an inauthentic voice is perfectly clear and easy to spot. We all know when someone addresses us insincerely, expressing themselves in terms that we know they do not really mean. We

also know when someone is speaking as if they are reading from a script or are speaking someone else's words like a ventriloquist. In writing, and especially academic writing, the most obvious case of this kind of inauthenticity is plagiarism. At its most extreme, plagiarism presents someone else's words as if they were the writer's own; more obvious – though a little less extreme – is presenting someone else's ideas without acknowledgement, as if they belonged to the writer. Any writing in which words and meaning do not match suggests plagiarism. When someone uses words that do not say what is meant, then this insincerity or lack of authenticity fails to convince and tells us that something else is going on behind the words. This is why readers can identify plagiarism so easily.

If plagiarism is the extreme act of bad faith in writing, what then is an authentic voice? I just used the phrase “bad faith” as a deliberate echo of the existentialist understanding of authenticity as the continuous effort to live and act in terms that are true to oneself: one's own experience, history, knowledge, personality, responses, and the like. In conflict with authenticity are external pressures like the force of convention: how we are expected to look, behave, and sound. Academic writing – and indeed all forms of writing – is governed by convention. In the Writing Lab and in instructions from teachers you will hear the same advice about how to write an academic essay in English. This advice describes the conventions of the English essay: an introduction that sets out your problematic, a statement of your thesis or argument in response to the problematic, and a description of the method by which you are going to develop your argument; a series of paragraphs each starting with a topic sentence that relates your thesis to the topic of your paragraph; and a conclusion that relates to your opening thesis statement all the evidence (the textual analyses) that you have presented in the essay. These conventions are your rhetorical response to the external expectations of your reader, and it is with these conventions that the expression of your authentic voice needs to balance. It is this balance that the department tries to help you to find.

Among the words that I often find myself repeating at the beginning of the academic year are “The English Department is not a language school.” We do not teach basic language skills, as I'm sure you know. What we as teachers devote ourselves to is the perfecting of English language competence and key to that is guiding students in their quest for an authentic voice in English. Yes, that means ensuring your grammar is correct and your vocabulary is appropriate. But these efforts are the foundation for developing the knowledge and confidence to express yourself within the conventions of good academic writing. All students coming into the BA1 module read in the *polycopié* the following “disclaimer”: “In your essays, we look for and reward insightful, intelligent, and sensitive readings which are clearly articulated and grounded in textual evidence; we do not look

for 'the one right answer' because it does not exist." There is no single correct answer to the interpretation of a literary text because each interpretation is created by an individual reader who, in his or her writing, needs to express their authentic response in a voice that is distinctively their own.

Of course, it is not only in the formal instruction we offer that the English Department encourages this development of an authentic voice in English. The intellectual environment of the department provides numerous opportunities to develop and express one's own voice. The theatre group is a valuable opportunity to learn and practice the performance of English in a variety of contexts; *Noted* will publish your creative writing and non-academic pieces like film, book, and theatre reviews; the *Commission mixte* is a venue where students can learn about the more administrative uses of English; the Film Club welcomes informal intellectual discussion around the films that are viewed. In these varied ways, the department hopes that every student will develop the ability to be their authentic selves through the medium of the English language. All of us are to a great extent how we express ourselves in language. It is a challenge to live authentically in a number of languages and only the mastery of each of those languages will allow us the existential freedom that arises from authentic being. It seems to me that this captures both the most elevated and also the most basic elements of our department's mission.

Bonne rentrée!

Deborah Madsen

Staff News

We have a number of new teachers joining us this year. Amy Brown, who is coming to us from the University of Sydney, is to be the new assistant in Medieval English; Bryn Skibo-Birney is familiar to all who have met her in the Writing Lab and she is the new assistant in American Literature; and Nicholas Weeks who has been taking the theatre group from strength to strength these past several years is the new assistant in Contemporary Literature. Teachers who will be with us only for the coming year are Juliette Vuille, who will be teaching Medieval Literature, and Alexandre Fachard who will teach Modern Literature. Both Juliette and Alexandre come to us from the University of Lausanne. I would also like to welcome Nadine Weiss, who will join us as an *assistante suppléante* in Early Modern Literature for the coming year.

Sadly, this means we say goodbye to several valued members of staff. Simone Oettli has retired after many years of service to the Department. And in the domain of Medieval Literature, Fiona Tolhurst and Petya Ivanova are moving on to the next stage in their careers. Susanna Gebhardt and Michael Rösli have also moved on to new horizons after several years of loyal service.

Congratulations have been amply earned by two members of staff: Erszi Kukorelly on her appointment as our new chargée d'enseignement in Modern English Literature, and Arnaud Barras who has been awarded a grant by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNF) to spend the academic year 2013-14 at the Australian National University in Canberra pursuing his doctoral research.

In the Writing Lab we welcome two new monitors, Oran McKenzie and Aleida Demartin. I would like to take the opportunity to offer, on behalf of staff and students alike, our warmest thanks to the outgoing monitors, Jayne Brady and Bryn Skibo-Birney, for the excellent work they have done in the Writing Lab.

Fun in the English Department

As we welcome everyone back to the English Department, it is a pleasure for me to remind you that while our department offers an academically stimulating environment we offer a number of valuable opportunities for having fun as well. You can find details of these activities on the departmental website and the *rentrée* is an excellent opportunity to make a “new year's resolution” to become involved. The theatre group goes from strength to strength; the Film Club continues with the new format that was such a success last year and, of course, there is *Noted* itself. These activities enable you to participate actively in the social life of the department and, at the same time, to practice and improve your English. A very important part of the department's interaction between staff and students is the formal committee, the *Commission mixte*. At the meetings of this committee any issue of concern to students or staff is discussed (over a glass of wine and a few nibbles). The committee is comprised of representatives of each of the groups that make up the department: undergraduate and postgraduate students, *corps intermédiaire*, and *corps professoral*. The current members of the *Commission mixte* are: myself, Deborah Madsen (president), on behalf of the *corps professoral*; Valerie Fehlbaum and Emma Depledge on behalf of the *corps intermédiaire*; and on behalf of the student body Linda Hinni, Paloma Lakumbi, and Elio Correia Fonseca (BA) and Mee Ji (MA). Do speak with your representative if you have anything that you would like to be discussed by the *Commission mixte*. Whether formally through this committee or informally through any of the extracurricular activities offered by the department, I encourage you to become involved and contribute to the vibrant intellectual and social environment that the English Department offers.

FEATURES

Interviews with New Staff

KIMBERLY FROHREICH

The English Department is happy to welcome several new teaching staff members this year! On that "note," the *Noted* team thought it would be nice to learn a little bit about them with some "getting to know you" questions. Without further ado:

Amy Brown, Medieval Literature

Where are you from?

More-or-less, from Sydney. With the exception of a year's stint in Canberra, that's where I've lived since I started my BA at seventeen. I grew up in a small coastal town about three hours north of there; lived on-campus during semesters at the University of Sydney for the duration of a BA, then moved to Canberra to work for the government. This turned out to be less fun than uni, so I packed up and went back to Sydney.

Please tell us a little bit about your research interests and how you came to acquire those interests.

Lo, these many moons ago, when I were an innocent child of sixteen, I decided that Guinevere got a bad rap in all the Arthurian literature I'd found, and elected to write a Guinevere-redemption story for my major work for English. I got all tangled up in my inability to a) access primary sources or b) process the fact that there isn't The Original Arthurian Legend anyway, so I gave up and wrote angsty teenage poetry instead. But this failure hung over me, such that, when selecting universities, the fact that Sydney offered a course called 'Imagining Camelot' proved an irresistible draw-card.

As to how I ended up on the study of friendship, perhaps it was a matter of nominative determinism for a scholar of medieval literatures named "amy."

What do you like to do in your spare time (when not reading and/or writing for research)?

Cooking (usually well); knitting (quite badly); lurking on the internet.

Where would be your dream spot for an academic conference (assuming it's fully funded)?

Being Antipodean and a medievalist, I have utilitarian ideals for conference travel.

Somewhere near whatever manuscript I most need or want to get my hands on at the time. Alternatively, anywhere with interesting historical day-trips available. In short: Europe.

If you were stranded on a desert island, what one book would you want to have with you (excluding a survival guide and one that you might consider using as kindling)?

For practicality (easily available in relatively portable form) and a variety of reading matter, it'd have to be the complete works of Shakespeare. But surely in this day and age I could take my Kobo e-reader? I have the Pan MacMillan e-book edition of *On Farting: Language and Laughter in the Middle Ages* just waiting for a suitable occasion, and I could probably get the complete works of Shakespeare on there too. I might need some kind of solar-powered charging mechanism, but a friend of mine in Sydney built such a thing for his laptop, so I'm sure it can be done.

Favorite book, play, poem, film, and/or TV series?

Oh goodness, you ask hard questions, don't you? Can I take three favourites? In terms of repeat reading over my lifespan, the *Anne of Green Gables* series takes the cake (current favorite might be *Anne of the Island*); favourite book encountered since starting uni would be *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*; and favourite from the last few years, A.S. Byatt's *Possession*. Non-medieval poetry, hmm... no, can't pick one poem, but I nominate the short chapbook *Devil's Road Down*, by Adrienne Odasso, a young American poet and sometime medievalist.

Films are even harder to account for, so I'll default to the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy. I hardly watch any TV, but one which I both enjoy and have great critical respect for is a 90s Australian short series about a teaching nunnery shortly after Vatican II, called *Brides of Christ*.

Favorite quote?

Byatt's painfully self-reflective scholars on the topic of academic interests:

"He hesitated. 'They were what stayed alive, when I'd been taught and examined everything else.'

Maud smiled then. 'Exactly. That's it. What could survive our education.'

*Alexandre Fachard, Modern Literature***Where are you from?**

I was born in the US but grew up in Lausanne, where I've lived my whole life except for one year in Los Angeles and another in London.

Please tell us a little bit about your research interests and how you came to acquire those interests.

My current research focuses on textual editing. What appealed to me in textual editing was the work on original documents and the sleuthing in archives, libraries.

What do you like to do in your spare time (when not reading and/or writing for research)?

I read, not for my research.

Where would be your dream spot for an academic conference (assuming it's fully funded)?

Perhaps Venice.

If you were stranded on a desert island, what one book would you want to have with you? (excluding a survival guide and one that you might consider using as kindling)

The *Norton Shakespeare* or the *Compact Edition of the OED*.

Favorite book, play, poem, film, and/or TV series?

I don't like the word "favorite" when used in connection with books, movies, etc. I admire too many authors, artists to select a single one as my favorite.

Favorite quote?

Same as above. That said, the following words by La Bruyère came to my mind last night as I was struggling through a bad book: "La gloire ou le mérite de certains hommes est de bien écrire; et de quelques autres, c'est de n'écrire point."

Bryn Skibo-Birney, American Literature

Where are you from?

Hard to say. I started off in Danville, California (7 years) before heading to West Chester, Pennsylvania (7 years), then a brief stint in Ocean City, New Jersey, (3 years), and finally Washington, D.C. to attend university (5 years) with Paris, France and Perugia, Italy mixed in. Last (but not least), Geneva (6 years).

Please tell us a little bit about your research interests and how you came to acquire those interests.

I think ever since reading *The Poky Little Puppy*, I've had my eye on animals in literature, films, and art. My research now focuses on a type of literary anthrozoology: how animals are used/discussed in literature (as characters or narrators? objects? metaphors?), how the human defines itself in relation to these beings, and how these seemingly distinctive categories are blurred.

What do you like to do in your spare time (when not reading and/or writing for research)?

I have convinced myself that walking my dog, Bonnie, counts as research. So when not reading, writing, or walking her, I like to run (for sport, not because I'm being chased), ride my bike, or attempt to garden (this consists of pulling things I think are weeds and googling "why are the leaves turning ___(fill in non-green color here)___?").

Where would be your dream spot for an academic conference (assuming it's fully funded)?

This is tricky because if the place is too amazing, you might regret having to attend the conference in the first place. That said, Papua New Guinea would be a great conference destination: unparalleled flora, fauna, languages, art, coffee, and beaches.

If you were stranded on a desert island, what one book would you want to have with you (excluding a survival guide and one that you might consider using as kindling)?

Jitterbug Perfume by Tom Robbins; at least if I'm stuck on an island, no one will hear me snort with laughter.

Favorite book, play, poem, film, and/or TV series?

Invisible Cities by Italo Calvino

"To a Mouse" by Robert Burns

Fight Club; dir. David Fincher

Favorite quote?

"You've got to jump off the cliff all the time and build your wings on the way down."
-- Ray Bradbury

Nicholas Weeks, Contemporary Literature

Where are you from?

My roots are quite extended. With parents from England and Mauritius, I was actually born in Peoria (USA) but have been living in Switzerland for most of my life (Vaud, then Geneva).

Please tell us a little bit about your research interests and how you came to acquire those interests.

First came my taste for philosophy and my encounter with Samuel Beckett's *The Unnameable*. Reading this work came as something of an aesthetic shock. It triggered my passion for this author as well as for the so-called "theatre of the absurd" dramatists. Then came my increasing involvement with the English university theatre group as actor then director, as well as my acknowledgement of the extremely vibrant theatre scene here between Geneva and Lausanne. After a year of military obligations, I came back to follow a fascinating interdisciplinary seminar on "The Sense of Movement." That seminar opened the path towards my actual research project on the dynamics of embodied expression in modern and postmodern literature and theatre.

What do you like to do in your spare time (when not reading and/or writing for research)?

Attending plays at theatre and dance festivals in Switzerland and nearby European countries. Swimming and trekking in the mountains when I find the time...

Where would be your dream spot for an academic conference (assuming it's fully funded)?

John Hopkins University

If you were stranded on a desert island, what one book would you want to have with you (excluding a survival guide and one that you might consider using as kindling)?

James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*

Favorite book, play, poem, film, and/or TV series?

Book: Gao Xingjian's *Soul Mountain*

Play: *Happy Days*

Poem: Robert Frost's "The Road Not Taken"

Film: *The Thin Red Line*

TV series: *TREME*

Favorite quote?

"Hereunder lies the above who up below

So hourly died that he survived till now"

-- Samuel Beckett

Blathering Wit's Writing Lab Corner

Editor's note: Following several requests made by students, the editorial staff of Noted approached Blathering Wit in the hopes that he might provide some hard-earned advice in the field of essay-writing. To our great appreciation, Mr Wit has kindly accepted our request and we are happy to publish what we hope will be the first of many installments, sharing his personal brand of expertise. He invites you to send in any writing- or research-related questions you may have to noted-lettres@unige.ch so that he may answer them in the following editions of Noted.

Dear Blathering Wit,

If my teacher doesn't require an outline, is it really all that important to write one before starting an essay? And, if so, what makes a good outline? How long should it be and how much detail should it have?

*Sincerely,
Unstructured at Uni*

Dear Unstructured,

Writing an outline before starting an essay can seem tedious, especially if your usual habit of writing involves sitting in front of a blank computer screen and letting your thoughts flow. But even if your teacher does not ask you for an outline, you should always do one. Why, you may ask? In part, because it will allow you to “pre-edit” your essay, so to speak; you can look at your outline and make sure the thesis statement is clear and argumentative, and that each bullet point works to support said thesis statement.

Another reason for outlining is that it will make the essay-writing process much easier. As you work on your essay, you can consistently refer to your handy-dandy outline. You'll always have an eye on the point you need to make and the direction in which you're going. In other words, outlines are a great way to keep yourself from getting stuck in that void we all know and dread: writer's block. Depending on how detailed your outline is, writing your essay will be more or less a pain-staking process. Having

a detailed outline should allow you to concentrate on fleshing out each of your points and on guiding your future reader in a logical manner from one point to the next (with lovely, smooth transitions).

That said, here are my DOs and DON'Ts for writing a good outline:

DO write an outline that has a length consistent with the length of the paper you have to write. A 3-5 line outline might be acceptable for a 2-3 page paper, but not for a 10 page paper.

DO write a detailed outline, beginning with a paragraph in which you include:

your problematic,

your thesis statement,

your method (the choice of text(s) you will discuss, the aspects of the text(s) you will analyze, etc.)

Then, two or more primary bullet points (representing each of the main parts of your essay),

secondary bullet points under each primary bullet point (representing the point you intend to make in each paragraph), and

the example(s) you intend to give under each secondary bullet point.

DO match each of your primary bullet points to your methodology, meaning that there should be one primary bullet point for each of the main steps you plan to take in order to develop your argument.

DO think of each of your secondary bullet points as a future paragraph. This means that you should be able to provide (the basis of) your topic sentence – the point you want to make in that paragraph.

DON'T write full paragraphs instead of bullet points. This strategy could be a bigger headache than it seems, because you'd essentially be turning a short essay into a longer one – not an easy process.

DON'T worry about having a perfectly symmetrical outline. In other words, if you have three secondary bullet points under your first primary bullet point, this does not mean you must have the same number under each successive primary bullet point.

DON'T allow your examples/quotes to become your secondary bullet points. The dan-

ger of an outline that merely provides examples is that your essay will then read like a list in which you expect the quotes to speak for themselves.

Essentially, the outline is for you; it is there to get you back on track when you get lost and/or blocked, to find the easy links for transitions between paragraphs, and to help you revise the finished essay (for example, did you argue what you promised you would argue in your thesis statement?). I hope this answers your question, dear Unstructured, and with that, I take my leave for now; until the next edition, happy outlining!

Yours truly,
BW

Rereading Austen

OLIVIA LINDEM

Jane Austen here, Jane Austen there... You've probably all noticed by this point that 2013 seems to be the year of All Things Austen. There are new films, books, and articles coming out of every nook and cranny, from the silly to the serious, with everyone from the *New Yorker* to the Bank of England taking part. Officially, this is all because it's *Pride and Prejudice's* bicentennial and *Pride and Prejudice* is incontestably Austen's most famous work. Unofficially, though? Anyone who loves Austen will simply jump at any occasion to celebrate her work.

To play my passive part in the celebrations, I decided against mock Regency balls and Austen theme parks and decided, instead, to do the "rational" thing and reread each and every one of Austen's novels throughout the year. It doesn't sound like a daunting feat, but with mandatory readings and theoretical texts piling towards the ceiling and a stack of lovingly chosen yet never-read classics that will no longer even fit on a shelf, it's easier said than done. Still, I've made my way through all but one, revisiting even *Sanditon* along the way. With so many new books to discover, I wondered, at first, whether rereading these old favorites was a frivolous thing to do, but as I've often noted before, and yet can't seem to remember, rereading favorites is almost always good.

The first time I discovered Austen, I was eight years old and enthralled with an ITV adaptation of *Emma*. I'd outgrown fairy tales at that point and had turned instead to the worlds of Louisa May Alcott and L.M. Montgomery. Yet, here was this story, steeped in a historical society, where ladies wore lovely, long dresses and everyone spoke beautifully. I fell then for the supposedly superficial side of Austen, the fluffy side Austen-haters dismiss and non-readers love to mock. It was with that enchantment that I watched all of the adaptations and then, some two years later, slowly began to read all of her books. At ten, eleven, twelve years old, I read for the social customs I wished we still had, for the charming characters I wanted to befriend, and for the celebrated stories themselves.

I decided to do the "rational" thing and reread each and every one of Austen's novels throughout the year.

It was with later rereadings of *Pride and Prejudice*, *Persuasion*, and *Northanger Abbey* in my teens that I began to discover the other, richer aspects of Austen. I'd always

known that *Northanger Abbey* was a parody, and that characters like Mrs. Bennet were to be laughed at, but I'd missed out on the finer details. What was the gothic novel she mocked? Who were the social types she criticized? The irony, the delightful turns of phrase, the morals, and the sheer extent of the social commentary... all stood out as they had failed to do before.

This time however, in addition to noticing just how different each and every one of her novels is from all the others in style and purpose, I was struck by just how hilarious Austen can be. After one or two reads, some of the socially criticized characters stop being annoying and become quite funny. Isabella Thorpe, for instance, holds on to her obnoxious bonnet but you can't help but laugh at how ridiculous she is, going from melodramatically writing about how she absolutely must have the fiancé she recently dumped back as he's "the only man [she] ever did or could love" to criticizing the new spring fashions in two adjoining sentences. Mrs. Bennet and her poor nerves, meanwhile, can now be summed up not only by her preoccupation with marrying off her daughters at any cost, which technically can be historically justified, but by the way she spends an entire evening essentially having a "Yes!" "No!" argument with a child:

'If I were as rich as Mr. Darcy,' cried a young Lucas, who came with his sisters, 'I should not care how proud I was. I would keep a pack of foxhounds, and drink a bottle of wine a day.'

'Then you would drink a great deal more than you ought,' said Mrs. Bennet; 'and if I were to see you at it, I should take away your bottle directly.'

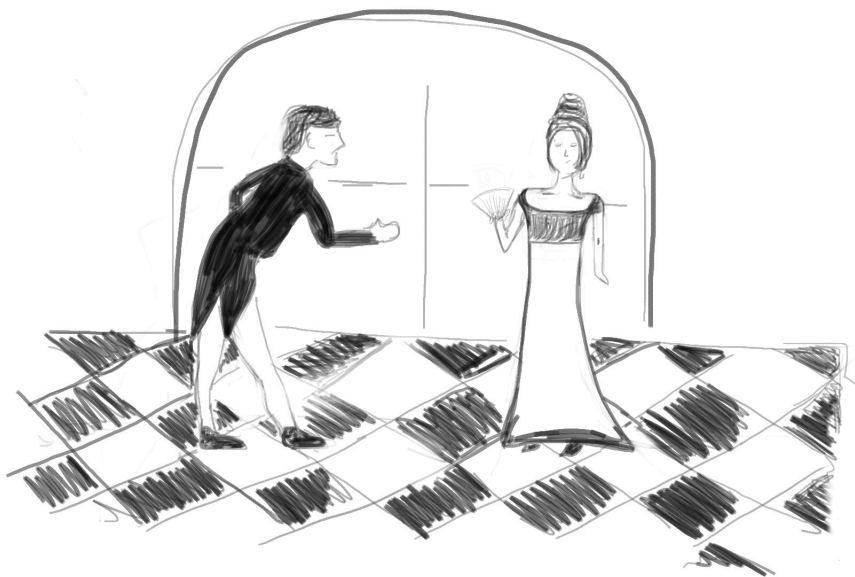
The boy protested that she should not; she continued to declare that she would, and the argument ended only with the visit.

Emma's Mr. Woodhouse, however, takes the cake away from them all (pun fully intended.) He's a lovably persnickety old man who hates going beyond his shrubbery and fears "thoughtless people" who do reprehensible things like open windows and eat cake. The novel's full of his antics and wholehearted but ridiculous recommendations that render him one of Austen's most memorable secondary characters.

Yet, this isn't to say that the funny bits are limited to funny characters. Who can forget that moment in *Pride and Prejudice* where Elizabeth Bennet jokes that she discovers that she is in love with Mr. Darcy upon "first seeing his beautiful grounds at Pemberley"? Jane Austen is by no means a comedian, but the unexpected nature of these quips, in-

terspersed throughout her novels, make them that much more of a delight to discover.

And that is precisely what rereading Austen has proved to be: a delight. Every reread brings with it new discoveries: overlooked turns of phrase, veiled critiques, and if you're lucky, new inside jokes. I, for one, don't think I'll ever be able to look at a cake without thinking of Mr. Woodhouse quietly muttering at the shame of it all.



"Ms Bennet, may I have this twerk?"

The Scarlet Stain: Understanding Trauma and Desire in the Scarlet Letter

ANDRÉAS-BENJAMIN SEYFERT

Editor's note: Andréas-Benjamin Seyfert's essay, "The Scarlet Stain: Understanding Trauma and Desire in The Scarlet Letter" was submitted as his BA1 in-class essay during the Spring 2013 semester and has been subsequently revised before publication in Noted. Students should note, however, that this work does not represent an "average" in-class essay but rather an exceptional in-class essay; it is for that reason, as well as for the thought-provoking theoretical reading that Mr Seyfert provides, that it is featured in this semester's edition of Noted. We thank Mr Seyfert for allowing us to print his essay and look forward to publishing more exemplary BA1 in-class essays in the future.

"The unconscious is structured like a language."

– Jacques Lacan

"The aim of all life is death."

– Sigmund Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1919)

Joanne Feit Diehl's essay "Re-Reading *The Letter*" marvelously uncovers an underlying structure of repressed desire through sexual-textual motifs in *The Scarlet Letter*. Throughout her essay, however, and especially in her last sentence, she seems to propose that repressed desire is irrevocably linked to "a scar": "Finally, when we, as readers, gaze at the scarlet letter, we ... witness [...] along with [Hawthorne] the scar of primal desire." Logically speaking, a scar always gestures back to a wound. Furthermore, a wound cannot occur without there being a more or less traumatic event on the body. Following this line of thought, the scarlet letter can be seen as a symbol of both desire and trauma. According to Peter Brooks (*Reading for the Plot*), discourse is similar to life in that both consist of the postponement of the end, sustained desire (Freud's "Pleasure Principle") through a string of detours – improper end points – resulting in a proper ending, something corresponding quite well to Freud's idea of the "Death Wish" in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. In my essay, I will show how adding Freud's idea of the "Death Wish" (and Brooks' treatment of it), in the way that it both reveals and conceals meaning, to Diehl's exploration of the sexual-textual can shed new light on the use of figurative language in *The Scarlet Letter*.

The “Death Wish” has often been misread as a suicidal streak. In fact, it has very little to do with a wish of dying. The “Pleasure Principle” consisted mainly in the idea that human beings have a tendency to repress everything that counteracts their direct drives of survival and reproduction. Nevertheless, what Freud saw by looking at trauma victims at the end of WWI is that they have a tendency to return to the traumatic event that put them in their predicament in a compulsive manner.

Trauma resulting from the discovery of the adulterous affair between Dimmesdale and Hester is very real in *The Scarlet Letter*; Hester had a fair chance of dying as a result of it: “another female [cried:] ‘This woman [...] ought to die. Is there no law for it? Truly there is, both in the Scripture and the statute-book’” (56). Had Dimmesdale been found out as Hester’s lover, a similar fate would probably have awaited him. While Hester’s traumatic “wound” is closer to healing than Dimmesdale’s (since she moves on with her life and Diehl refers to it as a “scar”), Dimmesdale finds it necessary to return to it: he flagellates himself to induce the pain. Furthermore, he is constantly reminded of his trauma by Chillingworth.

So why, then, return to a traumatic event? In *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, Freud gives two related reasons for it. First, the victim of trauma hopes to acquire mastery over the event through repetition. He/she hopes that by acquiring mastery over the cause of the trauma, the current repercussions of the first trauma could be overcome. The second reason that Freud gives is the “Death Wish”: a rehearsal of death through the traumatic event. According to Freud, a human being wants to die, but on his/her own terms. By rehearsing death via traumatic experiences that could prove fatal and acquiring mastery over them, the victim hopes to prevent his/her untimely death.

A good example in *The Scarlet Letter* to illustrate this idea of the “Death Wish” would be the forest scene. Here, Hester meets Dimmesdale for the first time in years and asks him to go away with her to Europe, wanting to return therefore to the very adulterous relationship that put her in her predicament in the first place. To surpass this predicament, represented by the scarlet letter, she literally casts it off in a symbolic gesture: “See! With this symbol, I undo it all, and make it as it had never been!” To return to my thesis statement: then, on the overt level, the symbol of the letter “A” stands for “Adultery,” but in this context the “A” stands for Hester and Dimmesdale’s trauma following the adultery and Hester wants to “undo it all,” to gain mastery over it, to surpass it. It therefore reveals one meaning and conceals another.

In terms of figurative language, desire and trauma are closely linked in *The Scarlet Let-*

ter. In *Reading for the Plot*, Brooks compares rhetoric to the dreamwork (the manifest content of a dream that serves as a disguise to repressed wishes and desires), and says that it works in similar ways. In particular, he links the term “condensation” to metaphors and “displacement” to metonyms. Indeed, those ideas are closely related. Condensation merges semantic elements together in the same way as a metaphor, whereas metonymy may establish a certain unity between two elements, but never to the point of saying that one equals two. Displacement does something similar to metonymy, then, by taking elements of one semantic field and placing them in another, in order to establish unity (not identity!) between the two.

In her essay, Diehl points out a contradiction within the figurative meaning of the symbol “A”:

Indeed, the A articulates through its linear geometry the illustration of forbidden desire. Its divergent verticals suggest a schematic drawing of the vagina, viewed at once frontally and from below, and the horizontal bar of the letter signifies the intact hymenal membrane, the sign that no violation has occurred. ... Scarlet recalls both the blood of the torn hymen ... and the color of sexual passion (326).

Reading this in terms of condensation and displacement, as well as metaphor and metonymy, may help us understand the apparent contradiction between geometry and color. Diehl suggests that the horizontal bar “signifies the intact hymenal membrane.” Nevertheless, we know that this is not the case with Hester. Instead, what we know to be true is the second part of the interpretation: “the sign that no violation has occurred.” Hester has not been raped. In other words, she has not suffered physical trauma. This accounts for the condensation, the metaphorical. Now for displacement: where is the symbol placed? Over the heart. The adultery for which the symbol stands has occurred in the vagina, yet it is not worn over the pelvic region. The displacement therefore accounts for the movement from the vagina to the heart.

To summarize then, we can infer that no violation has occurred to the vagina, yet there is a wound in the heart of Hester. This accounts not only for the color and the geometry of the symbol, but also the place upon which it is worn. To come back to my first sentence, then, desire (Diehl’s analysis) is closely linked to trauma (my inference) when it comes to coming to terms with the symbol of the scarlet letter. To conclude, I have shown how adding the element of trauma and Freud’s idea of the “Death Wish” to Diehl’s interpretation can enlighten our understanding of the use of figurative language in *The Scarlet Letter*, especially when we try to come to terms with the symbol of the letter “A” and the way it both reveals and conceals meaning.

Liberation from Sadomasochism: The Treatment of Marriage in "The Bloody Chamber"

HONOR G. JACKSON

Editor's note: Ms Jackson's "Liberation from Sadomasochism" was written for an in-class essay for the Spring 2013 BA6 seminar, "Rewriting Fairy Tales." It has been subsequently edited for publication and we thank Ms Jackson for allowing us to print her work in Noted as an example of an outstanding in-class essay.

Angela Carter's "The Bloody Chamber" is a feminist rewriting of the fairy tale of "Bluebeard." Traditionally, this tale would be used to condemn the curiosity of women, particularly sexual curiosity, as we can see through the morals of Perrault's story. Jack Zipes claims that "Bluebeard" attempts to uphold patriarchy as a "paradise" which is corrupted when a woman opens the door to the bloody chamber. However, this is not the only moral in the folkloric tradition of the fairy tale. The Brothers Grimm's "Fitcher's Bird" seems to present the idea that intelligence should temper curiosity in order to gain deliverance from death; in other words, the third wife or sister must enter the chamber to gain knowledge, but must be intelligent enough to firstly, not get caught, and secondly, escape. Carter contextualises and complicates the female protagonist's role as victim in her rewriting through various changes to the narratological aspects, certain telling images, and the characterisation of the men and women in the tale. Her aim is to present the marital element of the tale and the passivity of our heroine as anything but natural and conventional and instead as a dangerous social convention which has to be recognised in order to be broken.

The homodiegetic retrospective narration confuses our expectations of the tale. Traditionally, as with all fairy tales, it would be told through a heterodiegetic omniscient narrator in a factual manner which masks the latent ideologies at work. Carter's narratological twist exposes the role of victimhood in a way that oscillates between active and passive. Active, because she tells her own story and displays assertion at times, but passive in her willingness to play the role of victim. This passivity is particularly exposed within the given extract, as victimhood is given some seductive qualities, at least from the perspective of our protagonist. Christina Bachilega calls this a "heterosexual sado-masochism" which we find exemplified in our unnamed narrator who clearly recognizes

her own “potentiality for corruption” and seems to both desire and fear it. The charged sexuality of the marquis’ “voluptuous” voice is hard to ignore, and one can see that the heroine recognizes the “deathly passion” contained within it.

The recognition of her eventual corruption is presented to us both in her narrative voice and in symbols. The glass of champagne, for example, which “runneth over” is represented as the pure ornamental vessel of virginity. However, a virgin is always defined by the threat of potential corruption. The vulnerable innocence of a virginal chalice which is so attractive to the Marquis in “The Bloody Chamber” can and will be filled and thereby corrupted. The overflowing image of her cup, then, is simultaneously the potentiality for her own corruption and her uncontainable desire for it. What is most complicated, though, is the attraction of our narrator to the “sheer carnal avarice of it.” She saw how much the symbolic martyrdom of the virgin “became” her in the “cruel necklace” which she even uses to make the connection of beheading with herself, likening it to the symbolic “arterial blood.” Even here, however, we have references to those “who’d escaped the guillotine” and so the image cannot entirely be tied to martyrdom. Though enticed and exhilarated by her desire for corruption, there is an awareness that an escape can be found (especially when one considers the retrospective narration) but as readers we are unsure in what form our weak, fragile, pale-faced piano player, associated with lilies and martyrdom, will find her salvation. Whatever the case, we can see that her sado-masochistic tendencies are part of a socially exploitative society which seems to rely on heterosexual marriage. It is not only her fiancé who stares at her appearance in the archetypal colours of virginal loss (white of purity and red of blood) but “everyone.” The wedding gift is not just the ruby choker, but her virginity parcelled in the poiret dress rather than her own hand-me-down clothing. Carter draws our attention to this through the young narrator’s questions: “what would I have gone to him in otherwise?” exploiting the fairy tale Cinderella-esque acceptance that one must wear a beautiful gown in order for virginity to be a marketable product in the “game” of marriage, at least with a marquis.

The socio-political side of Carter’s narrative also touches on the economical. We are told through direct discourse that the unnamed narrator is sure that she wants to marry him and that she acts differently than her mother who shows “reluctance [to]...banish the spectre of poverty from its habitual place at her meagre table” in the analepsis that takes place whilst our narrator is on the train “thrusting” towards her marital bed. She describes the fine expensive gifts in detail, the “opal...the size of an egg” which is symbolic of the egg from the original tale, and the luxuries of the mansion in which her husband lives. Arguably, our narrator is active in her use of marriage for personal gain, but Carter

seems to expose the dynamics of socio-economics in marriage as a part of gender oppression. Indeed, by accepting these gifts she has sealed her own fate by fitting into the role of the passive recipient, or as it is translated in the tale, passive victim in the oppressive marital relationship. When the marquis later asks her lover “does even a youth as besotted as you are think she was truly blind to her own desires when she took my ring?” Here he is pointing out the self-serving motives that caused her own subordinate position of reliance within the marriage.

Another symbol of heteropatriarchy in the tale is that of the religious elements, the framework of which seeks to provide a representation of virtuous virginity but within the iconography of martyrdom. Religion is here used to represent the ominous note of sexual commodification in marriage as a form of martyrdom, especially in relation to the portrait of Saint Catherine. As a martyr, the story says Catherine was beheaded three times, took three days to die, and had three fingers extended when her body was found, which was read as a representation of the holy trinity. The peculiar usage of this image here ensures that the tale does not lose the frequency of the tryptichal repetition within the original “Bluebeard,” but also gives a dangerous view to the religious martyrdom our heroine seems to desire. This religious frame, a literal frame in terms of the painting, is eventually related to our patriarchal plot to possess the image of the ideal woman; just as the marquis’ archive of dead beauties is created.

As I have mentioned, another aspect of narratology is the retrospective point of view of the narrator. We are led to question how it is that our narrator’s double discourse, the recognition of her own demise, has led to her escape and eventual telling of the tale. Carter makes us aware from the beginning that our narrator is the third wife who we can predict will escape, but it is only in hints of the eccentricity of the mother that we gain insight in to the eventual assertion of female authority. Here we see she is the narrator’s “reluctant mother,” seemingly opposed to the engagement but unwilling to oppress her daughter. She is set up in antithetical iconography to the conventional female, the fragile narrator who marries for security. She is an eccentric, violent, brave woman who “begged herself for love” and can perceive the danger in the ordinary, hence her keeping of a pistol. Rather than the strong patriarchal brother figures who come to save the sister either by chance or by hearing the screaming pleas for help, it is her mother’s instincts and “maternal telepathy” that recognise something is wrong when her daughter cries over gold bath taps. Had she been enamoured by the riches of the marquis or his authority she may have presumed her daughter was happy with her lot and overjoyed at her riches, but she does not; instead she jumps into action against the male dominant figure. The conclusion -- that our narrator marries the poor, tender, yet somewhat emasculated piano

tuner who cannot objectify her physically as he cannot see her -- is not surprising. Even less surprising, although highly unconventional, is the retreat to matriarchal authority under the supervision of her mother whose agency can at least render the heroine's lack thereof as less of a martyring threat.

It is notable that some of the mother's reluctance and bravery is indeed passed down to our narrator. She asserts the similarity herself upon opening and exploring the chamber (with very little in the way of swooning as we would expect from an eighteenth-century gothic-esque sentimental character). She is almost expecting this secret, and the fact that she did is perhaps why she telephoned her mother in the first place. It is gaining this knowledge that, whilst it condemns her at first to willing martyrdom, allows her to escape from a loveless marriage to a "solitary monster." Through death or through her mother's feminine power she is able to free herself from Bluebeard's clutches. This knowledge may be relatable to the fall of Eve as recognition of her own sexual desire, or perhaps simply a maturation of character that allows her to reflect and expose her own sentimental naivety, passivity, and willingness. Carter purposefully places her in parallel and antithesis with her mother, as well as the two opposed men, to deconstruct the concept of the gender binary in which all women are the same and all men are as well. Indeed, even the three dead wives of the marquis' past are not the same nor have the same deaths. Though our protagonists, the aggressor, and the victim appear to fit conventional roles of man and wife, when one considers the tale as a whole, there are tell-tale signs that show that the fault here is not simply that the Bluebeard figure is evil or the wife curious, as in earlier tales. It is instead the social construct of marriage itself when women buy into the conventionality of marriage for security that displaces female agency and turns them into the victim. The placement of unconventional or opposing male and female characters outside of the binary, however, shows that this relationship between men and women is not in any way arbitrary.

The complications of the narrator as a victim in retrospect and the symbolic level of the narrative expose the nature of victimhood as a sado-masochistic effect of the socio-economic heteropatriarchy in marital relations. Carter then undoes the conventional binary by deconstructing the two conventional male-female, husband-wife, oppressor-oppressed roles through the addition of two antithetical male and female characters: the second husband who is timid and emasculated, and the matriarchal power asserted by her mother's awareness of dangers even in the cloistered, western, patriarchal society.

Reflections on St. Gallen

JOHN CURRY, ALEXANDER ROTH, ALEIDA DEMARTIN,

CHANTAL ROSSI, CRISTINA SIMONI

In April 2013, the English Department, led by Dr. Lucy Perry and Dr. Fiona Tolhurst, organized a study trip to the Abbey Library (Stiftsbibliothek) in St. Gallen. In addition to viewing ancient medieval books that have contributed to English literature and culture, the group toured the old town of St. Gallen and visited the cathedral. A few of the participants have chosen to share their reflections here, in the hope that students from our department and others will be encouraged to participate in similar trips in the future.

Cristina Simoni, English Department

There are many things that I found interesting and kept in mind about the trip to St. Gallen. Among them are two buildings, both UNESCO World Heritage sites, that we had the chance to visit: the Stiftsbibliothek and the cathedral. The former is an abbey library, known to be among the oldest and nicest libraries worldwide. I was particularly amazed by the medieval volumes we were shown. As for the cathedral, which was built during the late Baroque period, the paintings and carvings on the inside walls are really impressive.

Apart from these buildings, thanks to the guide we were also able to understand more about the city's architecture and its history. For instance, the numerous oriel windows that can be seen on the different houses are noteworthy. Did you know that there used to be a competition and that the most beautiful oriel window would win a prize? We also got to see the statue of Vadian and were told the story of "Vadiana," two central figures in the history of St. Gallen.

In a nutshell, I am glad I was able to take part in this study trip as I not only got to know other people in the English department, but I was also able to see original medieval manuscripts and tour a city I had never before visited.

John Curry,

Geneva International Students' Program (GISP) 2013

While not part of the UNIGE English Department, I was thrilled to take part in an extraordinarily informative visit to the Stiftsbibliothek in St. Gallen in late April. The chance to examine copies of some of the rarest extant medieval manuscripts and fragments in Switzerland's oldest library was beneficial for several reasons: it helped anchor the evolution of Swiss history in my mind - particularly the relationship between its confessional and humanist traditions, it emphasized the continued importance of knowledge preservation in an age of big data and ephemeral transaction, and it amplified my understanding of knowledge diffusion across Europe in the Medieval period. A very appreciative thank you to UNIGE for supporting such a valuable excursion for its students.

Alexander Roth, English Department

...and then there was Dr. Schmucki, or in short: Schmucki,* a fitting name for the gentle, giant guardian of St. Gallen's treasures, who weighed his precious babies with white-gloved hands...

*Schmuck (German) = jewel, ornament; Schmucki = little jewel

Chantal Rossi, English Department

I was so bewildered at the guide touching several manuscripts! They were authentic treasures, kept in the library for at least 600 years! We had the opportunity to look at the ink left on the paper and to learn about their style: Gothic, German, Old English. There were long sequences of words adorned with ornaments around the capital letters of each paragraph. The innumerable treasures kept in the library, as well as the cathedral itself, took me (and us) back into the past, to the Medieval period!

Aleida Demartin, English Department

Last semester while studying early modern bibliography, I came across a famous passage in Shakespeare's 1623 First Folio in which the publishers delegitimize formerly published Shakespearean texts as "surreptitious copies, maimed," and promote their own as "perfect of their limbes." This topos of text-as-body shows up in a number of early modern publications, but I think it is impossible to fully appreciate the metaphor without examining the books themselves. I had two opportunities to do so last semester: first, early modern books at the Bodmer Library with Professor Erne, and later, medieval books on this fascinating and enjoyable study trip to St. Gallen with Dr. Perry and Dr. Tolhurst. Indeed, the book is a body encrypted with information about its origin, value, and purpose, and it also offers insight into contemporary book/manuscript production. Moreover, viewing various manuscript and print editions raises the question of how we define "the text" that appears in our university textbooks and anthologies. It was a privilege and pleasure to visit these rare books with professors and fellow students, and I would recommend that all English Department students take advantage of such opportunities in the future.



31st of May 2013, approximately 18.00

GÉRALDINE DONALDSON

“Hello-w?”

My “o” mutated into a long, drawn-out drawl as I pushed the glass door and smiled sheepishly to the first faces my eyes met, making me sound even more awkward than I felt. As I received the drink coupons that an entry granted, I quickly scanned the room, striving to seem both at ease and in my place.

The room was minuscule. Bar to my right, chairs to my left. My brain rapidly registered the lack of discreet corners, and the even larger lack of hiding spots. Unless you count the ladies’ as one, which I didn’t allow myself to, as it would defeat my purpose. Shutting yourself in such a room for a long period of time is certain to look more suspicious than any thing else...

Two steps later, I found myself at the bar. With a randomly-selected red wine, I headed to the only other viable option (especially when glasses of vino are involved), namely the chairs.

And that’s where I waited.

I can almost hear the politer ones amongst you moan “But what for?” (The less well-mannered individuals shall be kept silent. I trust your colourful imagination to fill in these most important gaps). One might imagine that such nervousness may only befit a spy in Her Majesty’s service, operating in dangerous enemy territory under false pretences. And yet, that is not the case. Far from it. I am sorry to disappoint the thrill-seekers, but no undercover business was at hand. My ever-so-slightly startled look, which I sported throughout the evening, would make me a most pitiable secret agent. No mission, no Mafia, and definitely no danger. Indeed, I was only wanting to listen to poetry.

“Poetry?” To be exact, it was an open mic poetry night in Geneva’s ICV arcade, which hosts a number of artistic events. My tribulations began with an email from Keith Stimpson, an acquaintance. According to this, a group of people unbeknownst to me, baptised the Léman Poets, would apparently be “delighted” for me to be present at one of their evenings. A short search on the Internet was quick to provide answers to my

questions. Though faces come and go with time, these Poets have been dreaming and dreaming since 1999.

I smiled and absently noted the event in my agenda, as one does when one would like to feel intellectual, but with the knowledge that nothing is written in concrete, and a book is just as attractive an option for a good time.

Effectively, the night would have completely slipped my mind had it not been for a fellow student, Manolita Farolan, who turned out to be part of this creative gang. After she slipped a flyer in my bag, I decided to attend the poetry night.

Although I quickly learnt that a decision taken does not a poet make. I write no verse to speak of, and read only the occasional rhyme when it tickles my fancy. I am by no means a connoisseur. From this pooled the unease spoken of earlier. Writing, particularly poetry, has always seemed an honest act to me, for no matter whether what is said is true or not, it still demands the author to leave a little of him- or herself for the whole world to read and observe. Dreams of being in school and having forgotten trousers are nothing compared to the act of laying oneself on paper. Thus, imagine my reaction to reading poetry in front of living, breathing human beings. It's basically my equivalent of naked karaoke.

My initial behaviour reflected these thoughts. As names were being pulled out of a hat, people appeared and disappeared on stage. Three minutes each was all they had, yet it seemed a great amount of time to me. Metaphors applied to feelings, intricate vocabulary wrapped around longed-for flesh,

No mission, no Mafia,
and definitely no danger.

different voices painting different problems... At first, I wanted to shade my eyes and glance elsewhere, in the sole desire to give the readers the privacy that they seemed to be robbing themselves of.

You might be wondering why I didn't leave, since the event was taking such a toll on me. The answer was curiosity. Why should one react so strongly? After a few writers had passed, I discovered how wrong it was for me to act as if I were out of place. I had felt that I was prying in their lives, when the truth was that I was simply listening to my own being recited back to me. Not that I have lived through the various joys and pains that were brought up during those few hours, but because poetry does drag you into the experience, whether you will it or not. It makes it common, it makes it shared. It makes it yours.

I became mother. I became husband. I became sculpture. I even became dog. Shape-shifters would have been jealous. It was not simple words anymore, but a life rollercoaster. Due to that, more strongly than any precise poem, I remember my state as I stepped out of the arcade. It was one of satisfaction, as if I had achieved many things during that time, rather than just sitting and listening. Some of those things were heartbreakingly sad, others were hilarious, but all in all, we had all lived as a collective body for a little while.

Though I would be lying if I were to say that all the poems had been assigned to the limbo of my mind. One did strike me whilst it was read, and dwells with me still. A particular young woman had given out a few business cards. Yes, this comment has little to do with literature, but these particular business cards made her unique before she even opened her mouth. They read: "I am a superhero. And so are you." Enough to warm anybody's heart. And you know what? She was a superhero. When her name was called out, her nervousness was hard to miss and mine paled greatly in comparison. Contrarily to her colleagues, she had learned her poem by heart, and was in a hurry to snugly fit it in the required three minutes.

She need not have worried. Her verses, staccato at first, then flowing, raced after each other without spillage. Unpretentiously entitled "Ten Minutes," the poem listed how much each one of us could do if we allowed ourselves to stop our daily, mind-numbing tasks and various forms of entertainment. Ten minutes every day is all it takes to appreciate simpler things, to acquire distance from technology in order to let imagination roam. Ten minutes every day is all it takes to finally breathe and concentrate on too-often forgotten introspections. Ten minutes every day can be devoted to reminding people around us how grateful we are for their presence... The list was long, both uplifting and sobering. To top it off, she finally uttered the words that had been trotting in the listeners' heads: "And I? What would I do if I had ten minutes?" Gravely, she surveyed the room, closed her eyes...

And proceeded to snore.

I greatly enjoyed the evening, as unusual as it was for me. As I left, more than a few members of the Léman Poets nudged me, hoping to hear some of my own poetry at the next gathering. I had not the heart to inform them that,

Rhymes are strange beasts they may tame
But it would be some time before I attempt the same.

Massimo Marino's Reading of *Daimones*

ANNA AUGOUSTI

On Tuesday 7 May 2013, Massimo Marino gave a book reading of his post-apocalyptic fiction *Daimones* in Off The Shelf English Bookshop in Plainpalais. *Daimones* is Marino's debut novel which recently won the 2012 PRG Reviewer's Choice Award in Science Fiction. Marino's past vocations have included working as a scientist at CERN in Switzerland for over 17 years as well as formerly holding head positions in Apple, Inc. and the World Economic Forum. Marino is multi-lingual and when asked why he wrote his book in English, he stated that "when I think or imagine this story unfolding, it's done in English. I can't explain why that is, it just is."

The book reading was thoroughly thought-provoking, particularly with regards to Marino's concept behind the novel. Marino set the novel in Geneva, stating that "on some evenings I would come to Geneva and find it deserted, somewhat like an apocalyptic landscape. People were absent." This absence became the inspiration for his fiction. The novel focuses on the protagonist, Dan, his family, and how they survive during an apocalypse. They wake up one day in a world where there is nothing: everyone is dead and the cause is unknown. They believe at first that they are the only survivors on Earth; however they are not. Although Dan and his family are immersed in an apocalyptic landscape, they remain untouched. As a result, Dan tries to maintain his child-like nature in an atmosphere that seems desolate and abundant with wreckage. The novel demonstrates Dan's journey of survival, and his myriad of both moral and emotional issues which are the mechanics behind him and his family's survival. Marino tries to explore human relationships using memories and varying personalities.

During the reading, Marino states that we are "ghosts among other ghosts. If someone loses their job, it doesn't affect anyone else, just that particular circle of people. But what if there was something that affected us all? How would we react then? Suddenly, the mundane idea of jobs and finance doesn't seem so significant." He went on to say that "if you lose your job, this creates a personal apocalypse, but I wanted to show an apocalypse on a global scale and how this affects everyone." Marino continued to say that "post-apocalyptic novels are often about cataclysmic events, survivors fending off dangers at every page, zombie attacks, aliens destroying everything for inscrutable reasons, or as a fulfilment of a religious prophecy. *Daimones* is nothing of the sort." *Daimones* is the first in a trilogy, with the second novel out in May 2014. If you're interested in apocalyptic fictions, *Daimones* is definitely worth a read!

Making up Excuses

ANNA IATSENKO

It is a truth universally acknowledged that all students in literature have experienced or will experience the urge to write fiction at some point of their lives. Well, maybe not all, but let's call it a rough 99%. I've personally fiddled with pen and paper throughout my BA and MA, jotting down some plot ideas, unexpected denouements, sharp phrases, dodgy puns, spectacular and melodramatic dialogues in the hope of once surpassing my intimate belief in the fact that I had absolutely nothing significant to contribute to the great world of fiction. Another friend of mine constantly wrote poems entitled "What Would Shakespeare Do?" on post-its. Yet another wrote rhymes as birthday and Christmas cards.

It seems that the more we read, the more the urge to write takes over. Proportionally, however, the more we feel the urge to write, the less "it" comes out and if "it" does come out, we quickly bury it under a pile of other more serious stuff like exams, seminar papers, more books to read, more urges... Anyways, you get my drift. It can become a pretty vicious circle spiraling somewhere between the planes of frustration, need of expression, fear of criticism, desire, unworthiness, etc, etc, etc. I suppose that the best excuse for not writing fiction I've heard so far, and coincidentally I also find it one of the more serious ones, is "But I can't write!!! People are going to read me and that's like taping your exploratory surgery and posting it on YouTube under your real name with your real email address!" Hm... indeed. The worst excuse was mine: "I don't know what I could say that hasn't been said before and even if I will squeeze some puny idea out of my head, how significant will it be anyways?!" I know that I am not the only person who thought that at the time and I also know that there are a whole bunch of others out there who are still thinking it too, so here's what I have to say about it now with hindsight:

I was wrong!

There are a number of things that I now find deeply wrong with my bad "excuse." There's the whole victim-like self-deprecating discourse that undercuts the statement in the "I'm not worthy" kind of way. OK, so on one hand, the humility topos is sort of cute and funny, but if you reach further behind it a question begins to surface: "Why wouldn't my experience, my thoughts, my ideas be worthy of a short story, a poem, or even a novel?" Or yours, for that matter. What makes us so insignificant? But what if it is precisely you, or me, who could ask the right question, or write a phrase, or find

that perfectly quirky rhyme that will resonate within someone else and make their day more interesting, or simply make them smile, or make them see a side of a problem by confronting them with a fresh and new perspective?

Another aspect that I think this excuse hides is slightly related to the “best” excuse for not writing. Indeed, writing can be pretty apocalyptic (in the “revelatory” sense of the term) and may sometimes be seen as a type of emotional or intellectual striptease or self-help analysis. Here, I’ve got two things to say. One: so what’s wrong with that? Two: it depends on the “how,” doesn’t it? Seriously, what’s wrong with revealing yourself a little, or even more than a little? Would this make you an exhibitionist of your deeper fears, anxieties, hopes? I don’t think so. It will make you vulnerable – that’s for sure. But again – aren’t we all vulnerable in our own ways? Even the hardest of the hard? Certainly there is cause for concern once we start measuring our vulnerabilities against one another and, indeed, there are those who exploit them. But just imagine for a moment the following situation: what if those who do exploit your vulnerability are actually not worth the time you spend worrying about it? Moreover, what if by showing your vulnerability to others you may actually touch another’s vulnerability and create something out of that contact? What if being vulnerable and showing it sparks some sort of mutual growth between two (or more) vulnerable people? Wouldn’t it be worth a try?

And here I come to the number two point – the “how.” Sometimes the word “vulnerability” is quickly confused with weakness or inspires some sort of “ooooh, take it easy with this person, he/she is vulnerable”-type phrase. This is not what I am talking about here. I suppose that Judith Butler says it best when she defines the notion in terms of responsiveness to the suffering of others (here, suffering can be taken in the larger sense). Basically, the point I am trying to make is that being vulnerable is not a sign of weakness, but on the contrary, it is a sign of courage and strength! It takes a daring person to recover his/her vulnerability and express it, especially in our day and age. In short, to be vulnerable is to be human with other humans – it is an act of political and social scope. So get in there, dig into your vulnerabilities, and be daring! You’ll be surprised at what you will find out!

One last point worth mentioning here is that there are many more of “US” (“Unrealized Scribblers”) than you may suspect. So find each other – there is strength in numbers! Also, try to get to know those who have dared to dare. You’ll also be surprised at how many of them are around. Luckily, Geneva is a place to meet published authors (Off the Shelf organizes events all the time, there’s the Poetry Society, etc). The English department can also help you out as we regularly invite authors of fiction. One such event will

take place in the beginning of October when you will have the opportunity to meet the Australian writer Tom Cho whose fiction I remember from my MA studies. Meet these people, ask them questions, get inspired: one can always make up excuses about or reasons for “not writing fiction,” but are they really more valid than the art you can produce and the things you’ve got to say?

No.

Post-script: Mr Cho will be giving a talk on Friday, October 4, 10h-12h in room B307.

FILM AND THEATRE

News from the Film Club

THE FILM CLUB CREW

As we begin the new semester, the Film Club is back with a few surprises and a new theme. After spending the spring months looking into, discussing, and seeing ourselves on one side or the other of “Mirror, Mirror,” it seems only appropriate that this semester’s theme should be... “The Body”! Following vigorous debate (and a glass of wine or two), the Film Club Crew has settled on a “corpus” of films featuring the body in all its guises: dysmorphia, technological enhancements, servility, sensuality, and re-animation. You can view the full program on the following page of *Noted* and on the Film Club website.

“Students’ choice” is also back, giving you (yes, you!) the power to present, vote upon, and ultimately decide the final screening of the semester. Last year, we ended on *Akira* (in the autumn) and *Black Swan* (in the spring) - both great choices for their respective themes - and we wait with baited breath to hear your suggestions and find out the last film. Further details will be given during the first screening on 26 September, so have a think and start “fleshing” out your presentations (last bodily pun, we promise).

Quite a few new faces have joined the team recently – welcome Géraldine, Kimberly, Anna, and Nick – and we will always happily welcome new members that feel the urge to tag along with us in our crazy adventure, should they be film buffs, occasional moviegoers, or simply interested in taking part in the student life on campus.

With new faces come new ideas and so we are very proud to announce the Film Club’s first “Halloween Special”! Given that Halloween falls on a Thursday, we couldn’t resist the chance to try something a little... shall we say, different? And given the theme, there was really only one choice – The Rocky Horror Picture Show! Presented by some very special guests, you won’t want to miss this evening, so get your costumes ready, your singing voices primed, and join us on 31 October as we “take you on a strange journey...”

As always, we meet in B112 in Uni-Bastions starting at 7:00pm for an aperitif; the presentations and screenings get going around 7:15pm. So come, bring snacks, friends, pets, pillows, and join us! We look forward sharing our passion (and a glass of wine!) with you.

Géraldine Donaldson, Kimberly Frohreich, Sylvère Guyonnet, Sam Macduff, Bryn Skibo-Birney, Anna Treiman, and Nicholas Weeks

26 SEPTEMBER

EXISTENZ

INTRODUCED BY MICHAEL RÖÖSLI

10 OCTOBER

THE SESSIONS

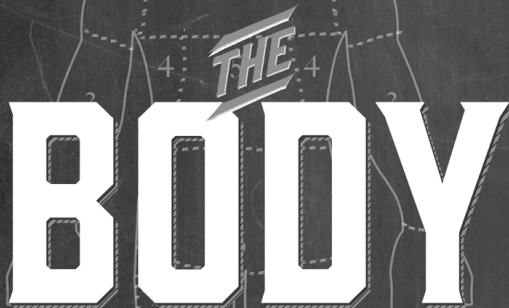
INTRODUCED BY ANNA TREIMAN

24 OCTOBER

PERFUME: THE STORY OF A MURDERER

INTRODUCED BY NICK WEEKS AND GÉRALDINE DONALDSON

The English Department Film Club Presents:



THE BODY

31 OCTOBER

HALLOWEEN SPECIAL!**ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW**

INTRODUCED BY SPECIAL GUESTS

14 NOVEMBER

WHAT'S EATING GILBERT GRAPE?

INTRODUCED BY SAM MACDUFF

28 NOVEMBER

FIDO

INTRODUCED BY KIMBERLY FROHREICH

12 DECEMBER

SHORT FILM NIGHT

INTRODUCED BY SYLVÈRE GUYONNET

19 DECEMBER

STUDENTS' CHOICE

UNIVERSITE DE GENEVE
ROOM B112, UNI-BASTIONS
RUE DE-CANDOLLE 5
FREE ENTRY FROM 7PM

Barbe-à-Papa Metamorphoses into Emmet

NICHOLAS WEEKS

Just as the seasons, human activities have their cycles. This autumn, as a fresh load of new BA students joins the university after the warm summer holiday, the English Department Theatre Group too will effectuate its metamorphosis. The group's name "Barbe-à-Papa" started very much as a joke. A member of the original cast thought we might raise money by getting a cheap candyfloss machine on eBay and setting up a stall on the Place du Cirque. Awkwardly, although we never got the machine the name stuck and has remained, unquestioned, for the past seven years.

During that time, the group evolved as the natural flow of students completing their degrees left and new students from different faculties came to join the English Department Theatre Group to create new projects. The group has always been a mixture of people from various backgrounds, with English accents ranging from Indian to Swiss German, including French, Greek, Polish, and Romanian. Recently though, it has come to present more ambitious and interdisciplinary projects which have granted it greater recognition from an academic standpoint. Since 2011, the group has been part of the Activités Culturelles, and since 2013 it has been officially recognised as an association by the rectorate. It was therefore time to shift from the playful innocence of "Barbe-à-Papa" to something more apt to summon the complex matrix of play, focus, physical practice, and diction involved in the workshops and performances of our shows.

Emmet, a contraction for Embodied Metaphors, is the group's new name. It reflects both the collective nature of the group's dynamic and the work involved in the serious gaming that makes for skilled acting practice. Having introduced the group's new name I will now proceed with a short summary of last year's project before moving on to the new and exciting experiments that await us for the academic year 2013-2014.

The Blake Project

“Blake’s Revolution,” our adaptation of William Blake’s narrative poem *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (1794), met an enthusiastic audience of about 350 people both in Geneva and Lausanne in April and May earlier this year. It ran for two dates at the Cité Bleue Theatre, then moved on to La Grange de Dorigny for a date at the Fécule Theatre Festival (Fécule = Festival des Cultures UNIL et EPFL), before ending with a final date in Carouge at the Festival d’ateliers-théâtre.

The show was a rich collaborative experience meant to summon the smithy of Blake’s imagination through a palette of media including acting, music (a rock band), contemporary dance, and video animation. By integrating the discourses of Blake’s contemporaries, notably Mary Wollstonecraft, Thomas Paine, and Edmund Burke, the show sought to develop the dialectical tension of Blake’s spiritual and moral revolution, connecting it to the French political Revolution and the advent of democracy. This project was filmed while still a work-in-progress and the making-of documentary is available on the group’s website.



Artistic Intentions 2013-2014

This year the Emmet workshops will be structured on a semester-by-semester basis. This means that rather than presenting a single, year-long project we will be working on two productions. The fall semester will be devoted to an adaptation of Shakespeare’s *The Winter’s Tale* while the spring semester will develop creative work based on the American transcendentalists Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau.

To register for the workshops and keep informed about our work, check the Activités Culturelles and Emmet websites (www.a-c.ch; www.emmet.ch).

Theatre Programme for Fall 2013

As the Geneva area is particularly rich in theatrical activities for the newcomer, here are a series of places, events and artists that I would particularly recommend.

Venues in Geneva:

Théâtre Forum Meyrin
Le Galpon
Le Grütli
Théâtre St Gervais
La Comédie
Théâtre de Carouge
Le Poche
Grand Théâtre de Genève (Opera)

A suggestion of other remarkable venues in Switzerland and abroad:

Vidy (Lausanne)
L'Octogone (Pully)
Les Bouffes du Nord (Paris)
Schaubühne (Berlin)
Young Vic (London)

Festivals:

La Bâtie (Geneva)
Festival d'Automne (Paris)

A few artists to keep track of:

Alias / Guilherme Botelho
STT / Dorian Rossel
Teatro Malandro / Omar Porras

CREATIVE WRITING

Deep South

PALOMA LUKUMBI

I have seen them look, and I've seen yours.
You and your folks was made for entertainment. Dark, savages...

Abasement was to command them life. You was just to be a price. A cost. An expense.
At the end of one of the tunnels, cause yes there were to be a number of them, liberation.

No space for self-respect nor money in the bank though.
Consciousness rising in the corner. Yet, room for music came first. Survival.
Not quite full expression.
Them was not listening. Remember the records?
You was swinging here in the South. Ain't nobody to teach you how to blues.
Rhythm carried around from day one—in the deeper South.

You was to meet up with Satchmo. A new era.
The stage. Every now and then a piano. The Drums. A voice—The trumpet.
The forefront. Was it enough?
Give me more space. I got the brains. Open yours.
Ain't no one to convince me I ain't enough to work on your side.
Nonsense. Them was saying.
Improvement, HERE.

Yes, success that is what them thought.
Or....Confined in a new disaster?
Next step: profiling. Ya'll kno.
Disposable. Sing, dance; or die.

Going circle. Take a look on them both sides.
Merry faces. There is more to it than gospel in the French quarters.
Affected still. Is your statements only to be vocals.
Were are ya'll to stand outside the flow of some brass....
Dirty south? Them print was left. You can tell.
I have seen them look, and I've seen yours.

Take a Walk

MANON GUIGNOT

Ever since my father passed away, the uncomfortable, tickling, pinching feeling that my life was a succession of more or less important deadlines started to creep in. Whether it was with respect to the beliefs of my smothering mother, my close, yet probably judging friends, or my despicable boss and boring colleagues. Yes, the overall so-called plague of Society-slash-Humanity was reminding me that I was doing something wrong. However, the worst of them all was no one but myself.

Deadlines. Dead. Lines. I felt like I was back in high school and I had to climb that damn rope. The issue was that these days, I would have rather hanged myself with it than climb it, like everyone expects you to. In reality, the Death guy or lady was not someone I wished to flirt with, no matter how appealing eternal runaway can be. I'd had quite an insight with my dad and could not forget his last words of homemade wisdom, those meant to remind me of the value of living. However, I didn't feel alive. I felt like I was slowly drowning.

One morning actually, I think I drowned in my car.

Out of nowhere, after months of quiet mourning, I drove to the edge of the road on my way to the office, stopped, and got out. The horns kept echoing as I walked over the metallic barrier and sank into the falsely maintained vegetation of the highway.

Joyce's Lost Lectures on Hamlet

SAM MACDUFF

"I expound Shakespeare to docile Trieste," Joyce writes in Giacomo Joyce, referring to a series of 12 lectures he gave on *Hamlet* between November 1912 and February 1913. Reviews in the Triestine newspaper, *Il Piccolo*, praise "Prof. James Joyce, whom our intellectual world knows and admires as a thinker, a writer, and a journalist" for his "erudite and enjoyable" lectures, delivered to a "completely packed Minerva hall." Another journalist (probably Roberto Prezioso) describes how Joyce's "original and slightly bizarre genius ... fascinated the audience ... for many hours," and after the final lecture Joyce was given "a warm and prolonged round of applause."¹

Unfortunately for us, these lectures have not survived, but while I was at the Joyce Summer School in Trieste this year (thanks to the generous support of the English department), I decided to visit the Società di Minerva, to see if I could find out any more about them. Alas, all that remains are a few fragmentary notes on Elizabethan vocabulary, and scattered references in Joyce's fiction. Thinking of fardels and bare bodkins I was of late losing all my mirth, but then, as luck should have it, I saw a truepenny glinting on Joyce's grave in Fluntern and there was I seized of an inspiration. Just as Joyce once referred to himself as a "scissors and paste man," patching his work together out of a hotch-potch of cribbings and plagiarism, perhaps I too could reconstitute the lost lectures from Joyce's ghost of Hamlet. What follows is a scissors-and-paste job on Stephen Dedalus's improbably impromptu lecture in the library episode of *Ulysses*, where, in the words of Buck Mulligan, "[h]e proves by algebra that Hamlet's grandson is Shakespeare's grandfather and that he himself is the ghost of his own father."

—What is a ghost? Stephen said with tingling energy. One who has faded into impalpability through death, through absence, through change of manners. Elizabethan London lay as far from Stratford as corrupt Paris lies from virgin Dublin.

Local colour. Work in all you know. Make them accomplices.

—It is this hour of a day in mid June, Stephen said, begging with a swift glance their hearing. The flag is up on the playhouse by the bankside. The bear Sackerson growls in the pit near it, Paris garden. Canvasclimbers who sailed with Drake chew their sausages among the groundlings.

—Shakespeare has left the huguenot's house in Silver street and walks by the swanmews along the riverbank. But he does not stay to feed the pen chivying her game of cygnets towards the rushes. The swan of Avon has other thoughts.

—The play begins. A player comes on under the shadow, made up in the castoff mail of a court buck, a wellset man with a bass voice. It is the ghost, the king, a king and no king, and the player is Shakespeare who has studied Hamlet all the years of his life which were not vanity in order to play the part of the spectre. He speaks the words to Burbage, the young player who stands before him beyond the rack of cerecloth, calling him by a name:

Hamlet, I am thy father's spirit,

bidding him list. To a son he speaks, the son of his soul, the prince, young Hamlet and to the son of his body, Hamnet Shakespeare, who has died in Stratford that his namesake may live for ever.

Is it possible that that player Shakespeare, a ghost by absence, and in the vesture of buried Denmark, a ghost by death, speaking his own words to his own son's name (had Hamnet Shakespeare lived he would have been prince Hamlet's twin), is it possible, I want to know, or probable that he did not draw or foresee the logical conclusion of those premises: you are the dispossessed son: I am the murdered father: your mother is the guilty queen?

—I was prepared for paradoxes from what Malachi Mulligan told us but I may as well warn you that if you want to shake my belief that Shakespeare is Hamlet you have a stern task before you.

Bear with me.

—A father, Stephen said, battling against hopelessness, is a necessary evil. He wrote the play in the months that followed his father's death. If you hold that he, a greying man with two marriageable daughters, with thirty-five years of life, with fifty of experience, is the beardless undergraduate

from Wittenberg then you must hold that his seventyyear old mother is the lustful queen. No. The corpse of John Shakespeare does not walk the night. From hour to hour it rots and rots. He rests, disarmed of fatherhood, having devised that mystical estate upon his son. Fatherhood, in the sense of conscious begetting, is unknown to man. It is a mystical estate, an apostolic succession, from only begetter to only begotten. On that mystery and not on the madonna which the cunning Italian intellect flung to the mob of Europe the church is founded and founded irremovably because founded, like the world, macro and microcosm, upon the void. Upon incertitude, upon unlikelihood. Amor matris, subjective and objective genitive, may be the only true thing in life.² Paternity may be a legal fiction. Who is the father of any son that any son should love him or he any son?

What the hell are you driving at?

I know. Shut up. Blast you. I have reasons.

—Sabellius, the African, subtlest heresiarch of all the beasts of the field, held that the Father was Himself His Own Son. The bulldog of Aquin, with whom no word shall be impossible, refutes him. Well: if the father who has not a son be not a father can the son who has not a father be a son? When Rutlandbaconsouthamptonshakespeare³ or another poet of the same name in the comedy of errors wrote Hamlet he was not the father of his own son merely but, being no more a son, he was and felt himself the father of all his race, the father of his own grandfather, the father of his unborn grandson who, by the same token, never was born, for nature abhors perfection.

—Himself his own father, Sonmulligan told himself. Wait. I am big with child. I have an unborn child in my brain. Pallas Athena! A play! The play's the thing! Let me parturiate!

1 I quote from John McCourt's translation in *The Years of Bloom*.

2 Do you know what you are talking about? Love, yes. Word known to all men.

3 A man of genius makes no mistakes. His errors are volitional and are the portals of discovery.

I hate

HONOR G. JACKSON

That ignorance prevails despite my land of open
Education, open people, open cultures.
The school regime teaches us societal norms
of the world in which we must conform.
The 9-5's, that since we're born
Dictate that the night is for sleeping.
That the voices and visions of screens and prisms
of falsity and lies dictate our very lives.
And the world buys and sells the produce of
Self-professed individuality to the mass market.
We must be delicate and pretty, and small.
Oh so small. So that we matter through inconsequentiality.
That CGI blockbusters with explosions of fallacies
Pretending at self-perception and escapism
Have more relation with the world and all
With ill-counterfeited shadows of humanity
than dusty theatres with real people, real words.
I hate the third dimension.
That the words that don't get read project their
Own self-detestation. But my tongue
Is populated with the language of other invasive
Sugar-coated sour taste-buds, pervasive.
"he said"
"she said"
"they said"
"the government said"
"everyone said"
And so I lose what I said.
That even the things I hate are formed
By a state-made ideology forlorned
By the populace who opposes them, with
Ideas of difference. But really centrality in hatred
Is all we have left.

Self for Others

MANON GUIGNOT

Lisa kept drawing me. I hated it. She used to say I had a weird face, definitely the best kind of face. I hated it all but I knew focusing on someone else eased her mind, so I let her anyway. Her room was covered in faces, all of them staring as she was crafting, half-sitting in her bed.

She used to say I had the best kind of face because she always ended up drawing someone else, people that were not there, though they might have existed. She used to say I'd probably had many lives that never really left my body and maybe, maybe the only way to let them out was through the means of art.

I teased her that she had watched too many crappy television shows and she stuck out her tongue, answering my provocation with another. She found comfort in the idea of reincarnation and I understood why, as I couldn't help but stare at the tubes in her nose, connecting her to some bottle of oxygen. She needed it to breathe in the very same way I needed her.



Lisa's true talent was not to draw people. She revealed them in another light, especially to themselves. She could see them for what they were or what they could be: individuals full of possibilities. I like to think I was special to her, but those who surrounded Lisa

easily felt that way.

A couple of months later, I fought for my sanity by holding on to another man's words: "Death ends a life, not a relationship."* I'm not the one who died. Yet, a part of me parted with that regular kid who was my friend.

I kept some of the homemade faces. Her mom assured me that she would have liked it.

**The quotation is from Mitch Albom in Tuesdays With Morrie*

Candied Bacon

ELIZABETH BAESSLER, JAYNE BRADY,

MARK D'ARCY, AND BRYN SKIBO-BIRNEY

We used to go down to the beach with our pig. He would lie there, crusting in the sun, in his sea salt seasoning peppered with barnacles, while we slurped ice-cream and occasionally dripped some on his skin, just to watch it sizzle. I guess you could say it wasn't his natural environment, but it wasn't ours either. Somehow, on hot days, we all managed to have a lovely time, forgetting where we really belonged.

When it rained though, the ice-cream didn't taste so sweet and after a while our pig would start wallowing in the wet sand. Then one of us would scowl and cry and wish we hadn't come. But that might have just been the wind, because we didn't like to look at each other when it howled. The pig then became our mantelpiece, the hearth of our home or at least a somewhere we could all look at and into, without feeding on our guilt.

In those moments, our pig got quite hypnotic. The more the waves rolled, the more the pig turned and the more we all crackled with the excitement of our common trance. There wasn't much in-between us then, sea land man pig all blurred into one compelling, infinite, misty blur.

This transcendental reverie may or may not have escaped our pig. The moon's pull on the water certainly did not. His buoyancy soon woke us up. Frightened by fear of loss, we jumped to our feet, squealing, to bring him back to shore. Later, with our backs turned to the sea, more fearless, cast-away alternatives sprang to mind. Our budding "bacon-neer" set off into the sunset, sending us back treasure and slaves.

Every morning, in wind, mist, rain, or sun, we would wait. With the departure of our porcine hearth, so went the childish rapture of our games, our fearful excitement. Digging our feet into the wet sand, dreaming alternatively of the pig's gravitas and our sea salt-speckled ice-creams, we would cast our eyes to the horizon and wait. Our bodies became sundial spines, casting shadows from our faces, our sides, our backs upon the sand. And without fail, as the sun hit our elbows and died upon our hips, a spot would appear.

Small, no bigger than the grains of sand which were slowly encrusting us, we could not be sure whether we saw it or merely an illusion floating above the horizon, created by our minds' boredom. But the grain of sand grew to a ball which grew to a basket which grew to an ark until, amidst our frenzied shouting and hallooing, it beached.

Once within reach, the ark was not so much an ark as a small raft, sloppily lashed together (forgivable, since our pig had no thumbs). But in its simplicity, in its arrival, so came a sense of deliverance. For the raft always contained a morsel of what eluded us: a bottle, buttons, a dead bird.

In the fresh dark of night, we would run, throwing the treasure, the slave to our enjoyment, over our heads, into our arms, down the beach, up the beach, until finally, collapsing into ourselves and each other, we were laid flat upon the sand. Barren, emptied of the night's frenzy, cold, hearthless, uncentered, orbiting our own lack of being, until we awoke on the beach with the sun and resumed our wait.

Before long, the wait became our hearth, became ourselves. As the tide ebbed and flowed, so our hopes, and our sense of being, swept through us and back out, and with each sweep a bit more was washed away, and something new came to take its place.

We grew big with this newness, with what the sea had sent us. We grew until our bellies swelled, until our eyes popped with the strain of it all, because how can that sloshing and breaking and driftwood take the place of flesh without some stretching, some growing pains?

Who was it who first voiced the idea? Or was it even voiced? Either way, a decision was made, and once made, it had to be stuck to. Because this waiting was all well and good, but with the waiting came the emptiness, and into the emptiness came the tide. Too much was slipping in the cracks, in the spaces eroded through. Too much knowledge, too many memories. And the guilt. But that goes without saying.

So an expedition party of one was formed. Not a volunteer, not a recruit. Simply one of us. Well-supplied, of course, for the journey ahead. Each of us bequeathed something dear, a salvaged bit of a wait ended that had struck us particularly. A token of favor, an essential piece of equipment. A sign to our pig that we had not forgotten, that we had received and cherished everything it had sent.

And so our expedition set sail, and with it a piece of each of us. What of us remained resumed the wait, our makeshift hearth returned but splintered, new. We gritted our teeth and sank into the sand, waiting no longer for treasure, but for word.

The sea froze and the sun and the moon stopped moving. Only then did the pig return, galloping over the frozen wasteland of ice and fish and turtles. Expedition Party followed close behind him in a chariot pulled through the sky by a thousand red rams decked with flowers and berries. We approached the shore, our tingling bodies decked out in our best nonchalance, determined not to show the pig how much and how long we had lusted for his delicious, wet-nosed kiss.

As Pig beached himself upon the jetty of bone our grandmothers had sourced from the carcass field of Michael Murphy's petting zoo, Expedition Party swooped low, his naughty bits flapping wildly and making snapping sounds in the breeze.

We formed a chorus, standing one on top of the other and then dug the foot and head of our combined mass into the sand, forming a Roman arch of flesh and emotion. Pig and Expedition Party nestled quietly beneath us in the sand, aching for our speech. Then, and only then, did we allow our words to erupt from our wet mouths, dangling on invisible chords of inhibition.

We asked Pig politely, but casually, where he had been. He replied that he had travelled to the future and had been (and will be) ordained a priest. Then we asked him why he had returned: "As you know Michael Murphy's petting zoo has been without a bishop for some time; I decided, I will decide, to apply for the post. I was, I will be, rejected. But I was prepared, I will be prepared, to risk being defrocked. I was gone, I will be gone. But I am here with you now."

We blessed ourselves and then noticed that Expedition Party had joined our arch to form a ring. "My episcopal ring," said Pig as he slipped the firm clasp of our decadent embrace snugly over himself like a lifesaver. Then we rose together in the last rays of our galaxy's dying sun, our final vapors mingling together to fuse into one gaseous trace memory of an unrewindable film.

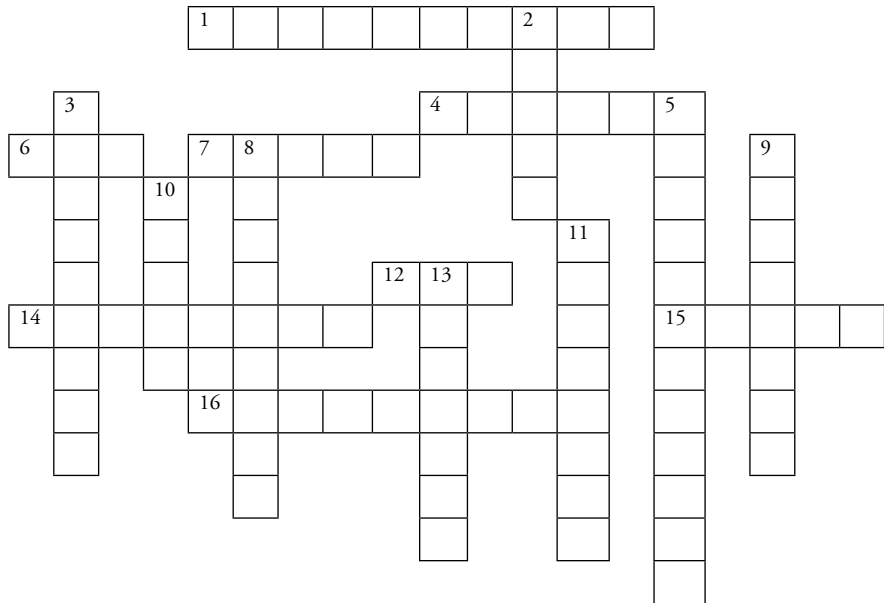
Well, that's it! You've reached the end of *Noted's* Fall 2013 edition. Phew, what a ride. You've been through Geneva's theatre scene, St. Gallen, and the "Deep South;" you've met Hamlet's ghost, a pig, and Mr Wit; you've even experienced a poetry reading and a drowning. If, after all that, you're feeling inspired to write something yourself, let us add a little extra incentive to your "budding" creative spirit. Introducing...

Noted's SPRING 2014 WRITING CONTEST!

So many images come to mind when you say "spring": the birds and the bees, new leaves, young animals frolicking. In short, the return of life in its many guises after the dreary cold of winter passes. And yet...is it me, or does something sinister lurk beneath those young green shoots? No, no, it's most likely just our imagination, for what could be happier, what could be more effervescent than the warbling of birds, the lazy circles of brightly-attired butterflies, the sublime feel of the sun upon chilled bones and ragged flesh...hmm...something's amiss here.

We are looking for your best pieces of poetry and prose. It can be anything from a short stanza to 4,000 words of fiction, in any style or format you desire. First, second, and third place prizes will be awarded, thanks to a generous donation from Off The Shelf English Bookshop. As for the theme, well, spring is the time of rebirth, regrowth, and the return of life, but what if flowers weren't the only things to emerge from the ground? As a famous family in literature is known to say, "Winter is Coming," with all its doomsday heraldry. In contrast, *Noted* offers, "Spring is Coming," and we look forward to see what's coming with it.

CROSSWORD



Across:

1. An angel that falls from a Harley, not from Heaven.
4. He based his canonical text, *Animal Liberation*, on Bentham's question "Can they suffer?"
6. What kind of animal gazed upon a naked Jacques Derrida?
7. How do you call a phrase whose whole meaning is figurative and different from the literal meaning of its constituents?
12. The acronym for a Swiss-made substance that made the 1960s particularly "groovy."
14. Made of tissue you cannot blow your nose with.
15. Bleak, Brothers, and a current TV series.
16. A critical theory useful when having your boss for dinner.

Down

2. Hunter S. Thompson's style of journalism.
3. Pertaining to the fall?
5. Sex, menstruation, and a rewritten fairy tale by Nalo Hopkinson.
8. Which of Joyce's books contains the story of Tom Kernan's fall from grace?
9. Jane Austen's unfinished novel, originally entitled *The Brothers*.
10. What particularity do the vowel sounds /ā/, /-e/ and /ō/ share, in opposition to /a/, /i/ or /y/? They are...
11. Which 17th century language teacher already used pictures in his English Latin textbook *Orbis Sensualium Pictus*?
13. They don't work for you, yet their theory explains a lot.

If you fancy a chance at winning the Noted crossword's "Grand Master Puzzler" prize, please deliver your completed crossword to Bryn Skibo-Birney's mailbox in the English Department's Comédie offices. The first 5 puzzles to be received will be ceremoniously placed into the official Noted hat and the winning puzzle will be thus drawn at random. The prize is worth "fall-ing" for so don't delay; get puzzling!