

# JUNE NOTED 2007

Newsletter of the English Department

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### What is *NOTED*?

*NOTED* is the newsletter of the English Department at the University of Geneva. We publish anything of interest to or by the students and staff of the Department. Our two yearly issues appear in January and June.

### Availability

Hard copies of *NOTED* are available for free at the English Department (Comédie) as well as at the English Library (Philosophes). All issues are also online on our Department website:  
[http://www.unige.ch/lettres/angle/activites/newsletter\\_en.html](http://www.unige.ch/lettres/angle/activites/newsletter_en.html)

### Contributions and Feedback

The deadline for contributions for the next January issue is 30<sup>th</sup> November 2007. You can send your articles, reviews, interviews, musings, fictions, poems, photos, cartoons, or drawings to:

[noted@lettres.unige.ch](mailto:noted@lettres.unige.ch)

Your feedback on *NOTED* is also very welcome and helps us to improve our newsletter constantly. Please use the same mailing address above for any kind of comment, idea or suggestion.

### Co-editing *NOTED*

You can take an active part in the editing process of our newsletter! You decide about your own function and degree of involvement. Tempted? Have a look at the last page of the present issue for more details. We'd be happy to welcome you on our team!

### Contributions to the Current Issue by:

Laetitia Abdoolraman, Tania Araman, Sophie Badoux, Romain Bajulaz, Ioana Balgradean, Arnaud Barras, Adwoa Bart-Plange, Mélanie Bello, Alexandra Borgeaud, Elsa Carron, Gabrielle Dayer, Emma Depledge, Lukas Erne, Valerie Fehlbaum, Eliza Filip, Lea Grammatopoulo, Sayaka Hanyu, Sibylle Heelein, Anna Iatsenko, Vicky Janssens, Kareen Klein, Kristijan Marinkovic, Sarah-Jane Moloney, Inès Mourant, KJ Müller-Griffiths, Michael Rööfli, Fabrice Rosset, Erika Scheidegger, Maria L. Schneider, Conradin Schwarzenbach, Anja Siouda, Lydia Sonderegger, David Spurr, Alan Sternberg, Clare Tierque, Cornelia Todega, David Wilson, Gisela Zingg, Léonard Zumstein, and several anonymous contributors.

## Editorial

Welcome to the latest edition of *NOTED*! When Agnieszka Soltysik and myself started devising a scheme to revive the department newsletter in 2005, we would never have dreamed that two years later we would not only have a great and encouraging readership, but meet with such enthusiasm among the students and staff alike as to present you with this issue of an amazing 56 pages, written by over 40 contributors!

I am all the more happy about this fabulous development because I will step down from my function as the senior editor and lay *NOTED* into the able hands of Emma Depledge and Ioana Balgradean, who thus encounter our newsletter in top form. Emma already co-edited the last two issues, and with her energetic help (and British humour!) turned our work into sheer pleasure. I would also like to thank our three student co-editors Cornelia, Lydia and Conradin, whose involvement not only changed our meetings into memorable social happenings, but made the air bristle

with new ideas! Curious about what happens behind the scenes of our newsletter? Or even game to join? The last page of the present issue will tell you all about what it takes and means to co-edit *NOTED*.

But now, without further ado, I will let you dive into our latest issue. The early spring made poetry blossom all over its pages, and it will immerse you into the memories of the great thespian highlights brought to us by Barbe à Papa and Kareen Klein's directing debut. An account of the latest ADEA party will make you cry for more; and more there will be immediately (keep your agendas at the ready)! A brand new column will flirt with the *cinéphiles* at the Department, you will get a glimpse of the creative bustle in our practical language courses, learn about the journalistic adventures of a former student of the department, and finally find out, after a feverish six months of suspense, which novels made it to the department's top three!

Ladies and Gentlemen, enjoy!

## Second Hand Books

By Anna Iatsenko

We would like to inform all students that it is now possible to sell – and therefore buy – second-hand books and brochures at second-hand prices.

If you wish to get rid of unread, unwanted, or unloved books, simply contact one of the following assistants via email:

Ioana.Balgradean@lettres.unige.ch  
Emma.Depledge@lettres.unige.ch  
Anna.Iatsenko@lettres.unige.ch

Please indicate the prices for your books along with your coordinates and you will receive your money once the books have been sold.

## Book Sale!

We are now happy to announce the English department's first ever second hand book sale:



**Tuesday**  
**12<sup>th</sup> June 2007**  
**18.00-20.00**  
**Phil 006A**

# Department News

## **Change of Department Director**

Beginning July, 2007, Prof. Lukas Erne will succeed Prof. David Spurr as Director of the Department of English.

## **Prof. Guillemette Bolens on Leave**

Prof. Bolens will be absent until the end of the spring semester. She is temporarily replaced by Lucy Perry, who is a *maître d'assistante remplaçante* at the English department of Lausanne University.

**Kareen Klein** is going to Cambridge for a year in the fall, to further her studies in English Renaissance Literature. Afterwards, she will be on her way to Germany. While continuing as a PhD student of Prof. Erne, she will no longer be an assistant at the University of Geneva. She wishes to stress that she is leaving for personal reasons and that she has thoroughly enjoyed teaching (especially Shakespeare, as you may have noticed), and has been happy to be part of the Department for two years. You may still see her in the corridors occasionally, as she will be back for exams, conferences or just for a visit. She will also try to keep the readers of *NOTED* updated on anything theatrical that comes her way ...

## **ADEA in Action**

After a successful event on March 15<sup>th</sup>, the student association of the English department invites you to their next party on Friday, June 1<sup>st</sup> 2007, starting at 8 p.m. at La Datcha! (See pp. 42-3)

## **New NOTED Senior Editors**

Michael Rööslü will hang up his editorial cap and make way for two new senior editors: Emma Depledge and Ioana Balgradean.

## **NOTED Editing Staff**

Are you interested in joining our wonderful editorial team? There are numerous ways in which you can give us a hand, ranging from visual advice to writing contributions or to managing your favourite column. Find out more on the last page of the current issue.

## **Publishing Anonymously in NOTED**

Every now and then our newsletter publishes contributions by authors who for some reason prefer to remain unnamed or use a pseudonym. This is perfectly legitimate, as long as the senior editor knows who wrote the text in question. We publish in the name of a University department and therefore have a certain responsibility as to the content of *NOTED*. We especially need to assure that the intellectual property of each text is credited to its rightful author. Therefore, you are free to reveal your name in the published text or not, but you cannot send us your contribution anonymously. Please be assured of perfect discretion on the part of the editor. Works handed in without a name for the present issue may be published in January if the author contacts the editor in the meantime.

## **Second Hand Book Sale**

The English department's first ever second hand book sale will take place on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2007, at 18.00-20.00 in Phil 006A.

## **Contacts**

Please note that there is now a special staff box at the Department for extracurricular activities including the Theatre Group, the ADEA, and *NOTED*. You can also contact them by email:

ADEA: [adea@lettres.unige.ch](mailto:adea@lettres.unige.ch)  
*NOTED*: [noted@lettres.unige.ch](mailto:noted@lettres.unige.ch)  
Theatre Group: [jmistovski@gmail.com](mailto:jmistovski@gmail.com)

### **New September Session**

The new autumn exam session lasts from September 7-15, 2007. You do not need to pre-enrol for this particular session at the English department, but make sure you sign up at the *service des examens*: on June 21<sup>st</sup> for *mémoire defences*, and on July 16<sup>th</sup> for *rattrapages*. Remember that the new September session is open for attestations, *hors-session* evaluations, *mémoire defences*, as well as second or third attempts (*rattrapages*) at oral or written exams. However, no exam can be scheduled for the first time. The reason for this is that the session only lasts one week and therefore cannot accommodate the usual number of exams.

### **Mémoires**

Congratulations to the students who successfully defended their *mémoires* in the February session 2007:

Gregory PASTERNAK:

"Redemption and the Reconstruction of the Self in Paul Auster's *Moon Palace*, *The Book of Illusions* and *Oracle Night*"

Célia TEIXEIRA

"The Rhetoric of Travel Writing: A Study on Post-Colonial Counter-Discourse in Ama Ata Aidoo's *Our Sister Killjoy*; or *Reflections of a Black-Eyed Squint* and Marlene Nourbese Philip's *Looking for Livingstone: An Odyssey of Silence*"

Thierry BOVEY

"Representing Blackness in Spike Lee's *Jungle Fever*, *Clockers* and *Bamboozled*"

Mary Jo MAFFI

"*The Owl and the Nightingale*: Reading in Movement"

Laura MANGHI

"Deconstructing Nationalism: Origins and Identity"

### **Bourse Thomas Harvey 2007**

The research scholarship was divided between two applicants. Anna Iatsenko, assistant at the English department, will be travelling in August to Liverpool for the opening of the International Slavery Museum. Ms Iatsenko is currently working on her doctoral thesis about new critical approaches to Toni Morrison's later fiction. The other applicant awarded the scholarship was Ariane Pollet, who is currently writing her *mémoire* in history of art on the American photographer Edward Steichen. The scholarship permitted her to pursue her research at the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

### **New Course in Creative Writing**

In 2007-08, the Department of English will offer for the first time a course in creative writing, to be taught by short story writer Alan Sternberg. Mr. Sternberg's works have appeared in *The New Yorker*. They were published as a collection by Harcourt Brace in 1994 under the title *Camaro City*, which the *New York Times* reviewer Michiko Kakutani compared to Sherwood Anderson's American classic *Winesburg, Ohio*. Mr. Sternberg's teaching will in fact consist of two seminars: a literature seminar on the short story, entitled "Short Cuts," offered in the autumn under modules BA5, BA6, and BA7; and a short story writing course in the spring offered only as a demi-module of BA7. Students wishing to take the writing course in the spring should prepare by taking the literature course in the autumn. The sequence of both courses is designed to fulfil the entire module BA7.

### **NOTED Logo Contest**

We are still looking for a logo for our newsletter, having launched a competition in the last issue. So far, no suggestions have reached us, and we are therefore extending the deadline for submissions to the next edition. The winner will not only see his or her logo published in all the following issues of *NOTED*, but will also be rewarded with

a voucher sponsored by the English bookshop OffTheShelf.

Your ideas are greatly appreciated and can be of any shape. There are no restrictions as to the form or size of the logo: the layout of *NOTED* will be adapted to the winning proposal.

Please send your logos or ideas to:

[noted@lettres.unige.ch](mailto:noted@lettres.unige.ch)

or leave them at the *NOTED* staff box at the English department.

### **Travels with Shakespeare**

In collaboration with Prof. Tobias Döring of the University of Munich, Prof. Lukas Erne organized a study trip to **Venice** for his MA seminar "Shakespeare and the world of Venice". The trip included discussions on *Othello* and *The Merchant of Venice* and Ben Jonson's *Volpone*, guided visits of the Italian town, film screenings, playreadings and general *dolce vita*, together with the students from Munich. (See pp. 28-9)

Prof. Neil Forsyth is taking a group of students to **London and Stratford** in the course of his BA seminar "Shakespeare at Stratford and London." This will include a number of theatre visits, including *Othello*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Macbeth* and *Macbett* by Ionesco. Additionally, a tour of the Globe (in London) and of Stratford upon Avon, as well as other merrymaking is planned.

### **New Departmental Website**

Our departmental website has in the meantime been adapted to the new regulations of the University. Unfortunately, the aforementioned regulations leave very few options for a personal touch either visually or structurally. I would therefore like to thank all the staff members who sent their photographs and thereby lent our new site a more personal 'inter-face.' The new site is completely bilingual, except for extracurricular activities and exam regulations. If you are unsure about how to switch between languages, please read the top info-box on the homepage. An advantage of the

new system is that each page now has its own and stable internet address (which even registers the desired language of the page). This means you can add addresses like the homepage or information on the film cycle directly to your favourites, or cut and paste them into an email. Unfortunately, a few displaying errors still persist. This is a problem with the server's interpretation of our code rather than the code itself. If you have any difficulties surfing our website, it would be helpful if you could send us an email briefly describing the problem and mentioning the browser you are using:

[Michael.Roosli@lettres.unige.ch](mailto:Michael.Roosli@lettres.unige.ch)

We will compile a list of errors and forward them to the *service informatique* which periodically updates the program interpreting our code. Please feel free to use the same email address for any ideas or feedback on the site!

### **Conferences**

This academic year's **3<sup>e</sup> cycle conference for medieval and early modern literature** was housed by the University of Lausanne and hosted by Professor Denis Renevey. The first panel took place on the 26th of January, when junior scholars from around the Lake of Geneva – among whom our own Emma Depledge, Christophe Rose and Ioana Balgradean – and senior scholars from across the Channel – Jocelyn Wogan-Brown and Andrew Hadfield – all gathered in the name of Texts and Contexts. To be continued on the 15th of June.

Another **3<sup>e</sup> cycle**, this time on **Theory after 'Theory'** took place at the University of Geneva on May 25-26, 2007. Organised by Professor David Spurr, the conference welcomed Vivian Liska, Ned Lukacher and Jean-Michel Rabaté as keynote speakers.

This year's **SAUTE conference on Mediality and Intermediality** from May 4-5 was hosted by the English department of Zurich University. Among the participants were Lukas Erne, Valerie Fehlbaum, and Michael Rösli of our English department.

## A Note from the Director

There is a missing article in this issue of *NOTED*, based on an interview of an Iraqi professor of English invited to spend the summer semester doing research and attending seminars in Geneva. The article was never written, because the researcher in question never arrived from his native country. Fadhil Hayder Khudeda teaches English at the University of Dohuk, in Iraqi Kurdistan, and is the author of a master's thesis on the poetry of Robert Frost. Under the auspices of a programme sponsored by United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), he was chosen by the English Department of the University of Geneva from among several other Iraqi applicants for the programme. However, the planned date of his arrival came and went without a sign of him, for reasons that remain wrapped in the combined mysteries of the UN bureaucracy, the Swiss Department of Foreign Affairs, and the war in Iraq. The University of Dohuk has an attractive website, which however does not provide a way to contact individual faculty members. For the moment, we don't know where Mr. Khudeda is. The conditions in Iraq make us concerned about the fate not only of Mr. Khudeda, but of all students and professors in that unimaginably distressed country.

What the missing Mr Khudeda brings to mind for me is the world of violence that exists far from the privilege and tranquillity of life at a Swiss university. As I write this, I am also preparing a lecture on "Frivolity in Jane Austen," and puzzling over the precise juridical and philosophical precedents for the word "frivolous" when, in *Pride and Prejudice*, Elizabeth Bennet rebukes the impertinence of Lady Catherine de Bourgh by saying "the arguments with which you have supported this extraordinary

application have been as frivolous as the application was ill-judged." As I ponder this matter, here is the latest news from Iraq as reported in the *New York Times*: "Bombs ravaged Baghdad in five horrific explosions aimed mainly at Shiite crowds on Wednesday, killing at least 171 people in the deadliest day in the capital since the American-led security plan for the city took effect two months ago." The report comes forth in a frenzied stream of information, with an urgency that lacks time for syntax or style. Returning to my little paper on Jane Austen, I feel frivolous indeed.

However, this absurd juxtaposition of Jane Austen and Iraq, which is nonetheless a symptom of daily life in 2007, naturally raises the question of what exactly we think we are doing in the university study of literature. No one has thought more deeply on this question than John Henry Newman, the Victorian philosopher and essayist who, to our discredit, is not read much these days. In his address to the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters of the Catholic University of Dublin in 1854, Newman defends the study of literature in these terms: "By great authors the many are drawn up into unity, national character is fixed, a people speaks, the past and the future, the East and the West are brought into communication with each other,—if such men are, in a word, the spokesmen and prophets of the human family,—it will not answer to make light of Literature or to neglect its study." Newman goes on to say that in proportion as we master literature and are touched by its spirit, we may ourselves become the ministers of like benefits to others. This is not a defence of the western tradition; Newman's language is universal: the spirit of literature, in no matter what language, speaks for all humanity and, in particular, brings East and West into communication with each other.

Newman's address, delivered to Irish Catholics at a time when they were engaged in a struggle for independence from Great Britain, provides some measure of solace for those who might wonder why they are reading Restoration comedy or *The Importance of Being Earnest* as the bombs explode in Baghdad and Kabul. I think of Fadhil Hayder Khudeda dreaming of Frost's New England, its country roads, stone fences, and white birches so far from the arid steppes of Kurdistan. Kurdistan: during a 25-month period from 1987 to 1989, Saddam Hussein's army carried out a campaign of genocide against the Kurds called *Anfal*, characterized by mass executions and the widespread use of chemical weapons. Hundreds of Kurdish villages, as well as the ancient city of Qala Dizeh (population 70,000) were systematically destroyed. The organisation Human Rights Watch estimates the total number of dead from *Anfal* at more than 100,000.

One of Frost's darkest poems is entitled "The Census-Taker," in which the speaker comes across a deserted and ruined house far from the nearest town. The door swings open, the window rattles in the wind, and inside no lamp is lit, nothing is on the table, the stove is off the chimney and down on one side where it lacks a leg. The poet writes,

This house in one year fallen to decay  
Filled me with no less sorrow than the houses  
Fallen to ruin in ten thousand years  
Where Asia wedges Africa from Europe.

Reading these lines after the Iraqi army had left much of Kurdistan in ruin, its silent villages emptied of every human soul, would Fadhil Hayder Khudeda have understood Frost's sorrow over the abandonment of a single house in the forests of New England? I would like to think so, because Frost's sorrow is not restricted to his time and place; it is the essentially human grief over life swept away by what he calls in another poem

"the universal cataract of death." There is a truth here more durable and more meaningful than any we may find in the *New York Times*.

Kurdistan has an ancient and distinguished tradition of poetry. The Kurdish poet Melaye Jeziri was a contemporary of Shakespeare. His countryman and fellow poet, Nali, was a contemporary of Newman. In Newman's terms, all great poets are the spokesmen and prophets of the human family; they bring East and West into communication with each other by finding the words, as Frost does, for the sorrow or the joy that comes simply of being human. Frost's poem comes to a conclusion with the question of why, as a census-taker, he should feel such extreme melancholy at finding a place where the number of souls has shrunk to "none at all." His answer is that "it must be I want life to go on living." I believe that this is something that can be added to Newman's defence of literature. Not only does literature speak for humankind as a whole, but it does so out of the desire for life. Literature is made out of the universally human desire to live, and be it comic, tragic, or something else, this life-affirming, life-giving quality is what makes literature important. We await with impatience the arrival of Fadhil Hayder Khudeda.

\* \* \*

This is the last "Note" to be written by the present director of the English Department. I thank *NOTED's* successive editors, Agniezska Soltysik and Michael Rösli, for permitting me to contribute a series of "Notes from the Director" which, over the years, have become gradually less directorial and more the merely personal observations of a scholar and teacher. These are the primary functions to which I shall soon return, confident that I leave the position of Director in the hands of a more than capable colleague.

David Spurr

## After the Rain

By Sarah-Jane Moloney

The wind is blowing through the trees  
Or maybe it's just the sound of cars on the motorway.

The houses are lit up like paper lanterns  
And I can see that my neighbours have  
Easter-themed stickers on their windows,  
The kind that peels off.

Grey clouds float over the black backdrop of the sky  
And one of them is shaped like a rabbit.

The church bell struck once, it must be half past  
Something, I hear car doors slamming.

I can see what must be a constellation, but I  
Don't know its name. Three stars in a row –  
Sign on the dotted line, please.

There's a lonely daffodil in my vegetable patch  
And bird shit on the trellis.

## The Daisies' Milky Way

By Anja Siouda

That wonderfully shiny day  
I saw the daisies' Milky Way  
Amidst the green and springy sky  
Although I was just passing by

Nature, God or whatsoever  
Has always been extremely clever  
At pointing out the things we miss  
Although they give to us such bliss

To catch the stars too far away  
Is difficult and may not pay  
But look at those which show the way  
So near your feet and day-to-day



# Quoted for *NOTED* (part I)

By Anna Iatsenko

I don't know about you, but I practice a disorganised religion. I belong to an unholy disorder. We call ourselves "Our Lady of Perpetual Astonishment."

Kurt Vonnegut  
*A Man Without a Country*

\* \* \*

I took a speed reading course and read 'War and Peace' in twenty minutes. It involves Russia.

Woody Allen

\* \* \*

I was thrown out of college for cheating on the metaphysics exam; I looked into the soul of the boy sitting next to me.

Woody Allen

\* \* \*

Freud is the father of psychoanalysis. It had no mother.

Germaine Greer

\* \* \*

Freud thought he was bringing the plague to the U.S.A., but the U.S.A. has victoriously resisted the psychoanalytical frost by real deep freezing, by mental and sexual refrigeration. They have countered the black magic of the Unconscious with the white magic of "doing your own thing," air conditioning, sterilization, mental frigidity and the cold media of information.

Jean Baudrillard

\* \* \*

Sean/Christian: Tell me what you don't like about yourself?

*Nip/Tuck*

\* \* \*

Christian Troy: Can I buy you a drink?

Kimberly Henry: I don't drink.

Christian Troy: May I buy you an appetizer?

Kimberly Henry: I don't eat. I'm a model.

*Nip/Tuck*

\* \* \*

In the beginning there was a river. The river became a road and the road branched out to the whole world. And because the road was once a river it was always hungry."

Ben Okri *The Famished Road*

\* \* \*

I'm very glad to have met you. I like your playing very much.

Charlie Parker to Jean-Paul Sartre

\* \* \*

I'll play it first and tell you what it is later.

Miles Davis

\* \* \*

[...]

dub-a-dups

dub-a-dups

dub-a-dups

huh

dub-a-dups

dub-a-dups

dub-a-dups

hah

[...]

Kamau Brathwaite

*Angel/Engine*

\* \* \*

'I'm afraid I don't read as much as I ought to,' said Maggie.

'We're all afraid of something.' Trout replied. 'I'm afraid of cancer and rats and Doberman pinschers.'

Kurt Vonnegut  
*Slaughterhouse Five*

# NOTED at the Movies

By Michael Rösli



Our newsletter launches a new column which focuses especially on film. Your contributions are highly welcome: are you interested in a particular movie director? Do you like writing film reviews or sharing your response to a particular scene or narrative

technique? Would you like to explore cinematic currents, discuss the position of cinema in today's society, or venture an idea for a screen play? Do you know someone working in the world of cinema you would like to interview? These are but a few possibilities which would render this column an exciting forum for *NOTED*.

Find below a schedule for interesting events of the rather rich cinematic scene of Geneva. Maybe you will find inspiration for an article while watching a silent short film on the tram, riding through the city. Maybe you will be astonished to discover the scope of local film productions at the FROG festival, or feel your pen twitching after one of the famous short film nights which close the *cinéma tout écran* festival. If any of this should happen, make sure to let us know!

## Upcoming Events, Film Cycles and Festivals

- 02.04.-03.06.2007 **The Tram Film Festival**  
<http://www.tramfilmfestival.ch/splash.html>
- 16.04.-25.06.2007 **Ciné-Club Universitaire Cycle: 'Action! Le cinéma du refus'**  
<http://www.unige.ch/acultu/admin/images/BrochureCycleAction.pdf>
- 08.06.-11.06.2007 **Festival: FROG - Film ROmand à Genève**  
<http://www.festival-frog.ch/home.html>
- 03.07.-08.07.2007 **Neuchâtel International Fantastic Film Festival**  
<http://www.niff.ch/>
- 27.09.07-17.01.08 **Our Department Film Cycle**  
[http://www.unige.ch/lettres/angle/activites/film\\_en.html](http://www.unige.ch/lettres/angle/activites/film_en.html)
- 29.10.-04.11.2007 **Festival: cinéma tout écran (including 2 short film nights)**  
<http://www.cinema-tout-ecran.ch/>
- 09.11.-26.11.2007 **Festival: Filmar en América latina**  
<http://www.filmaramlat.ch/Accueil.php>

# Cinéma Bio Carouge Reopens its Doors

By Michael Rösli

There's a place in Carouge where you can snuggle up in the dark in a cosy double seat in the back row, under a sky full of twinkling stars, and experience unforgettable moments of movie history. How come you didn't know about this fabulous place? Well, it only just came back into being, after a lengthy period of fierce debate, while its closed and worn-out doors stared empty onto the Place du Marché.



The history of the Cinéma Bio Carouge can be traced back as far as 1912. In its turbulent trajectory, it went through many trials, including a fire not long after its first opening, when one of the (at the time highly inflammable) films ignited the operating booth (who hasn't seen *Cinema Paradiso*?) After a meandering path through different parts of Carouge, changing its name and owners, the cinema came back close to its original location on the Place du Marché, at the intersection with rue Saint-Joseph. The term Bio goes back to 1972, when the cinema was named after the first cinematographic apparatus, *le biographe*, which was perfected by Georges Demeny and used by the Lumière brothers.

Rumour has it that a fast food chain intended to buy the cinema in 1996. Though never exactly confirmed, these suspicions led to a petition submitted to the Carouge authorities, asking them to preserve the theatre. The petition turned the Bio into the object of political controversy between politicians on the left

who proposed that the city buy the cinema, and those on the right who doubted its long-term viability without any major subsidies. In the elections of March 2003, the left wing gained a majority in Carouge, and Jeannine de Haller, the new mayor, launched the project of buying the cinema, which was promptly accepted by the municipal council. However, a referendum sought to reject this decision and brought the issue to the polls. On April 24, 2004, the people of Carouge eventually decided in favour of the acquisition of the theatre.

The Bio opened again on March 4, 2007. With a completely renovated interior and the latest technical equipment, the cinema now accommodates 198 spectators and entrusts its programming to Patricia Dumont and Laurent Dutoit of Agora Films. The independent cinema will show both new films and older ones and collaborate with festivals and various cultural events such as the *Printemps Carougeois*. Furthermore, special programs for children will be scheduled on weekends. The new chapter in the life of Cinéma Bio Carouge started off with the avant premiere of André Téchiné's *Les témoins*. Dumont and Dutoit promise a *cinéma d'auteur populaire* which tries to distinguish itself both from mainstream cinema and too remote and exotic productions. Remember that the Bio does not profit from any subsidies, which makes your interest not only its *raison d'être*, but also its means of survival!



All information in this article is drawn from the various documents provided on: <http://www.cinema-bio.ch/>

# The Incredible Hulk's Underpants

By Alan Sternberg

And therefore take the present time,  
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino;  
For love is crowned with the prime  
In spring time, the only pretty ring time  
When birds do sing  
Hey ding a ding a ding:  
Sweet lovers love the spring.

From Shakespeare's "Song," *As You Like It*

Come, my CELIA, let us prove,  
While we may, the sports of love;  
Time will not be ours for ever:  
He at length our good will sever.  
Spend not then his gifts in vain  
Suns that set, may rise again:  
But if once we lose this light,  
'Tis with us perpetual night.  
Why should we defer our joys?

From Jonson's "V. – To Celia"

Then die, that she,  
The common fate of all things rare,  
May read in thee;  
How small a part of time they share,  
That are so wondrous sweet and fair.

From Edmund Waller's "Rose Song"

## ASSIGNMENT:

Write an essay on "Shortage of Time as a Seduction Argument"

Panellists: Ben Jonson, Gustave Flaubert, Ophelia, and a beefy guy in overalls named Dwayne, who is holding a guitar

## RESPONSE TWO WEEKS LATER FROM ANALYSIS OF TEXT CLASS THAT IS ALMOST ENTIRELY FEMALE:

For God's sake. Life expectancy in 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> Century England was about 40, women obviously didn't stay pretty a long time, and instead of being polite about it, these poets said, "Sleep with me now because you'll probably be ugly or dead before your next opportunity comes along." The more we study literature the more we get the impression that its universal message is that men will say or do anything to get you-know-what.

Audience, speaking in chorus (indicated by italics): Analysis of Text class that raised the original complaint. (This includes a single male student, L., who looks as if he is going to bolt the room at any moment).

Moderator: Inept male *chargé d'enseignement* who plans to be more careful when he chooses future essay topics.

Ancillary materials: extracts from student essays

## SIX MONTHS LATER

## AUDIENCE:

*Shakespeare is even more disrespectful than the other poets. He basically says: All your friends are rolling around in the fields, so you should do it, too.*

## COLLOQUIUM:

## MODERATOR:

MEN – LITERARY AND OTHERWISE – ARE SLEAZY CREEPS WHO WILL SAY OR DO ANYTHING TO GET YOU-KNOW-WHAT

You mean it's like getting a tattoo?

*Shakespeare didn't even come.*



DWAYNE:  
Is this the Geneva country-  
music festival?

EVERYONE: No.

DWAYNE:  
Well, I'll stick around  
anyway. The girls are cute.

JONSON:  
Shakespeare doesn't go to small colloquia  
at foreign universities. But I do. It's a good  
way to meet nubile young women. Are any  
of you free for a drink later?

*Were your intentions toward Celia  
honourable? Were you going to marry her if  
she slept with you?*

(Jonson needs several minutes to regain  
his composure. When you've been dead for  
400 years, you don't get many  
opportunities to laugh so hard.)



JONSON (sarcastically,  
wiping eyes):  
My intentions had to do  
with structuralism. I was  
focused on that. Celia was  
well-structured.

*What was in it for her?*

JONSON:  
She did all right. My . . . non-literary  
performance wasn't so great. She was  
disappointed and sarcastic afterward. But  
ever since then she's been known as the  
woman who inspired "To Celia," and she  
feels fine about that. Don't you think it's  
flattering if a man finds you so beautiful he  
writes poems about you?

REAL LIVE QUOTE FROM ACTUAL  
STUDENT ESSAY:

It makes a girl happy to be compared with  
a rose or the springtime and furthermore if  
a man writes something about her it  
means that she is a source of inspiration  
and that he is thinking about her. Flattery

is a good way to obtain something and  
makes a girl more receptive, but more  
vulnerable, too, because she may not see  
that she is being trapped.

*But there's nothing personal in that poem.  
It's just a man begging for sex. There's  
nothing in there about Celia's personality. It  
doesn't say if she's thoughtful or intelligent  
or anything.*

JONSON:  
Poems like that don't last for 400 years.

*You're saying literature can't be high-  
minded?*

MODERATOR:  
Sure it can. Read Milton.

(Analysis of Text class gives the moderator  
what he has come to call "the look." It is  
not complimentary.)

*All we see in this endless so-called famous  
literature we have to read is that women  
are important for physical appearance and  
for which men get their hands up their  
skirts. But these poems sink lower than  
anything we've come across yet.*

JONSON:  
Life was cruel then.

ACTUAL QUOTE FROM STUDENT ESSAY:  
Love makes life magically happy, but as  
shown in Maslow's pyramid of human  
needs, it is based on a foundation of  
security and food.

JONSON:  
That's right. I never flirted until my  
stomach was full.

*So why did you make life more cruel by  
telling women they were going to die soon?*

JONSON:  
We thought of it as constructive advice.

*Creep.*



JONSON:  
To quote Auden:

Time that is intolerant  
Of the brave and innocent,  
And indifferent in a week  
To a beautiful physique,

Worships language and forgives  
Everyone by whom it lives;  
Pardons cowardice, conceit. . .

So pardon me – I chased the ladies. I also wrote the damn poems, didn't I?

STUDENT ESSAY:

Whatever poetry's role and life's uncertainty in the past, flirting in the present, and God knows what in the future, men used to want sex, still do, and always will.



FLAUBERT:  
That's true. What men feel about women can be cruel and difficult, and literature should reflect that. There is the intimacy; and there is the possible damage. It's life's main subject.

FROM ESSAY:

Beyond the superficial level and the conventions, lovers are the eternal protagonists of life.

FLAUBERT:  
Men think about sex all the time. That may hurt, but do you want the truth or not? You can't accuse me of ignoring Emma Bovary's personality.

*Not as it relates to boredom, adultery, and suicide, we can't. Thanks a lot.*

FLAUBERT:  
She made bad choices. I hear a lot of general complaining here, but what's important is the specific decisions women make. To quote myself: Women trust men too little in general and too much in particular.

*Didn't you spend your whole life living with your mother?*

FLAUBERT:  
Err. . .

*Creep.*

FLAUBERT:  
It was comfortable there.

(During this conversation, Dwayne has left the podium and seated himself in the audience.)

DWAYNE (looking at colloquium nametag):  
Gosh, Federica. (Plays guitar and sings)

Put me in'th'back of your pickup truck  
And drive me to Shangri-La. . .

FEDERICA:  
I'd rather run my liver through a food processor.

DWAYNE (turning in the other direction):  
Gosh, Francesca –

(Francesca hits Dwayne in the head. This is somewhat painful, as she is holding a stiletto-heeled shoe. Dwayne flees the room.)

MODERATOR:  
Now we'll never get to know what he thinks about postmodernism.

OPHELIA:  
Did he mean "song" as in lyric poetry?

MODERATOR:  
More post-modern poetry. Federica. Francesca. That wasn't fair. He wasn't manipulative. He was respectful. His intentions were honourable. He didn't try to seduce you. He sang a song for you.

FEDERICA:  
We prefer our suitors to be more sophisticated.



*Consid'ring that they're selfish and unkind,  
If they died young, we really wouldn't mind.*

*That's iambic pentameter, right? We should get credit for that. Another problem is we get attention from geezers. You wouldn't believe how old they are. Thirty. Thirty-five. Forty. It's incredible. They look at us like WE might be interested in THEM. Fifty, even. Those guys are definitely in a hurry – they're about to forget what sex is. And we're like, What's the evolutionary point of having a bunch of bald, wrinkled, drooling, you know, using up oxygen and natural resources?*

QUOTE FROM STUDENT ESSAY:

Four centuries later, life expectancy has gone so high that we sometimes feel sorry for those who live so long.

MODERATOR (somewhat shaken):

Can we get back to literature? Maybe you should be reading Jane Austen. You get respectful treatment of women *there*. Written by a woman. Lots of honour and courtship. You don't see Darcy pawing Elizabeth Bennet.

*He's definitely the type who got beat up a lot when he was a kid.*

JONSON:

He's a total candy-ass. *I would have beat him up.*

*He spends 350 pages getting to know her, and then he proposes and doesn't even kiss her. No ripped bodice, nothing. And that's the climax of the book: him talking and Elizabeth blushing and thinking she's going to faint or something.*

JONSON:

I thought ripped bodices were what you didn't want.

(Jonson is given the look.)

*After 350 pages, if something like that doesn't happen, the guy's not normal.*

JONSON:  
And you're impossible.

OPHELIA:  
Do women still have bodices?

*We have Wonderbra. Look, it's not just literature. It's all the arts. It's not fair. They had a feminist colloquium at the Museum of Modern Art, and the women were saying only 3 per cent of the paintings in the museum are by women but women make up 83 per cent of the nudes. Men don't have to put up with this stuff. When the Incredible Hulk is turning into the Incredible Hulk, and his muscles are swelling so much his wristwatch pops off and his shirt rips in half, did you ever notice that his underpants stay on?*

MODERATOR:

Maybe it's the Incredible Hulk you're looking for. He's young; he's got muscles; he's dangerous enough to be interesting but still basically a decent guy. He might rip a bodice or two, but without evil intent. And he keeps his pants on.



OPHELIA:  
Is he a literary character?

MODERATOR:  
Oh, yes. Very important one. Post-modern.

*Forget it. We're not sleeping with anyone who's green.*

# Train and Rain

By Wolfie

My life is a train  
Swift yet horribly slow...

Watching through blind windows  
I see my past swirling in my brain  
Oh God how could I know  
I would forget the taste of rain?

I walked through life and I saw  
Neither joy nor beauty, only dismay.  
I do recall no colourful days, alone in my horror train  
A world in shades of grey. And everlasting rain.

A lonely train. A lonely life.  
Where does it lead, I do not know.  
When shall I meet my end?  
Maybe am I already dead...

Isolated in my terror train  
As I always was.

My past tries to invade my mind  
Already filled with oblivion  
Remaining as hollow as a gulf  
Only ethereal voices can end this void

Angels' voices, unsound in my horror train  
Deaf and blind behind shattered windows  
I wait for the end of my journey through hate and sorrow  
Deep into the depth of Hell, for this is the Devil's train.

No coming back. I ought to know  
That life is lonesome and vain.  
I am sad only because from now  
I will not hear nor hear the rain pour down ever again.

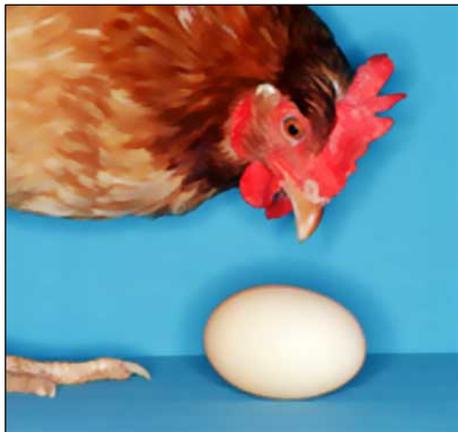
# The Hen's Philosophy

By Anja Siouda

I am a hen  
Don't ask me why  
I have to lay  
An egg a day

There is no man  
No cock no child  
This makes me wild  
Though I am mild

And yet I see  
That this may be  
What pushes me  
To philosophy  
And poultry-poetry!



# The Man Who

By Kareen Klein

*The Man Who* was written by Peter Brook & Marie-Hélène Estienne. The play was performed by Barbe à Papa, the English Theatre Workshop at the University of Geneva on the 18, 21 and 22 of April 2007.

"If a man mistakes his wife for a hat – that must mean something. I once forgot her name, – but a hat! There must be something seriously wrong."



I had the pleasure of seeing this play twice (on its first and last performance, arguably the best). The production was quick-paced, energetic and yet thought-provoking. A series of sketches were presented – patients with different mental illnesses, in treatment (?) or conversation with their doctors. The four actors were dressed in simple black everyday clothes, which blended in nicely with the black-painted space of *Le Contretemps* and contrasted with the white doctor's robes. The actors switched parts, so that each played the doctor once and the patient once.

Everything started out slowly, with soft music – a woman who cannot say "no" and has to be startled into yelling the negative by being poked. She then leaves, energetically denying that she will

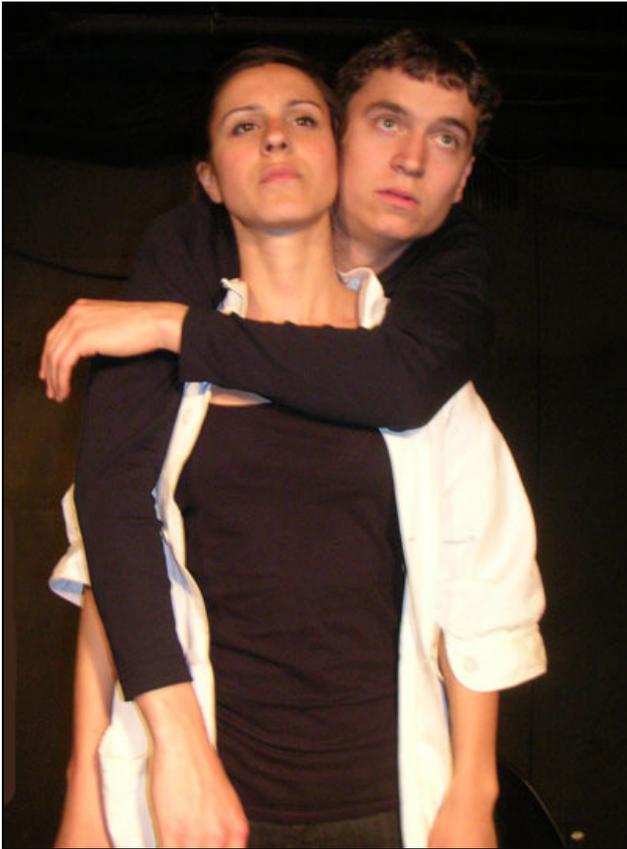
come back with a strong "yes." Blackout. The scene changes were quick and well organized, in complete darkness, accompanied by recorded sounds (announcing the next sketch). Three chairs, a table, some other small props – that was the set.

The actors were remarkably settled in their texts and managed even long and semantically complicated monologues astonishingly well. (I will not attempt to reproduce the gibberish of the sketch entitled "Jargon", but can assure you that it was the same on the two nights I went). At times the other actors accompanied the soliloquies with miming, or took over a few words of the actor speaking – an efficient way of avoiding monotony and of illustrating what was spoken. The body language and mimics were also impressive, especially in such a small space, where one has to find the right amount of theatrical exaggeration. I've always found it hard looking at actors (especially if you know them) from close up: one always frets with them. But, as I said, the actors seemed comfortable and confident.



One actress played the violin, and a star-appearance of a bear on a bicycle raised a lot of laughter.

The director's experience was visible in the carefully choreographed, rhythmic *mise-en-scène*. Everything fitted together perfectly, some actions or words followed each other like punches and some movements seemed like choreographed dances. And the light cues were always observed – this is essential but by no means always the case in amateur theatre, believe me.



**To round things up, let me describe some scenes:**

One sketch portrays "tickers", people with ticks.

Patient: A friend of mine who's a ticker told me: "I can never go to an auction."

Patient: If the ticket-collector asks me, "Your ticket, please", I could kill him.

\*\*\*

*The patient is sitting on a chair as the doctor enters.*

Doctor: Sit down.

*The patient stands up with a jolt.*

\*\*\*

*The doctor is sitting in one chair, the other is empty.*

Doctor: Sit down.

*The patient sits down on the doctor's lap.*

Doctor: Name some words that start with an "f".

Patient: Fact, factotum, ... phenomenon ... fippopotamus!

**Some voices from the audience:**

"The *mise-en-scène* was really good."

"I didn't feel as if one had to laugh, if you've studied these things a bit, they are really quite serious. I saw the human tragedy in it."

"I liked how the bodies were in relation to each other on stage, there was no imbalance, all had a strong presence."

"I wouldn't call it a comedy. The mental illnesses weren't taken lightly." (But, I might add, one did grin, chuckle and occasionally laugh.)

A quote to summarize: "You got that right, man's a mystery."

NB: Quotes are from memory only, I apologize for any mistakes.



→

# Reviews of *The Man Who*

Compiled by Sarah-Jane Moloney

*After the performance, we encouraged the audience to write down some of their impressions...*

*Some wrote well thought-out reviews with coherent sentences...*

*Name:* Kristijan Marinkovic

*Profession:* Student

*Review:* Extremely intelligent and witty, the play makes you laugh in that innocent and spontaneous way. Each and every member of the cast has a unique presence on stage, which helps in pulling you into the play.

\* \* \*

*Name:* Ioana Balgradean / Matthias R.

*Profession:* Medievalist / Engineer

*Review:* Glorious handling of collapsing syntax and cracking minds and bodies. Wonderful fun.

\* \* \*

*Name:* Alex & Laurène

*Profession:* Students

*Review:* It was f\*\*\*\*\* amazing. Wonderful riding Bear! If you want to teach dance, please call us, we'll enjoy taking lessons. Well done!

\* \* \*

*Name:* Andriana & Christos

*Profession:* unspecified

*Review:* Actors in the skin of the role. Very true performance, good skills, simple scenery to focus on the characters. Jargon excellent, Ticker strong, Man From La Rochelle well put in place. Congratulations, keep us updated!

*Name:* Kostas Spyropoulos

*Profession:* unspecified

*Review:* Loved the play... Great group and nice skills. Ticker and Jargon were very well executed – tough monologues. Great touch with the violin and the couple of La Rochelle. Keep it up guys, it was very entertaining.

\* \* \*

*Name:* Dragos

*Profession:* Student

*Review:* Very well played. Mr Brook would be proud.

\* \* \*

*Name:* Emmanuel Pralong

*Profession:* Teacher

*Review:* Thank you guys. I had a good nap. But when I woke up, I don't know why, my brain hurt... I'm joking... you guys rocked the place!!!

*Others were inspired to give their own rendition of "Jargon"...*

*Name:* Malvolio

*Profession:* Reporter

*Review:* It appeals to a wide range of catharsis. The ambiance is very river. Colors used conform with triggers of nannies. Keep up the good highway underpass.

*And some summarised the entire play in one word!*

*Name:* Damien Théodoloz

*Profession:* Banker

*Review:* PLUSH!

## ***Losing Something: Incursion of the Virtual on Stage***

**By Michael Rösli**

A translucent cloud floats in the middle of the stage. Sensual limbs are entwined in its soft tissue of beige satin and dangle in slow motion through the free space of seemingly zero gravity. An actor addresses a figure suspended and spinning in mid-air while bodies fall vertically through the stage. The actor suddenly splits into two characters, his double flat and translucent, pacing up and down the stage.



I had the great pleasure of stumbling by coincidence over a play entitled *Losing Something*, which the *3-legged dog media & theatre group* performed at the 3LD Art and Technology Center in New York. Written, directed and designed by Kevin Cunningham, the play is a meditation of an unnamed protagonist on several people he lost during the events of 9/11. His inner monologue, however, is exteriorised by rather stunning techniques which present his reflections as actual dialogues with the various voices and memories of the deceased.

Moreover, the protagonist gradually comes to realise that his own person is no less a construct of his mind than are his memories of the dead. This disturbing economy between reality/illusion and life/death is

visualised by the characters' passing through different stages of materiality, reaching from the regular actor to three-dimensional figures, seemingly suspended in space and with various degrees of translucency, and to two-dimensional characters with a ghostly shine.

The technique used is a high-definition video projection system called *Eyeliner*: the orchestra pit contains a white horizontal plane which, if illuminated, is reflected in a pane of glass positioned in front of the stage at a 45° angle. Some characters are pre-recorded and projected onto this white plane, which the spectator, through reflection in the otherwise invisible glass pane, perceives as flat ghosts wandering through the space of the stage. When actors are lying down on this white plane, unseen by the spectators, they appear fully three-dimensional on stage.

This phantasmagorical illusion transgresses the boundaries of both space and time of the stage. The actor has to address recorded or reflected characters which he (unlike the spectator) cannot perceive before him, and communicates with pre-recorded virtual characters whose lines, like the memories of the deceased, nevertheless engage him in a lively dialogue in the present. The play is an overwhelming experience which blurs the lines between its form and content, the present and the past, and incorporates the spectator by its uncanny and radical questioning of perception itself.

For more information, consult <http://3leggeddog.org/mt/>

# ***Good Night Desdemona (Good Morning Juliet)***

**An Interview with Director Kareen Klein by Michael Rösli**

## **A Brief Glance at the Play**

This highly entertaining comedy is loaded with all the usual Shakespearean elements – misunderstandings, chases, sword-fights, cross-dressing – and it also sports a more contemporary take on the Shakespearean masterpieces – in iambic pentameter, of course. Constance Ledbelly, assistant professor at Queen's University has an unusual theory about the bard: she believes that *Romeo and Juliet* and *Othello* were originally comedies, which Shakespeare transformed into tragedies.

As her private and professional life seem to fall apart simultaneously, she suddenly finds herself in the middle of the plays, with her chance to prove she's right. Intervening at the crucial moments in the two plays, she changes the course of events, but the course of events quickly turns against her. Constance embarks on a quest for the truth, as well as a journey of self-discovery, and the people she meets look suspiciously like some of the folks from back home.

*Good Night Desdemona (Good Morning Juliet)* was staged by the Geneva English Drama Society (GEDS) and directed by Kareen Klein. Performed at the Théâtre de l'Espérance from March 13-17, 2007, the play featured Sarah-Jane Moloney (whom you recognise of course from *Barbe à Papa*) as Desdemona and Mercutio, Davina Pinto as the protagonist Constance Ledbelly, Shane Kester as Othello, Tybalt, Professor Claude Night and Juliet's nurse, Sam Breen in the role of Romeo, Iago, and the Ghost, as well as Naomi Blyth-Kubota as an exuberant Juliet, a student, and a soldier of Cyprus.

## **Comment by Prof. Lukas Erne**

Two plays by Shakespeare were adapted by a highly gifted woman playwright and turned into a play that was directed by a highly gifted woman director who is working on a doctorate on adaptations of two plays by Shakespeare. The genesis of this remarkable production added a real sense of occasion to an entertaining night out. We can be grateful to Ann-Marie MacDonald, Kareen Klein, and the high-energy actors and actresses of the Geneva English Drama Society for reminding us of one of the ways in which Shakespeare, in 2007, is still our contemporary.

## **Interview with Director Kareen Klein**

It is now my special pleasure to ask Kareen a few questions about her experience and adventures as the director of this fast-paced and hilarious play.



*Kareen, Good Night Desdemona (Good Morning Juliet) seems to be a custom-made play for you in respect to your studies and extracurricular activities. As a spectator I also felt the great enthusiasm and loving care for the text inherent not only in the acting, but also in the mise-en-scène. How did the project start? And was the play your own choice?*

Yes, the play was my own choice. In fact, the whole idea of me directing a play started when I arranged a playreading for GEDS (*Andorra* by Max Frisch), which seemed to have quite a few positive echoes. When I made my interest in directing known to the committee, the answer was: "Can't you do a comedy?" Then I went to a conference in the Czech Republic, entitled: "Shakespeare and his Collaborators." One of the organizers read a paper about this play: "When the bard was still Jung." I immediately liked the play, ordered it, read it, loved it, and after some hesitation proposed it to the committee. Again, incredulity: written by *whom?* Never heard of her. Never heard of the play. Bad for the business. So I didn't really think that I'd stand a chance. But they did give me one in the end, so there we were.

And yes, people have asked me whether I wrote this play myself ;)

And, Davina, my lead actress, came to me a few weeks into rehearsals, inquiring: "You really are Constance, aren't you?" But, as I wrote in the program, I insist that similarities do stop at a certain point.

*How does your staging deviate from Ann-Marie MacDonald's text? Does the play already suggest the doubling of characters by the same actors assuming different roles? Were there passages you cut or added? Did you make modifications to adapt the play to your own interpretations and mise-en-scène?*

The play in itself does not suggest the doubling (except for some similarities in the characters – both Prof. Night and Othello pat Constance on the head to say good-bye, for example, and Ramona rhymes with Desdemona, and the actress playing Juliet appears as a student precisely after Constance has written the word “Juliet”). I only got the hint from the cast list of the original performance, and I definitely thought it was a great idea (though it did imply a lot of running backstage, Sam told me that he was more stressed backstage, because as soon as he came off, people were ripping his clothes off him, and he then had to dash to make his next entrance).

I only cut two little passages of Constance's text, in a slight attempt to make the play shorter. But I couldn't cut a lot, I liked it too much.

Oh yes, we cut the ending after the second night, due to audience echoes (they started clapping too early). I think everyone was happy without the final warp and the epilogue.

We only added “Oxford, Oxford” to make sure people really get the joke about Othello fording his ox and Constance having a déjà-vu about it.

Otherwise, I'm not conscious of having made any big changes to the play. Just the odd emphasis on a pun.



*What questions of mise-en-scène have you come across in adapting the text to the stage?*

Well, for one thing – a person had to disappear into a wastebasket. The most challenging moment in the play, I was told. Although I didn't necessarily agree, this clearly needed a

lot of thought, and we spent a whole week-end trying things out. I practiced sliding into a 60 cm-high space from our coffee table – with bruises all over my knees as a result. When my technical team had finally come up with a solution which seemed to work, I found out that Davina (who had to go through the construction) was claustrophobic! But she bravely managed the trick every night. The main problems in this play were actually technical – how do you perform a warp? Where do you get a turtle that can be ripped apart? (I received Hector as a present on the last night – he's still everyone's favourite.)



*What aspects of your function as a stage director surprised you as a literary scholar?*

Nothing really, I love theatre and every aspect of it fascinates me. So I didn't even mind screwing and gluing the set, together with the technical team. One thing though: you have to think about everything and in the last weeks all kinds of people were constantly asking all kinds of questions. You really have to be organized. And you seem to have very little time for each person, which is a bit of a pity, really. I was lucky to have a production assistant, who greatly helped with all the administrative stuff.

*To what extent did you guide the actors and what was their creative contribution?*

At first, they seemed to expect total direction from me. But in the end, they really took over. Usually, I just supplied some key ideas for interpretation or movement, but they also came along with a lot of their own suggestions. Do you think this will work? I don't know, let's try it. Some scenes were nearly choreographed, down to the last movement, others were blocked more freely. One of my main concerns was that the actors should be happy with what they were doing. →



*How did the rehearsals work – how did you work on the text with the actors?*

The text was another of the committee's worries. Shakespeare – help! Having read the play four or five times before rehearsals started and having made sure that I got every pun and allusion (well, nearly all of them, some we discovered in rehearsals, like “I saw thee fingering his very jewels ...” – Oh!), I simply tried to pass this on to my actors. Some of them had previous Shakespeare-experience, others less so. But once I got them to ask whenever they didn't understand something, we had a lot of fun discovering all the layers of meaning. My favourite example is Romeo's “I rode not hither on a horse tonight.” Some of the actors didn't get that, and when I asked and explained, there was a general relief: “Oh, I thought it was another one of those sexual innuendos ...”

*Was your greatest work accomplished before the rehearsals started or did everything happen and evolve in real-time? To what extent did the development of the play shape or reshape your vision of the project during the rehearsals?*

Difficult to say. One big relief was when I had found my cast. I guess that from start to finish I just went along for the ride, although I sometimes had to hold on tight. I didn't have a lot of expectations, since I'd never done this before. I was very pleasantly surprised about the general enthusiasm and commitment, though. And this not just from the actors. I found out that even props and costumes can add to the comedy. Generally I'd say that I definitely put more time, effort and nerves into it once rehearsals had started.

*The cast of your play struck me as simply brilliant. (I'll pass on the compliment.) How did you go about the casting itself? Did you already know who or what you were looking for? To what extent could you imagine a person you had only just met in a particular role of your play?*

GEDS always has auditions, usually on two nights. I knew whom I wanted for the lead, casting the others was more difficult, especially since there was a real lack of men. It took me nearly three weeks after the auditions to cast the play – I started looking at people in the streets and on the tram, desperately looking for someone suitable (and willing). – Rest assured I didn't speak to any strangers.

For casting, looks obviously count, and the acting – but also vibes. I have to be able to work with the person for months, so you need to get along well, very well. But it is true that these decisions are sometimes taken on the spur of the moment, and then you just hope it will turn out all right. I was extremely lucky with my cast.



*What are the strongest memories or impressions (positive, negative, none or both) you are taking away from this project?*

Difficult to say ... Hm. For one thing, the atmosphere of working with the cast and crew. It's really great to have so many people working for something that is so important to you. Also, I'm still a bit surprised that it's actually over and that I actually did it. My worst moment was the end of technical rehearsal, when I had worked my actors for 12

hours straight and they were (understandably) moody. But I surely have a lot of memories to cherish: Nearly not daring to look every time something crucial happened on stage, seeing how the actors dealt with missing props (or pieces of set!), watching the play every night, with a huge smile on my lips, and laughing at all the wrong moments, reciting lines in my every day business, mulling over bits of blocking or pronunciation on my way to rehearsals, laughing ourselves to stitches when recalling how things went wrong, admiring costumes (I actually screeched when I first saw Romeo's – it was perfect), laughing my way through some rehearsals, ...

What was also very important was the support of my friends and family throughout this project – six months of easy-going preparations and nearly three months of intensive work (although there were also such helpful questions as: “Do you have understudies?”).

### Some Responses from the Audience

‘A truly hilarious play – I was left begging for more, so saw it twice!’

‘An amazing cast, a side-splittingly funny play and an outstanding director – what more could an audience want? I had a wonderful evening and would like to say a big thank you to all those involved with the production’.

‘A brilliant cast full of talent. I particularly liked Juliet – what a great comedy actress’.

‘It was really nice. I got all of the jokes and really enjoyed myself’.

‘It was a very interesting adaptation of Shakespeare’s plays. I love what the playwright did with the two Shakespeare plays. I think this will help to make Shakespeare more accessible for younger people. It was so very funny and I really loved the actors’.

## Remaining Theatre Calendar of the Season

By Karen Klein

Suiting the summer season, most of the remaining events will be outdoors. The playreading on the 5<sup>th</sup> and on the 19<sup>th</sup> of June will take place in someone's garden, including the usual aperitif. Do come along for a theatrical and social event. The entrance fee is only 5.- CHF for non-members (see [www.geds.ch](http://www.geds.ch) for details about venues). And: be sure not to miss *A Mid-*

*summer Night's Dream*, performed in the courtyard of the château in Prangins – slightly more costly, but definitely worth it (see review of *Taming of the Shrew* in the last issue of *NOTED*). After the summer, look out for GEDS' new season (starting September) – apart from the usual three full productions, a number of special events in celebration of GEDS' 75<sup>th</sup> birthday are planned.

<b>29.05.-10.06.</b>	<b><i>The Twits</i></b>	<b>Roald Dahl</b>	<b>Simply Theatre</b>
05.06.	<i>Busy Day</i>	Fanny Burney	GEDS
10.06.	<i>Blithe Spirit</i> (at the Château de Prangins)	Noël Coward	GEDS
<b>14.-16.06</b>	<b><i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i></b>	<b>William Shakespeare</b>	<b>Howard Productions</b>
19.06.	<i>Agadir</i>	David Lewis	GEDS

Full productions are in **bold** type, play-readings in *italics*.  
For venues, times etc. see the following websites:

[www.geds.ch](http://www.geds.ch)

[www.howardprod.ch](http://www.howardprod.ch)

[www.simplytheatre.com](http://www.simplytheatre.com)

For those of you more interested in musical theatre, visit the website of the Geneva Amateur Operatic Society ([www.gaos.ch](http://www.gaos.ch)). You also find all these internet addresses and more on our departmental website under > Links.

## Quoted for *NOTED* (part II)

By Karen Klein

If you're resting on your laurels, you're wearing them on the wrong part of your body.

Heiner Geissler

\* \* \*

Obsessions don't have preliminaries.

*De Lovely*

\* \* \*

And oftentimes excusing of a fault  
Doth make the fault the worser by th'excuse;  
As patches set upon a little breach  
Discredit more the hiding of the fault  
Than did the fault before it was so patched.

William Shakespeare  
*King John*, IV.ii.30-34

\* \* \*

You have to live with your enemies, since you cannot be everyone's friend.

Alexis de Tocqueville

\* \* \*

You couldn't put off the inevitable. Because sooner or later, you reached the place [where] the inevitable just went and waited.

Terry Pratchett

\* \* \*

A camel is said to be a horse designed by a committee.

Thomas Clayton

\* \* \*

A woman's love is not complete without a listener.

Juliet Dusinberre

\* \* \*

There is no future in time travel.

Anonymous

\* \* \*

The difference between a miracle and a fact is exactly the difference between a mermaid and a seal.

Mark Twain

\* \* \*

Certain things they should stay the way they are. You ought to be able to stick them in one of those big glass cases and just leave them alone. I know that's impossible, but it's too bad anyway.

Salinger  
*The Catcher in the Rye*

When man don't love you, more you try, more he hate you, man like that. If you love them they treat you bad, if you don't love them they after you night and day bothering your soul case out ... A man don't treat you good, pick up your skirt and walk out. Do it and he come after you.

Jean Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea*

\* \* \*

Thinking is what many people believe they are doing when they are merely re-arranging their prejudices.

William James

\* \* \*

Opportunity knocks more often than you think but generally there's no one at home.

Will Rogers

\* \* \*

We generally do not believe something, but someone.

Heinrich Waggerl

\* \* \*

Clothes make the man. Naked people have little or no influence on society.

Mark Twain

\* \* \*

Scandals are the Alka-Seltzer of democracy.

Dario Fo

\* \* \*

A book is a garden that you carry in your pocket.

Arabian proverb

\* \* \*

Outside a dog, a book is a man's best friend. Inside a dog, it's too dark to read.

Groucho Marx

\* \* \*

Only dull people are brilliant at breakfast.

Oscar Wilde

\* \* \*

There is such a thing as being too profound. Truth is not always in a well.

Edgar Allan Poe  
"The Murders in the Rue Morgue"

# Insomnia Perpetua

By Clare Tierque

A fatal caffeine trip:

Anxiety fought,  
anxiety wrought  
daylong  
by bitter cups washed  
down her gullet.

Daybreak:  
fresh, filtered brew  
to help her wake.  
Mid-morning fix  
to whet her wits.  
Postprandial slump  
begs more;  
Soon followed by  
a cup at four.

To give up now  
would leave her with a void  
she's desperate to avoid.

Come night  
she tries to hit the sack,  
but demons hold her back  
and not one sheep  
comes forth to bring her sleep.

The clutches of the night  
toss her about  
until daylight:  
grim prospect of  
another crushing day,  
that wishful thinking  
will not take away.

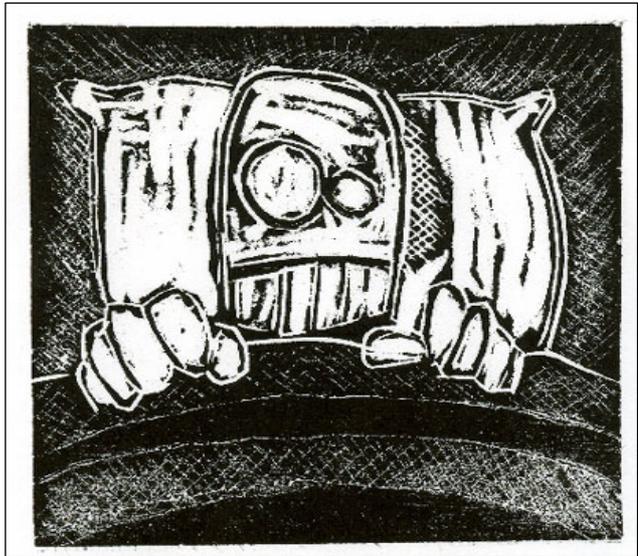
Her brain like lead  
triggers a primeval need  
for bed;  
there's only caffeine  
in its stead.

They tell her she should  
drink green tea - insipid  
like a vow of chastity.

The only poison apt  
to numb the pain  
of death and growing up:  
caffeine.

Insomnia perpetua.

(written at 3.00 a.m. on 17 April 2007  
and refined after coffee on 24 April 2007)



# Patiently

By Sarah-Jane Moloney

Patiently,  
I await your return,  
Pleating my hair with love knots,  
Pledging my allegiance to you.

It may seem futile, or fragile – but hair,  
They say,  
Is made of the same stuff as nails –  
And I would dig my nails into your flesh  
Until you bled  
If it meant never letting you go.

# Oh, You

By Sarah-Jane Moloney

Go on.  
Wallow in your self-pitying spite.  
Rip up my pictures.  
Luxuriate in the cloying jealousy that  
Gnaws and claws at your insides.  
Admit it, you like it.

I will not walk on your eggshells anymore.  
I will scream, stomp, crush and crunch and  
BANG goes your haywire hypersensitivity!  
How I love reminding you that  
You alone are responsible for your ruffled feathers.



## Shakespeare's Venice

### Memories of a Study Trip

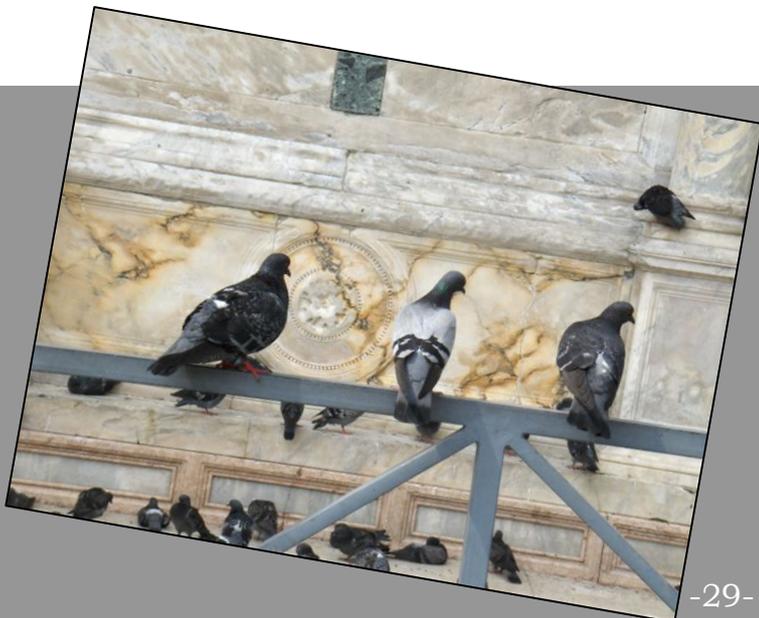
Simply a great experience! After having read Shakespeare's *Othello* and *The Merchant of Venice*, we visited the setting of these plays, namely the so called 'Queen of the Sea', Venice. We stayed on a beautiful island called *San Servolo*, where the international University of Venice is located. We had seminars in the morning and watched different film versions of the plays in the evening. The afternoons were free moments of relaxation, when we could visit the historical sites of the city, go shopping, or simply stay at the University to study.





A Shakespearean scholar from the University of Venice took us on a wonderful guided tour of places alluded to in the texts; places Shakespeare may have had in mind when writing the plays, including the Rialto and the Jewish ghetto. We also got to know friendly, studious University students from Munich who joined us for this special, unforgettable trip.

Janice



# Grouchy, Grumpy Gripes

By KJ Müller-Griffiths

Samuel Johnson was not only witty but also wise. He once wrote that “the misery of man proceeds not from any single crush of overwhelming evil, but from small vexations continually repeated.” \*

Apparently, if you want to lead a life free of daily irritations, you should become a professor (not one provided me with a gripe). However, if you're not a member of the higher academic echelons, you undoubtedly will have an axe to grind. Here are some examples of what makes our blood boil, our hackles rise and our tempers flare:

- ✎ People who overtake you on the motorway and then slow down once they're in front of you.
- ✎ People talking on their phones at full volume whilst travelling on the bus or train.
- ✎ Misspellings.
- ✎ Bus drivers who ignore you when you're pushing the button to get on and then blissfully drive off.
- ✎ People who don't answer their mobile phone, letting it ring for ages.
- ✎ People who munch their way through an enormous cone of popcorn big enough to feed the population of a Pacific island for a week whilst you're trying to watch a film.
- ✎ When you lug your umbrella around with you it never rains, yet when you've forgotten it you're soaked through in a sudden downpour.
- ✎ People who fidget constantly, making the table shake.
- ✎ People who push in.
- ✎ People who never acknowledge e-mails. Did my computer crash again? Is the addressee away, ill, dead? Is the addressee simply “an ignorant git”?
- ✎ Men who pick their noses at traffic lights. Can't they do that when no-one's looking?
- ✎ Single socks. What happens to all the single socks? Is there some black hole full of floating foot appendages?
- ✎ People who don't know how to whisper and talk loudly through a play, concert or ballet.
- ✎ Students who don't say a word in class and then give the most brilliant oral presentation.
- ✎ Women who say to their abominably behaved children in an angelic, but squeaky voice: “Non, chéri, ne touche pas. Non, ne touche pas, chéri”. Meanwhile, the brat continues to wreak havoc and all the onlookers want to at least scream or else wallop the offender.
- ✎ People who do nothing but moan all the time.

What gets your goat? Why not share it with *NOTED*? It might make you feel better...

\* Johnson, Samuel. 'The Lives of the Poets.' *Johnson: Prose and Poetry*. Ed. Mona Wilson. London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1957, p. 923.

# Test Your Knowledge!

A Quiz by Erika Scheidegger

## Part Two: Structuralism, Historicism, New Historicism and Post-Structuralism

- 1) **The origin of Structuralism is generally located in**
  - A. Russia, with the work of Vladimir Propp, in the wake of the Formalist approach, in the 1920's.
  - B. is inseparable from the politics of first wave Feminism.
  - C. Geneva, with Ferdinand de Saussure and the Geneva School shortly before 1920.
- 2) **Historicism became less popular after**
  - A. 9/11
  - B. The Second World War.
  - C. The Russian Revolution.
- 3) **New Historicists are mainly inspired by Michel Foucault's analysis of power, and how to spot its manifestations in various representations.**
  - A. true
  - B. false
- 4) **Post-structuralism is linked with**
  - A. radical politics of the 1960's.
  - B. Friedrich Nietzsche's writings.
  - C. Michel Foucault's studies on madness.
- 5) **For Saussure, linguistics is only a part of**
  - A. the science of semiology, the study of signs.
  - B. the literary field.
- 6) **For Saussure, the link between the signifier and the signified is not arbitrary.**
  - A. true
  - B. false
- 7) **Connect each brief definition with the school of thought that relates best to it:**
  - A. structuralism
  - B. historicism
  - C. new historicism
  - D. post-structuralism
  - W. a theory that appreciates almost all elements of human culture (culture understood in a broad sense) – that is from literature to cartoons to billboards; from classical music to acid jazz or hip hop; from petroglyphs to tattoos, etc - as parts of a system of signs.
  - X. a study of the links between a work of literature and events taking place at the moment it was written.
  - Y. an analysis of how “collective representational systems work in the reproduction and contestation of social powers” (Michael Ryan, *Literary Theory, a Practical Introduction* 129)
  - Z. an examination of how language and art is subject to creating indeterminacy, contingency and how it is likely to misguide the reader, thus engendering multiple meanings.
- 8) **Stephen Greenblatt, a New Historicist proponent, under-scores how many works of literature, even if they display nonconformist understandings of the world, in the end nonetheless work towards reinforcing powers in place.**
  - A. true
  - B. false



## Evaluation: Test Your Knowledge!

Count your points, allowing 1 point per correct answer.

### More than 8 points

- 1) **C** is the most widespread answer, but if you answered **A**, Bingo! Formalists were indeed also moving towards methods developed by Structuralists: particularly Vladimir Propp who scrutinized narrative morphologies, attempting to locate plot elements common to a large number of Russian fairy tales.
- 2) **B**
- 3) **Very true**
- 4) **All three are correct!**
- 5) **A**
- 6) **Very wrong indeed!** Saussure even goes to the extent of italicizing this passage from *Course in General Linguistics* when he writes “*The linguistic sign is arbitrary.*”
- 7) **A - W; B - X; C - Y ; D - Z**
- 8) **Very true indeed.**

you have probably already read Stephen Greenblatt’s *Shakespeare and the Exorcists*, Ferdinand de Saussure’s *Course in General Linguistics*, Michel Foucault’s *The Archaeology of Knowledge and Discipline and Punish*, Derrida’s *Of Grammatology*, Jean Baudillard’s *Simulacra and Simulations*, Jean-François Lyotard’s *The Postmodern Condition...* and if not, consider plunging head first into those (at places difficult, yet ô so inspiring) works.

### Less than 8 points

Why not brush up on your knowledge by perusing the following reader-friendly introductions to literary theory?

### Sources

Ryan, Michael. *Literary Theory: A Practical Introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1999.

Culler, Jonathan. *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Online, Purdue University:

<http://www.cla.purdue.edu/academic/engl/theory/index.html>

*Also contemplate reading the following anthology that can provide you with a sturdy background in literary theory:*

Rivkin, Julie and Michael Ryan. eds. *Literary Theory: an Anthology*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1998.

### Quiz in the Previous NOTED Issue:

Part One: Which School of Literary Criticism Do You Most Relate To?

# Your Star Sign Tells You...

An Astrological Book Recommendation by Gisela Zingg

Have you ever wondered why you prefer one author/subject/genre over another? And has it ever occurred to you that it might have something to do with your astrological chart? Well, why not blame your difficulty analyzing Shakespeare on the stars? Or are you on the look-out for a good and useful summer read? Let yourself be guided in your choice by the stars.



The **Aquarius** whose characteristics include reason, openness to analysis, unpredictability and unconventionality might enjoy the eccentricity of a Beckett play or an exotic novel such as Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*.



Students born under the stars of vivacious **Leo** value energy and spontaneity, and might therefore enjoy the dominant, wild nature of the heroes of Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*.



The open, imaginative, dreamy, sensitive **Pisces** can connect with love-stories of all kinds but also with Yeats' spiritual and Twilight poetry.



The curious, versatile **Gemini** finds a great deal of pleasure in the everyday conversational style of Walt Whitman.



If you are an **Aries**, you like to take the initiative and you like to conquer. *The Rape of the Lock* by Alexander Pope with its vanquishing hero might be just what you are looking for.



The reasonable **Libra** who values balance and harmony will appreciate the aesthetic beauty of Lord Tennyson's poems.



The sedentary **Taurus** who values family, home and hearth likes to immerse himself in a Bildungsroman such as Dickens' *Great Expectations* or Jane Austen's *Emma*.



The **Scorpio** who is passionate, intense, individual, and who likes dramatic situations, surely enjoys any Shakespearian tragedy.



For the earthly, practical **Virgo** let me suggest something a bit different but nevertheless interesting. What about Samuel Johnson? Perhaps his 'Preface to the Dictionary of the English language' or his 'Preface to Shakespeare'?



If you are a **Sagittarius** you value freedom; you love to travel and to engage with life. You will be satisfied by adventure stories or travelogue and might like to read Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* or Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.



The caring, protective and sensitive nature of the **Cancer** will surely respond to Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience*.



The cautious, dependable **Capricorn** who exerts a great deal of self-control will take pleasure in the rather austere short stories by E.A. Poe.

What are you waiting for? Go out and get that copy of your perfect summer read now!

# The Department's Favourite Novel

By Emma Depledge

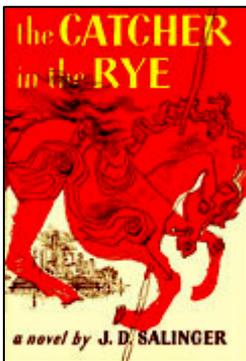
In the last issue of *NOTED* I launched a campaign to find the English Department's favourite novel of all time. Convinced that students of literature would be the best people to ask, I began my quest with a giant voting box covered in big yellow stars. I was neither mistaken, nor disappointed: your suggestions came flying in. I must admit though, this was not always the case. I spent many a morning shaking my empty box with a sad little look on my face and was about to resort to underhand tactics (such as subjecting my colleagues to feet stomping followed by 'I am the youngest...and a very long way from home, so you really ought to humour me and play my game') when a wonderful thing happened. There was a delightful rattling sound when I shook the box – the first contribution had arrived. This rattling was soon replaced by the sound of leaves rustling together. The rustling became a flutter, the flutter a flapping – the delightfully deafening sound of excited suggestions desperate to take flight. I was forced to tear the box open and set them free.

I am delighted to say that you are every bit the brilliant bibliophiles I had been hoping for and that the initial lack of contributions appears to have been the result of lengthy labours of love as you took time to nurse and nurture your fledgling ideas. Below are some of the passionate responses I received, along with the 'top three.' I look forward to hearing your comments and feedback. A warm thank you goes out to all those who took part.

## The High-Flyers

1. ***The Catcher in the Rye***  
by J.D. Salinger
2. ***The Alchemist***  
by Paulo Coelho
3. ***To Kill a Mockingbird***  
by Harper Lee

### ***The Catcher in the Rye*** by J. D. Salinger



If I had to boast the qualities of a novel, I would certainly do that with *The Catcher in the Rye* by J. D. Salinger. The book tells of a great journey in which an adolescent boy is forced to face up to the harsh reality of the world in which he lives. Through several encounters, the character is forced to take responsibility and act like a man. He wanders in the gloomy lights

of a big city and longs to act as a positive role-model for his younger sister. The reader will soon find him/herself drawn into the character's mind. This is a highly recommendable piece of work which will leave many breathless. It is fresh and sombre at the same time.  
*Fabrice Rosset*

J. D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye* is THE greatest book ever written. It summed up exactly how I felt as a teenager. I think that the books which 'speak' to you during your adolescence stay with you for life. This one will always be important to me.

[Anonymous]

The meaning of life for young people in a hostile and corrupt society is what J. D. Salinger illustrates in his novel, *The Catcher in the Rye*. Written in the fifties, the story reflects a turbulent adolescent's view of an American society in which the keywords are 'success' and 'money'. Through the character of Holden Caulfield, the sixteen year old protagonist and narrator of the novel, J. D. Salinger expresses, in colloquial language, the condition of an outcast teenager in New York City. Searching for reasons to stay in adult society, he wanders in uncertainty and anxiety before growing awfully depressed. Life is a game and playing it according to the rules is impossible in the 'phony' world of the adults. Sexuality, drunkenness and loneliness are, for adolescents like Holden, a way to search for an identity.

Stepping into society is to be ready to deal with the society, to find a way to live in it, to accept reality and to accept life as a game, a game one should play according to the rules.  
*Mélanie Bello*

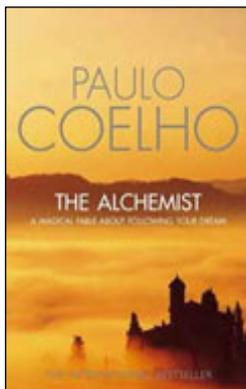
I'm so happy to be asked! I have to select *The Catcher in the Rye* as it makes me feel alive! I also adore *To Kill a Mockingbird* – I was moved to tears...and I'm a 'big tough football player'!

[Anonymous]

Definitely *The Catcher in the Rye*...need I say why?

[Anonymous]

## ***The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho**



My favourite novel is *The Alchemist* (written by Paulo Coelho), even if I appreciate many others, like *Veronica Decides to Die* or *By the River Piedra I Sat Down and Wept*. I admire the writer's style and his ability to touch his reader. His main themes are often related to the quest of identity which is an important aspect of our society. Nowadays

people are engrossed and even obsessed with their work. Therefore, they are always (or often) looking for a sense of their lives.

Although Coelho is a 'soul-writer', his style and his narrative often make people conscious of the essential. Some can probably find him moralising or even educational, but I believe that he raises our consciousness. After all, aren't we all looking for the same happiness? His representation of reality is based on a more spiritual aspect which, unfortunately, people no longer have time to explore. So I believe that Coelho's work reminds us of what we can accomplish by ourselves and through our own strength. However, I know that this book is not an academic one whose style or content we could analyse during a seminar ;-)

[Anonymous]

Coelho is a genius. His words move me beyond belief. How can I persuade you to read my favourite book? It is beautiful, profound and sensitive. I promise you will not be disappointed.

Marie

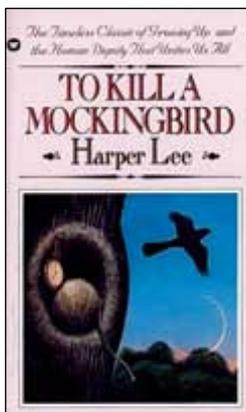
There are many interesting books about science, biology, chemistry, nature, astrology. There are many fun books. There are short ones, long ones, scary ones, boring ones. All of these types of book offer something to the reader, be it pleasure, satisfaction, knowledge, frustration etc. I respect all of the different elements and emotions which people look for in a book and so am addressing myself to those who are sensitive and in search of self-knowledge. I recommend *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho.

[Anonymous]

*The Alchemist* is a simple book that will teach you more about yourself than you can imagine. I read it four times, and each time I was discovering a new story. It is philosophical (in a low profile way), charming, interesting and calm. Paulo Coelho makes you learn about yourself by teaching you the basis of life. It is a bit like a return to innocence as we are taken on a very smart and deep path.

Lea Grammatopoulo

## ***To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee**



The story takes place during the Great Depression, in the thirties, when racism and social anxiety are rife in Alabama. Harper Lee tells us about the trial of a black man, who is wrongly accused, through the eyes of a six-year-old girl. This is probably the real genius of the book. Indeed, it is very rare to have the point of view of such a young person. It makes every fact, every action and every

word truer. Furthermore, our vision of the story becomes completely objective and spontaneous.

Therefore, the racism, intolerance and prejudice against Blacks seem absurd, unfounded and undeserved. On the other hand, Scout, a six-year-old girl, also makes us realize how normal and logical it was for people in the south of the United States to segregate the Black population at the time.

Scout's point of view is actually the point of view that we should have towards Afro-Americans. We

should be tolerant, take them for what they really are, not make any unfounded judgments, and so on.

Her father, Atticus, also represents a figure of a perfect man. He is one of the most respectable people in his town, and as his daughter, he does not have any prejudices. He tries to defend the Black man who has been wrongly accused, even though he knows that there are no possibilities to win. Racism is too present in people's minds. However, he wants to tell the truth and gives this man a chance.

*To Kill a Mockingbird* is a book with a moral. It tells us what to do or not to do by presenting us with polarized characters. We do not identify with any of them, but we support the Black man, admire Atticus' courage and sense of honesty and Scout's spontaneity. They are what many people would like to resemble. In addition to that, Harper Lee presents us the everyday life at school and in the neighbourhood. Here also, racism and intolerance transpire; features which leave us marked.

Once you have read the first page, you will be incapable of putting it down. It really is a captivating and touching story.

So ... READ IT!

Vicky Janssens



**The Neverending Story** by Michael Ende

**The Shadow of the Wind** By Carlos Ruiz Zafon

**Chocolat** By Joanne Harris

The movie based on my favourite book may well be more famous than the novel. As always, the book goes into greater detail than the film and that is why I liked it so much. It shows so clearly how seductive chocolate can be and how it changes people who try too hard to control themselves. For me, as a chocoholic, reading about chocolate's good side, instead of hearing about how unhealthy and fattening it is, is the most wonderful thing!

[Anonymous]

**Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded** By Samuel Richardson  
'coz it's dead good!

[Anonymous]

**Author, Author** By David Lodge

This book is about Henry James' failure as a playwright. It was really interesting to see the way in which the author mixes true events with fictional ones. For me, David Lodge manages to make Henry James appealing as a man, rather than as an author.

What I enjoyed most was the suspense and the hope which are evoked throughout the book. The reader gets to share in Henry James' hope that his readers and audience will finally recognise his talent as one of the best writers ever. But, instead of this, people (apart from his friends) reject and despise his work. They even humiliate him in public.

By the end of the novel, when Henry James finally dies, it is very difficult for the reader not to have fallen in love with him, and not to admire him for what he did, for his constant fight to get people to appreciate really good literature. Unfortunately, his work was too complicated for them to understand, but he got his revenge a few years after his death.

[Anonymous]

**The Women's Room** by Marylin French

My favourite novel is *the Women's Room* by Marylin French. I was very young when I first read it but even then I could grasp some of French's vision. I may not fully agree with her opinions but her story is very captivating. Some sentences are very beautifully written.

In this novel we are thrown into a very rich and exciting moment of American history. We follow the life of Mira from her youth to her marriage and its aftermath. Even if the world has changed since then, the message or vision is timeless. However, in my opinion, the author doesn't present a solution to the problems that she presents.

This book gives us an insight into what is going on in the mind of a woman. It is understandable that her views or statements may seem a bit extreme to some readers but they hold some truth. Men seem to be stick figures in this novel and they contrast with the depth of the women that we are confronted with.

But I think that there is more than a feminist statement in this novel. One hears the voices of some women who at the time seemed to be only represented in stereotypes. For example, in the character of Val we go beyond her identity as a feminist activist. We see a mother, a friend and a lover. Mira herself is not solely a mother or a divorcee.

I think that this novel must be read by everyone because of the observations and questions that the writer shows us.

There are so many approaches that we can have as we read this book. It can be considered as a simple novel or a social history, feminist propaganda (not from my point of view) or simply a study of different characters' psychological journeys.

[Anonymous]

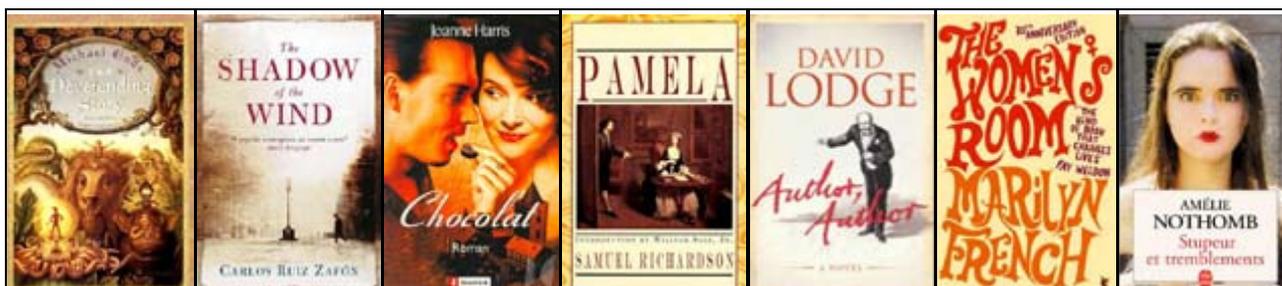
**Stupeur et Tremblements** By Amélie Nothomb

People have already heard a lot of rumours about Japan and its people. Nobody says the same thing and most of the time it happens to be an invention or a mistake about a Chinese restaurant. In this text we read the impressions of someone who really went there and tried to discover the culture by herself. Her former experience of Japan as a little child only gave her some phantasms which won't last long against reality.

It would already be interesting like that, but there is something which makes this text better. Amélie Nothomb chose to focus only on the worst part of modern Japanese society, the world of business, and she explains it in a very atypical way. Where most European people would have given up with disgust, Amélie Nothomb seems to feel euphoria during her superior's ridiculous rage and analyses their behaviour with calm and sometimes admiration in spite of all the humiliations she suffers.

Throughout the text, Amélie Nothomb describes in a hilarious manner the actions of every employee of the Yumimoto Company and her incredible imagination leads to a lot of surprising situations. Although she seems to be in very disagreeable positions, she often speaks of things with detachment as if she weren't concerned and considered herself as a thing which creates reactions by her inaction. Each character is fascinating; the despotic superior of the superior takes on a comic appearance to the reader, while the untouchable big boss in his great kindness is compared to God. It is even so amazing that we finally don't know if she added her writing skills to colour an astonishing reality or if she invented some part of her story.

Romain Bajulaz



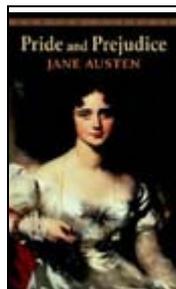
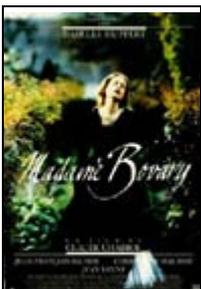
## **Saturday** by Ian McEwan

This brilliant thriller, set in the heart of London in 2003, is full of topical material. The story is about a neurosurgeon faced with all the difficulties the 21<sup>st</sup> century can bring, especially the development of society in rich countries. In those times, the war in Iraq is impending, life is ruled and transformed by science (he is in a good position to know about that), the individual lives like a king at the expense of the community and the reason of the stronger is newsworthy everywhere. In this stressful atmosphere, the surgeon also has to face personal problems with his family and, realising he is growing older, he questions himself and his whole life. As a reader we follow this inner questioning throughout the neurosurgeon's daily life. The action is focussed around one day and on one single character. This technique prompts the readers to read quickly, making them feel as if they have been plunged into the middle of this agitated world.

The auscultation of our society is done very accurately by the author and the result is brilliant. Cutting right through the problematic organisation of our modern world, Ian McEwan does not try to come up with answers here. It is just a way to denounce the actual way of life in the rich countries that lead the economical and political world. He isn't claiming that he is better than everyone and has the solutions. We are all living in this society and if we don't accept the rules we become marginal and cannot do anything about these problems. In fact, we are all imprisoned in the system and forced to follow it. But with some texts, like this one, that I agree is total fiction but a fiction that is fully inspired by the reality and its frame, it is possible to make people conscious of their ability to change things or just to be conscious of problems which are rising every day. But this novel isn't here to convince people to make demonstrations in the streets and become activists overnight. McEwan, using an inverted zoom effect by beginning to talk about the individual in order to then make generalizations, is very careful about making such generalizations. He lets the reader judge whether he wants to interpret the book in that way, or not. By telling us the life of an ordinary man, the author, with great skill, leads us to think about the concerns regarding our world.

In my opinion, this book is so great because it speaks to me about changing the world and making it turn round. When I was a child, I always had utopian thoughts that once I have a good job, I will be able to solve some injustices throughout the world. And now I often think that young people have to do something so that the world won't go crazy tomorrow. In this thoughtful book you can also identify with the traits of the different characters. All those elements give the reader a new vision, certainly sweetened by its fictional point of view, but this breath of fresh air on such recent events is good to read for pleasure and for self questioning.

Sophie Badoux



## **The Bell Jar** by Sylvia Plath

It will be difficult for me to choose only one book out all of the ones which have affected me, but I think I would have to go for the *Bell Jar* by Sylvia Plath. I read this book for the first time three years ago, after studying her poems. I was hoping to find an answer but I still cannot resolve the mystery and complexity of the 'writer/narrator.' The key that I was (and still am) looking for in that book in order to have access to the writer's 'world' is still missing. I may be looking for the wrong thing. However, this book gave me the tools necessary to understand today's world and I would recommend it to anyone who wants to enter another world without leaving this one.

[Anonymous]

## **Madame Bovary** by Gustave Flaubert.

'*Un livre sur rien*': this short sentence is one of the most clichéd topoi governing the restricted circle of French literature. This slogan, flag of a whole Bovary movement, has also been used by the book's author, Gustave Flaubert, but he probably wasn't expecting his innocent opinion to become part of his well-known *Dictionnaire des Idées Reçues* (*Dictionary of Received Ideas*). It is, in fact, one of the most utterly false opinions to be spread in the minds of critical readers. Indeed, against this mischievous prejudice, it appears clear to an attentive reader that *Madame Bovary* stands at the pinnacle of ardent works, mingling the erotica of mysticism and the stubborn platitudes of provincial life. Gustave Flaubert does not narrate the story of an illusioned, selfish, petite bourgeoisie, stifling in the triflings of a dwarfed life; he narrates the story of style, of aesthetics. Rather than a narrative of events, he prefers events which happen to affect the narrative itself: his writing process is nothing but a struggling labour, an ascetic solitude devoted to creativity. It is for this reason that we should consider *Madame Bovary* to be one of the most pregnant/fruitful novels ever written.

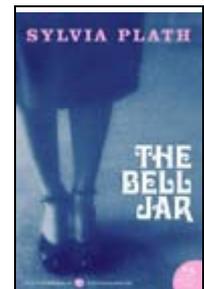
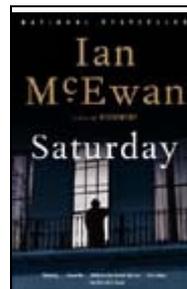
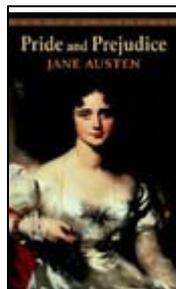
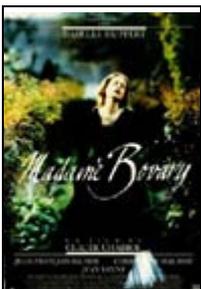
Léonard Zumstein

## **Pride and Prejudice** by Jane Austen

My favourite English novel would probably be *Pride and Prejudice*. For me it is the best book ever because it has everything in it. It contains irony, fun, suspense and, of course, romance. I first read it when I was fourteen and absolutely loved it. I would like to stress the fact that I read it before seeing the BBC's version featuring Colin Firth (which, by the way, is the best adaptation of the novel).

Mr. Darcy is the best character ever imagined. In my opinion, he is the perfect man in every way. However, reading this book can give you unrealistic expectations about love. It can also lead to uncharacteristically weird behaviour, such as naming your pet Fitzwilliam Darcy, which will make people think you are crazy (trust me, I know!)

Gabrielle Dayer



### **The Dead Souls** by Nikolai Gogol

Gogol is the best. He is the best writer of the Russian world. And his most fabulous novel has to be *The Dead Souls*. When you first open this little blue book and read the first three words, you feel like dropping it. But, with a bit of courage, you keep holding it in your hands and by the end of the first chapter nothing is as it used to be. You look through the window and, instead of seeing a big, grey building, you are transported into a big, white, endless field with a forest containing three little houses which appear to have been empty for years.

Gogol makes you live the story and you nearly become one of the characters. Maybe I feel this way because of my origins, but I am quite sure that this is not the only reason. Russia has never been a pleasant country to live in and people are always scared. Gogol could not write the full names of his characters because it would have been far too dangerous. By the time you have read the fifth chapter, you become afraid that one of your family members may die without reason. You become Russian and your feelings are divided between an ugly side of Russia, where fear is always present, and Russia's beautiful culture and civilization. But do not believe that Russia is an awful country – it is far from that.

If you have not already read this novel, then you really ought to.

Sibylle Heelein

### **Nine Princes in Amber** by Roger Zelazny

This is the story of a man who searches his identity and purpose in life. Having lost his memory, Corwin goes through life searching for something, but he does not know what. When he finds out that he has amnesia, his world changes through his remembering his true self; but his character is now multidimensional and he no longer sees everything from one point of view.

His situation reminds me of today's society. People, like me, have the feeling that they are lost, that they are searching for something definite, but which refuses to come into focus. They realize that it is their true self they are searching for, and only in finding it may they find their purpose in life.

I adore this book because it is a story that reminds me of myself and of the traps that exist because we only see things from one point of view. Corwin finds his purpose, so I too have hope.

Maria L. Schneider

### **Meet Me Under the Ombu Tree** by Santa Montefiore

If I were to choose my favourite out of all the novels I have read, it would probably be Santa Montefiore's

*Meet Me Under the Ombu Tree*. Now, one could ask why I have chosen a relatively unknown novel. The answer is quite simple: it contains all the elements that make a novel a good one. *Meet Me Under the Ombu Tree* is the story of two cousins, a boy and a girl, of course, who grew up together on the family farm. This farm will come to represent the place in which a forbidden love story between the teenage cousins, who refuse to admit their feelings for one another, began.

One day, Santi (the boy) decides to leave his country, Argentina, in order to accomplish higher studies in the USA. During his absence, his cousin manages to set aside her feelings for him. They both live their lives – adventure and action guaranteed – until Santi decides to return to Argentina. The reunion of the two souls unleashes very strong feelings, marking the beginning of their 'forbidden love'. As in every good novel, the silent lovers meet with more hindrances than luck.

Once their secret is discovered, all hell breaks loose. Their parents decide to separate them. Santi stays in Argentina but the girl is sent to Europe. Will their love remain long enough to unite these two souls? Or will time have the upper hand and suppress young love? There is only one way to find out!

Inès Mourant

### **Of Mice and Men** by John Steinbeck

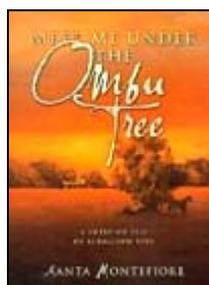
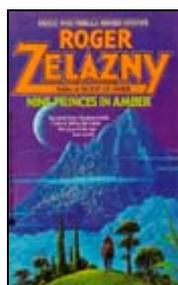
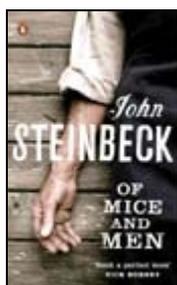
Whenever I watch a movie I always go for the heavy, harrowing and touching ones... I like the feeling of the knot in my tummy as the tears well up in my eyes! I have always wanted to read a novel capable of giving me this feeling of deep emotion, but when I concentrate on the words they never seem to touch me in the same, profound way.

When I read *Of Mice and Men* I was blown away by Steinbeck's writing, by the way he describes such things as the sun shining on dust through the window of a room. It is such a common thing, yet the author's words make it seem so beautiful and striking.

I read the end of the novel in a crowded school, surrounded by noisy students, but when I read that 'the shot echoed in the valley', I could hear it in the non-existent silence around me. These words, meaning that George had killed Lennie, brought tears to my eyes. They are just a few simple words, but the death which remains unsaid touched me more profoundly than any 'book death' ever. *Of Mice and Men* is the only book I have read in which insignificant details are described whilst dramatic events are left unsaid.

I was young when I first came across this book, but its power still affects me after all these years. A must-read!

Alexandra Borgeaud



### **The Hours** by Michael Cunningham

As I have to name one novel I liked, one book I preferred, one story I could recommend, I would say *The Hours*, written, rather recently, by Michael Cunningham. His novel is inspired by *Mrs. Dalloway* (written by Virginia Woolf) and explores its characters by placing them in three different centuries. What I found extremely interesting in this novel is how three women living in three different centuries, in three different places, can be bound together by the same book.

The narrative tells Virginia Woolf's story during the writing of *Mrs. Dalloway* through her psychic malady. Years later, a second woman reads this book and is almost submerged by the marvellous story of Mrs. Dalloway. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Mrs. Dalloway, a woman living with her girlfriend in America, lives her life quietly.

Three women, three different stories, three different centuries, but one book, or rather one name (Mrs. Dalloway) which binds them through their lives and their problems.

I've been fascinated, in reading this novel and analysing it, by its originality and overall by the links these women can share through time. Every thought, every object, every single aspect of the characters and their environment symbolizes something of their own character and is important to the comprehension of them. And finally, one could easily identify with each character for each can be seen to represent one part of us.

Good reading!

Note: I also recommend the film *The Hours* with Nicole Kidman and Meryl Streep... which is a good representation of the novel. [Anonymous]

### **Breath, Eyes, Memory** by Edwidge Danticat

*Breath, Eyes, Memory* is a novel about a young Haitian girl who migrates to New York. The young lady lived with her grandmother in Haiti until she was sent to live with her mother in New York. The topics of the novel are very interesting. They include issues such as immigration problems, racism and cultural differences. The topic of love is also treated with a great deal of sensitivity. The evolution of this girl, in a foreign country which she will eventually come to view as her own, reflects the stories

of many people in the United States of America. This novel shows how difficult it is to live in another country and at the same time keep your own culture. The novel also shows the evolution of the relationship between a child and the mother she doesn't really know, as Sophie has to live with her mother and attempt to work out who she is. It is the story of a child who discovers the awful reality about her unknown father.

To sum up, these topics are developed with such simplicity and sensitivity that the novel evokes a number of emotions. Laetitia Abdoolraman

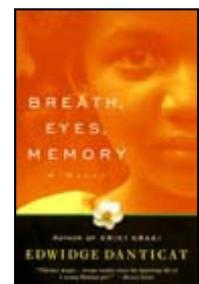
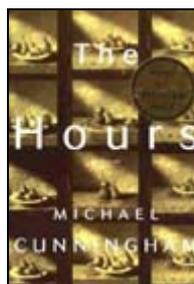
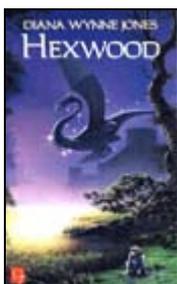
### **Hexwood** By Diana Wynne Jones

The overwhelming profusion of books that have been published, edited, re-published, translated etc. can very well make the mind balk. Even more so if one has to choose the 'ultimate pearl' amidst the vast selection available. I have gone through a list of the books that have affected me most and have boiled it down to three titles: *Hexwood* by Diana Wynne Jones, *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury and *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman* by Laurence Sterne.

*Hexwood* is a childhood favourite. Whenever I think of it a dreamy atmosphere of cup-cakes and rainbow sprinkles invades my mind. Any piece of work which makes one feel good just by thinking of it is definitely worthy of a top-ten place among my books. As you read *Hexwood*, the story comes alive in your hands, characters unfold and the twisted plot unravels. When I first read this book I identified with the main character because, like me at the time, she is a teenage girl. Even now, as an adult, I am able to identify with her. Everyone was young once and that part of our lives never really goes away. The main character represents a fractured reflection of one's former self.

For all the likeability of the characters, the most appealing aspect of *Hexwood* is its plot. A children's book it may be, but it does not take the reader for a simpleton. It forces echoes, and what can be better than travelling back down memory lane for a moment, viewing your childhood self through a young protagonist in a thought-provoking plot?

Elsa Carron



# Hide and Seek

Anonymous

Come away now,  
Tip-toe hastily, treading softly,  
Don't let it hear the direction of your movement,  
For this time there will be no mercy,  
For this time the play is on lethal finality.

Quickly, quickly!  
If only time weren't as scarce,  
The carpet swallows the sound of  
your hasty feet,  
But your breathing, heavy under despair.

You try to oppress it,  
Only to take a deep breath,  
Fill your lungs with life again,  
Air rushing,  
It seems the walls are reflecting the echo.

And the heart, pounding, racing,  
Blood rushing through your head,  
Noisily as the river of the underworld,  
Filled with wailing waste.  
Your veins vibrating with the essence of life,  
On your neck,  
Climbing the side of your head,  
Hot, blushing your skin.

And your hands, tingle with trembling  
At such high frequency,  
The air must be transmitting your pitch,  
United to sing of your presence,  
When It is only counting to hunt you down.

Now you have reached the stairs,  
Descend into complete darkness,  
Submerging your appearance.

Maybe It won't find you there,  
Maybe you won't have to see It  
When It finds you.

But how to step down these stairs,  
When vertical movement is such a friend,  
To impact, to the generation of sound,  
Blurting out the testimony of your direction,  
Leaving a trace that you have been there.

Trying to avoid this treacherous friendship,  
Revealing your feet, betraying your life,  
In carefulness you seek noiselessness,  
In consciousness of your movement  
And seemingly audacious strategy,  
You hope to succeed in auditive invisibility.

Lower and lower, step by step,  
You descend below earth's surface,  
And hope that she will keep you well,  
Save you, preserve you, hide you,  
Six feet under,  
Where the crawling is eager to meet you.

Underneath the staircase,  
You hide,  
As you used to when stakes were low,  
Slowly pull your knees to your chest,  
Magnetic,  
Maybe your head is save  
between your kneecaps.

And as you breathe down into filth,  
You feel your blood,  
Filling your cheeks,  
Pulsating with the rhythm of your heart,  
Sending waves through the musty air.

Soaked by complete darkness,  
In this embryonic prenatal position,  
Ready to be reborn into safety,  
Once It has missed you,  
And forever left for nowhere.

One thousand and one,  
Marco Polo,  
The count has stopped,  
Claws are starting to dig into carpet,  
Rip out its intestines,  
Leaving a trace of scorched ground.

Subtle movements upstairs,  
Smelling noisily,  
Who would hide in the bright daylight.

It knows its prey well,  
That in hiding,  
it searches for cover,  
Somehow hopes that its predator will fear the  
darkness as well.

Steps on the stairs,  
One after the other,  
With a slow ripping sound,  
Fabric being torn,  
As sharp claws dig into it,  
Leave it while still attached.

You think you can feel its breath now,  
It's cold like death,  
Marco Polo,  
It is so close, you fear its breath will bounce off you,  
And betray you,  
You have become paranoid of living,

A mouth opens from the dark,  
With a brief flash,  
The brown teeth reflect your paralysis,  
Suddenly your face is gone,  
A moment of pain and it's all over.

Falling through the ground,  
As your corpse is dedicated a last feast,  
Having become the main course,  
Twelve feet under,  
You did not have to see It.

# Dive

Anonymous

I drink from your memory again,  
Thoughts of images softly crawl down my dry throat,  
Reach my insides, fill up the bleeding emptiness,  
Float inside my veins, warming up my blood again,  
Bring beautiful pictures (in)to my head,  
Can almost sense your presence now,  
Feel the taste of your skin close to me,  
Like the incense you have laid haze upon my senses,  
Inhale the sweet fragrance of your hair,  
Wish I could feel you breathe now,  
Whisper for the night to bring you near,  
So you could calm the screams of my restless heart,  
The blue haze of emptiness burns my eyes,  
Shadows thirst for my clear tears,  
Yours is not on the wall, reflection alone,  
Breathe, this air still tastes just like you,  
Deep, sink into dark-blue dreamworlds of your eyes,  
And suddenly my skin feels your touch,  
Now I must be there, shadows kiss,  
Softly taste your neck, feel you breathe,  
Your presence surrounds me like warm summerwaters,  
Beautifully drown as our glances cross in candlelight,  
You take me so deep into the ocean of beauty,  
My dreams forget the morning at the surface,  
Here in your arms, I dream farther away from the world,  
Just don't let reality wake us up yet,  
Breathe in, taste your skin once more,  
Leave me floating at the surface.



# A Blast from the Past: the ADEA Party

By KJ Müller-Griffiths

On Thursday 15th March the ADEA finally got its act together and organized a party at “La Datcha.” Admittedly, the locale was not quite in the heart of Geneva’s vibrant clubbing centre. In fact, it reminded me more of the “Centre for Soviet-German Friendship” – a jazz joint I visited over 20 years ago when I was an exchange student in the German Democratic Republic. Although “location, location, location” may well be the mantra of commercial enterprises, the setting is practically irrelevant when it comes to a good party – and it was a great party.



Beer and wine flowed freely, the booze was plentiful and gratis. However, if you wanted a non-alcoholic beverage - for the mugs like me who had to drive home - you were kindly requested to pay a small contribution. This was not in a bid to encourage students of English literature to follow in the footsteps of great literary alcoholics. Apparently, no liquid stimulants were allowed to be sold. With the cunning of Shakespeare’s Portia, the ADEA discovered the loophole: alcohol

could be consumed, but not sold. Eureka, the problem was solved!

The groove was provided by three talented DJs: Eggman, Christophe and Conrad. I was dreading being blasted with Techno, House or the latest “noise.” However, it was with great relief that I discovered that young students love the music of the 80s, the zenith of my disco-dancing days. I could even look quite cool as I sang along to all the songs – the re-makes might seem quite recent to you but I knew the originals! I was not alone in my geriatric gyrating. Despite being a relatively discrete group within the student body, the mature students came out in force to relive their bygone glories. In fact, where were you? Why didn’t you take advantage of the occasion “to get into the groove”, “to hustle”, “to rock and roll”?

Honestly, young people don’t have any get up and go – it must have already got up and gone! Support your ADEA, let your hair down with friends and enjoy these carefree years at university before real life strikes back!

I would like to offer my thanks to all the students and assistants who dedicated their time and effort in the organization of a very successful evening. Thanks must be given to all those who sacrificed their evening, propping up the bar, on both sides of this important divide. When’s the next get-together? You can certainly count me in.



# ADEA News

By Kristijan Marinkovic

Dear students of the English Department!

Are you ready for some news from your student association? I guess the best way to start would be to thank everyone who came to our last party at La Datcha; the people are what makes a good merrymaking possible! I would also like to send out a very special thank you to our extremely talented trio of DJs, namely Conradin, Dominic, and Christophe. Last, but not least, Michael Rööslü deserves ADEA's gratitude for his precious assistance with publicizing the event. Everyone in the ADEA committee is really happy that this first party turned out well and that people had such fun!

It inspired us to go back to the drawing board and organize another party just like it. So, without further ado, I would like to invite all students, friends of students, and those who feel like students, to...



## Our next ADEA Party!



**At La Datcha  
On Friday  
1<sup>st</sup> June 2007  
Starting at 8 p.m.**

For those of you who attended the last event, you can expect a similar kind of thing, only ten times better... For those of you who are still unacquainted with ADEA parties, you can expect lots of English students, thumping music of all kinds, a friendly barmaid, and no exam requirements! See you all soon,

Kristijan Marinkovic  
ADEA member

## Inspired by Practical Language Courses

Passionate, inspirational, sometimes controversial, but never dull, the following contributions come from some of our wonderful first-year students!

These five texts are based on the practical language courses taught at the Department. They were originally written assignments which the

students then edited and offered for publication in our newsletter. A little note at the end of each essay briefly indicates the context from which the essay arose. We would like to thank the students who chose to share and exchange their idea through *NOTED*.

Enjoy!

## Why Places Are Important in People's Lives

By Sayaka Hanyu

"Talk, listen, watch, read, write to anyone, anywhere in the world without worrying about cost, distance or time", says the slogan promoting for Skype, a piece of software that makes it possible for you to call for free anyone who has installed it. With communication tools like mobile phones, Internet or Web cameras, the access to any information, visual, acoustic, written, spoken, static or moving, has today become worldwide unlimited. The so-called "virtual reality" moves deeper and deeper into our "real" life. Developing the technical means, the modern age has also developed an impression of ubiquity. Nevertheless, a human being is still a human being and hence does not have such power at his disposal.

As human beings, we are made of a set of three inexorable units, the body, the intellect and the heart, which permit us for example to live, to think and to feel. As long as those abilities are fundamental to our existence, the abstraction of place and time cannot be made, simply because we live somewhere in a three-dimensional world at a certain moment. Humans

have seen sense in drawing maps and establishing calendars. Throughout history, it has seemed necessary to create bearings and reference points, to situate oneself. It is certainly not by chance if we hear today most people starting their conversation with the question "Where are you?" on the mobile phone. Or if we look someone up in a dictionary of biography, the first given data about a person are the name, the place and the date of his or her birth and death.

When certain memories come to mind, we often remember images, impressions, feelings or words. We generally pay more attention to the place, which is concrete and visionable than the moment, abstract and invisible. However, it is the intrinsic relation between place and time which plays a significant role in the human's world and conceptions of life. Place is the support on which time reposes.

This discussion is inspired by the opening pages of Adam Nicolson's book *Sea Room: an Island Life*. Nicolson owns a group of three small islands in the Outer Hebrides of Scotland. His book is a vivid description and history of the islands, showing the important place these islands have occupied in his life.

# Turner's Colours

By Eliza Filip

I like to travel and I like to paint. I know that I'm not like everyone else and this is why most of them don't understand my feelings. The only one that could understand me, my desire to leave the crowds behind and stride out in wide open spaces was Tom Girtin. He had the same love and admiration for nature as I have. If he had lived, I would have had a friend... or maybe not... perhaps my desire to outdo him would have stifled our friendship.

And now I'm here, alone, with my canvas and my own thoughts; away from all other human beings, in the heart of nature. My boat drifts along, carried by the glittering waves and the sky seems to be a cover of light, like the dome of a cathedral placed on the surface of the sea. I feel dwarfed by the immensity of the sky. I wish I could express this feeling in my painting.

This time I'll draw the horizon very low; the sea below will be a greenish stripe while the sky above the horizon will occupy the whole rest of the canvas. I am charmed by this dazzling sky! If the interior of a cathedral's dome is painted with a multitude of figures, this dome of light is also painted with an infinite number of colours and pale shades and the clouds have different forms, continuously changing; but what I like most about them is that the rays of the sun colour them in such an exquisite way! I could paint those clouds that surround the sun with a pale yellow and the sky behind them with a pale orange. The sun will soon sink beneath the horizon and this image will be one of a sunset. I will use therefore the colours of a sunset: I can use more yellow and ochre and I can also drip some scarlet into the navy blue areas of the sea, right in the corner where it meets the land. These dark colours will emphasize the brightness of the sky which still illuminates the surface of the water at these late hours of the dying day.

There is a beautiful ship approaching, sliding on a sea of glass, clear as crystal. What a spectacular view! Every blue and grey splash of the sky reflects in the sea as

if it were a mirror. I wonder if anyone else knows that there are so many colours and nuances of colours that can be used to paint the sky at sunset. I use pastel colours and vivid colours as well. I use a light blue right from the beginning to cover the whole surface of the sky. Then I add darker blues, turquoise and navy; I use bluish white and greenish white for the clouds, then a pale yellow and dark yellow, ochre and even a dark brown. I use purple and mauve between the clouds, where the cold colours meet the warm colours; and I also trace some touches of pink from one cloud to another, to suggest the direction of a beam. Lastly, I use white for the brightest areas of the landscape, such as the sun, which I surround with a fiery orange.



I sometimes ask myself what people will say about me after I die. I suppose that if they say "Turner was a landscape painter!" they will be right and they don't need to say many other things, because my paintings will speak for me. They reflect my being, my whole life; they are a proof that my life is not tarnished, but full of colour. My paintings will last through time as evidence that I am a great admirer of nature.

This creative text is an imagined extract from the painter J. M. W. Turner's travel diaries. They were inspired by David Hill's article 'Turner the Traveller' in *The Countryman* magazine about the painter's travels through Europe. The next essay is a different approach to the same assignment.

## Switzerland “Brünig Pass” Monday, November 6<sup>th</sup> 1843

By Anja Siouda

We finally arrived at the “Brünig Pass”. The way up from “Giswil” had been quite harsh and somewhat disappointing. Sitting on top of our diligence, I had been admiring the surrounding mountains already covered with snow, when, just at the moment we arrived at top of the pass in the early afternoon, a heavy chilly fog swallowed the marvellous view I had enjoyed before. We were forced to make a stop in this isolated area at an altitude of more or less 3500 feet. One of the horses of our four-horse team had lost a shoe from its front left hoof and started limping. Obviously it seemed to be a rather long-term affair to find a blacksmith or at least a farmer willing to shape a new horseshoe and fit it on the horse’s hoof. That’s why I decided to leave my Swiss cabman and guide alone to busy himself with the solution of that problem.

My sketchbook squeezed under my arm, I started walking a few hundred feet on the pass, but soon chose to amble on a track turning off to the right and leading me straight down to the edge of a forest of deciduous trees and firs. As soon as I entered it, its shadowy darkness overwhelmed me and made me feel oppressed, but I went on all the same. Suddenly I realised why I had such a strange sensation. There were huge stone blocks lying around in front of me, my path just meandering around them and around the majestic firs grown in between. I had seen something like this before, some weeks ago, when I made a painting of “Goldau”, the little town situated in central Switzerland, which had been buried under an unimaginable quantity of rocks, shattered trees and masses of mud when the top part of the “Rossberg” (literally Horse Mountain, that’s my guide’s translation) slid and crashed down in 1806.



Joseph Mallord William Turner, 'Goldau' (Switzerland)

Almost forty years later, the rare survivors still remember the catastrophe as if it had happened an hour before, and their scars, even if they weren’t as visible as the scars that will rest in the landscape of “Goldau”, will linger in their minds until doomsday. So I found myself experiencing the same feeling I had had while painting the valley blighted by these barren rocks, and recalling this, while I was ambling on the small path, just gave me goose pimples again. How many times had I been frightened but also awestruck by the fierce force of nature, the most unpredictable and indomitable wildness of the holy creation? I couldn’t say, but I know that both the breathtaking beauty and the merciless cruelty of nature will always inspire me. That’s why I continued my modest excursion round these stone blocks until I reached a clearing, where I encountered two men who apparently had just started to fell a thick fir with a rusty wood-saw. I gave them a smile and a greeting in English, but they looked as startled as if I had been a kangaroo. I didn’t even try to engage them in conversation. I still haven’t learnt anything of the Swiss-German dialect because my Swiss guide is so keen to practise his English with me. I just continued smiling, passed by and climbed onto one of those rocks scattered

nearby in the clearing, opened my sketchbook and sat down on the rock whose sharp edges were softened by the green moss grown over it. The two men had been observing me, but when they noticed me reaching for my sketchbook and my pencil, they smiled with a sort of relieved understanding and went on sawing their trunk.

The clearing afforded an interesting view onto the surroundings, so I began sketching them, almost unconsciously noticing the nippy air filled with the smell of a distant wood fire, the spiciness of the resin and the odour of the two men's sweat. Half an hour later, the trunk began to wobble and finally crashed down, slightly heaving up and down as if breathing its last on the springy grass. While the two men started lopping off the branches with their axe, I just imagined how different it might have been when the trees had been shattered by the landslide. Not half an hour, but just a few seconds must it have taken the trees to be rooted out and shattered like matchsticks by crashing rocks thundering downward and deadening the cries of the terrified humans in the valley.

A call from the two men snapped me out of my thoughts. They were having a rest and apparently invited me to share some food with them. They were now smiling brightly at me and made me understand that they wanted to have a look at my sketches. I don't know if they really liked them, but anyhow, they offered me some wine and a piece of cheese at least as hard as the stone blocks (without the softening moss, unless you consider the greenish mouldy rind as something like that...) and for a second I really wished to be a kangaroo with a pouch to slip the stony cheese imperceptibly into so as not to offend my hosts. A rather different experience, I thought, nothing in common with the delicious cheese fondue I had been offered by those inhabitants of the Valais

a few months ago. And anyway, there's a saying here, which goes as my guide once translated it, "Don't look into the mouth of a horse offered to you". (I actually recognized our English saying "Don't look a gift-horse in the mouth", and I had to stop myself laughing, because my guide seemed very proud of his own translation). So, of course, I didn't make any comment on their cheese, but just expressed my gratitude for their hospitality. Although they couldn't understand a single word of what I was saying, they laughed loudly, patted me on the back and gave me a strong handshake when I finally indicated to them, making signs with my hands, that I had to return to my diligence on top of the pass.

When I had made my way back to the diligence, I found my guide waiting impatiently for me. He had managed to discover a farmer willing to shape the new horseshoe and we could have continued our journey immediately, but he gave me a broad smile and said to me 'You must be very hungry, and so am I. I could eat a horse. Look what I've bought from the farmer, a local speciality' and he laid a whole cheese with a faintly greenish rind onto my knees.

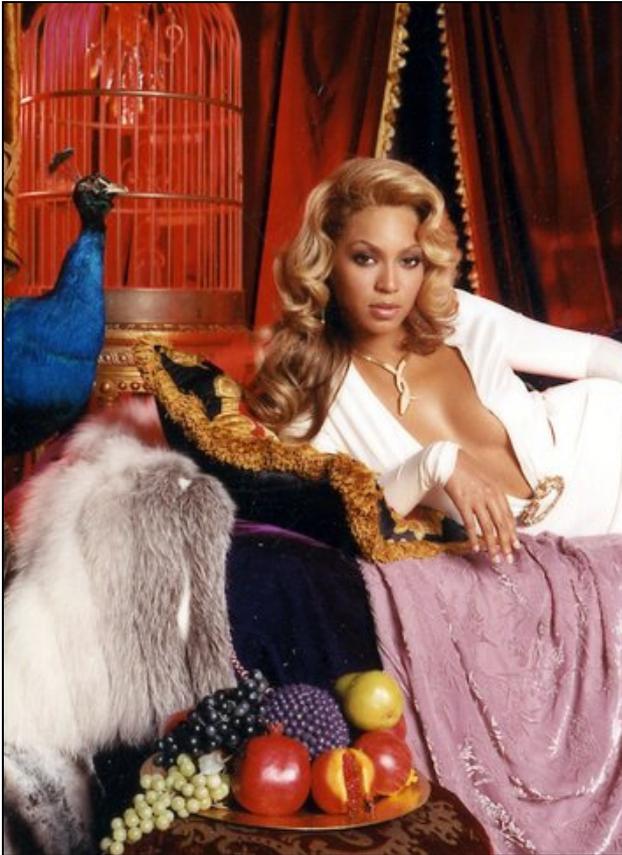


Joseph Mallord William Turner,  
The Brunig Pass from Meiringen (Switzerland)

This creative text is an imagined extract from the painter J. M. W. Turner's travel diaries. They were inspired by David Hill's article 'Turner the Traveller' in *The Countryman* magazine about the painter's travels through Europe. The previous essay is a different approach to the same assignment.

# The Music of Terrorism

Léonard Zumstein on Mechanisms of the American Music Industry



Beyoncé: a new Odalisque?

America has always had a talent for trade. Especially for exportation. 1944: in the time of WWII, America sent troops and weapons, to help save Europe from the Nazi-Fascist Axis embodied by Hitler. In a parallel direction, America sent its culture, that is to say, music, movies, ways of clothing, and so on. A *come-to-naught* Europe was hence at the same time rebuilding and Americanizing itself in the 50's.

2001: the situation completely reversed. From the worldwide great Power, America is transformed into a frightened nation, haunted by the specter of terrorism. First thing to do: to designate a common enemy, bluntly consisting in Arabic nations, also charmingly called the 'Axis of Evil'.

The political reversal brings under scrutiny a cultural one. Indeed, America seems – this time – to be importing the culture of its enemy into its own culture. Let us consider the extremely fast development of R'n'B, of which Beyoncé is the appointed 'muezzin.' Indeed, oriental violins, Arabic productions and belly dances, that Scheherazade herself would not have ventured to sketch, are now flourishing. Who would have thought that America would one day become the shrine of Arabic culture, the harem of musical styles?

Why? Why would America adopt the music of its enemies? First of all, the recuperation of *this music of terrorism* appears as a recuperation of the strange – even *barbarous* – nature of America's opponents (cf. ancient Greek βαρβαρος: one who does not come from Greece). Indeed, America has discovered a new world, in which the American way of thinking does not monopolize cultural space. For a great Power, that crowns it all! This *Arabization* also answers an urgent need of domesticating American fears of terrorism, now associated with the Arabic world. Taming its own nightmares is the only way to calm down the fears of a nation hit in its very epicenter. Finally, to spill the beans, let's confess that this Arabization allows the American music industry to make profits out of it, by the discovery of intact cultural material. I told you that America had a talent for trade.

This text is a provocative review of the work of the contemporary R'n'B artist Beyoncé. It was inspired by an equally provocative review 'The last word in necrophilia', by Mark Lawson in *The Guardian* newspaper, in which the author condemns posthumous completion of unfinished works of art by third parties as 'necrophilia.'

# Heaven Channel 1,2,3

By Anja Siouda

God's sitting in his favourite rocking-chair, watching the current news broadcast from Heaven Channel 1, when Archangel Gabriel turns up, smoothly moving his delicate wings.

'Hi Gabriel, how are you tonight?'

'Oh just the usual aches and pains, my Lord, nothing serious. What about you? You look a bit off-colour.'

'I'm feeling quite nauseous,' God sighs. 'Just have a look at what's going on downstairs. It makes your feathers stand on end. It's a real nightmare! I'm fed up with all the torturing, murdering, slaughtering, raping, starving to death and so on of the most innocent people.'

'Why don't you switch to another channel then?' Gabriel stoically suggests.

'You mean HC 2? It's just the same trash, I'll show you.'

Snapping his fingers, God picks the channel broadcasting the news from the north half of the planet. Together they silently watch what's being displayed on the screen: stressed people dying from heart attacks or cancers, depressed humans jumping to death off a bridge, people being executed on electric chairs, others quietly walking to the gallows...

'My Lord, may I ask you a question?'

'Of course, my dear Gabriel.'

'Have the humans ever asked your permission to behave in this manner, to kill each other or themselves?'

'Are you kidding? You really ask me the right questions to put the roses back into my cheeks! You know as well as I do that most of them don't even believe in me anymore!'

'Are you sure? Let's have a look at my favourite series on HC 3,' Gabriel says and touches the screen fleetingly with one of his wings. More depressing footage appears, showing a man lying in a hospital bed, his body connected to a lot of

sophisticated looking devices, a man who can only just manage to move his eyes.

'What's the matter with that fellow?' God asks, feeling a little bit ashamed because his servant seems to be better informed than himself.

'He's waiting for his death. He *wants* to die, because he has not been able to move or even breathe on his own since an accident that occurred to him 30 years ago. He has asked his government to help him die.'

'Oh, I'm sure they'll go along with that,' God comments, demonstrating a striking naivety in Gabriel's eyes. 'Even when it comes to their pets they can't stand watching them suffering and so they take them to the vet to have them put down... and then they pick up another pet.'

'I'm afraid, you're wrong, my Lord, with all due respect. The lawyers of that country claim that it isn't up to them, but up to *you*, to make the decision about his death.'

'Up to *me*? Their hypocrisy really drives me to despair! They never bother about me, but when they don't want to take responsibility for their own lives, then I'm welcome. In some countries with corrupt dictatorial governments killing perfectly healthy people or even young children in any cruel manner is common practice. It doesn't upset anybody, it's just trivial. But when it comes to delivering suffering elderly people or badly physically disabled people who have clearly expressed their desire to die, this is considered as a crime? For heaven's sake...', God lets out an almighty sigh. 'What's the world coming to?'

'So, why don't you intervene, my Lord? I'm sure it's just a matter of...'

'...*What?*' God asks in return, suddenly jumping up from his rocking-chair and laughing bitterly. Then he adds, with a rather frightening undertone in his voice, '*What* would you recommend me to do? Just blot out this little planet with my →

fingertips? It would be over for all the criminals, of course, but for the innocents, too. My dearest Gabriel, there's no possibility for me to intervene directly, or in person, if you prefer. How do you imagine I could intervene? As a Christian, a Muslim, a Jew, a Buddhist, a Hindu Saver or whatever? I can't represent *any* of all the religions on earth, because it would be understood that I had a preference, although I haven't any as long as the different religions stand for mutual respect and tolerance. Well, but that's a matter I'll hammer into them when I've gathered all of them who are worth it in my sole paradise. And if they don't watch their step or start arguing about the fact that they have to tolerate each other at least in paradise, then I'll just throw them back to the hell they've created themselves.'

'And what about the real criminals?' Gabriel asks, rather impressed at God's speech.

'That's not my business, but Lucifer's of course. I'd let them decay on earth forever.'

'There could be...', Gabriel, whose wings are shivering because of the mention of Lucifer, hesitates for a second, but then goes on, '...another problem related to the decaying humans. You know the organ donation and transplanted stuff and all that...'

'Stop it, Gabriel, I'm getting a headache, just let me have a rest, will you?'

This creative text is related to the article 'Just 70' by journalist Joan Bakewell, who discusses Dylan Thomas' and John Donne's contrasting ideas of death before moving towards the modern debate on euthanasia and the way we think about old age and dying today.

## Rest

By Wolfie

Lost in a desolate, mournful moor  
 Lonesome and silent wanderer  
 Condemned to walk forever  
 In this land lit by no moon

Stumbling over jagged stones  
 On this path by a great force driven  
 Guided by guilt and poignant sorrow  
 Longing to throw the life I was given

Roaming the land without aim  
 My sight blurred with bitter tears  
 I repeat over and over joyful memories  
 Which bring no comfort but pain

A smile shadowed by tears  
 Pale face never so perfect  
 As when soothed with rest  
 Washing away your fears

My fears your fate  
 Your tears my blade  
 Heart-wrenching cry  
 And deafening silence

Grey upon grey, restless agony  
 In stone a name was written  
 Sorrow deeply rooted in me  
 Remembering the angels who have fallen

Lying as a heart bleeding  
 A pain never eased by comforting words  
 Life pouring, scarlet tainting steel,  
 Steel of a finally needless sword.

# Breakfast

By Lydia Sonderegger

Every night when I go to bed, I look forward to the next day. My life is not particularly exciting: I'm not a movie star (their loss, not mine), I'll never be a famous concert pianist (too bad, Dad) or a top model (sorry, Mommy), so why should I be so eager to survive the darkest hours of night and start a new day? The answer is very simple and consists of a single word: BREAKFAST.

Apart from books and music, breakfast is the greatest invention of all time for the good of all mankind. Breakfast is never dull; it makes my heart swell with hope; it gives my soul a reason to sing in the rain; it erases worry and disillusionment from the cells of my body. Breakfast is the moment when I feel fresh and clean, when the outside world resembles a gentle, undemanding playmate. Breakfast is silent satisfaction, deep gratitude and tranquil expectation. Last but not least, breakfast has taught me that there is no such thing as monotony: even after countless years,

the customary slices of bread spread with margarine and honey, accompanied by a big mug of coffee with milk and brown sugar, still taste heavenly...

More often than not, the least sophisticated pleasures are the ones we never get tired of. They're also the ones that give us the physical and psychological strength to follow Milton's advice and "bear [our] milde yoak"...



# Riddle

By David Wilson

We have waited for each other. I lie before you and you smile. I am open for you and you gaze across my whole, revealed extent with pleasure. I soothe you when you have the time. Now in this morning moment I am fair, soft, winsome – I know you agree. And in this way I nourish you, feed you with all the generous intensity of the day's blue-mirrored light. Past noon you meet me again and I make up for you afresh with stranger hues of wildest green or purple. And in the evening I could be sprawled out for you once more the same ... but – and this is up to you – I may be found elsewhere, drawn perhaps across the sea, across the azure race of distant white horses, or endless miles of tufted cotton wool, across the stony waste or arid

sand. In narrow spaces where the bright towers scrape towards a thin pale moon. And you will gaze out to me as you pass by.

Though I can be so much to you, others may barely see me, or will sell or block me grasping after more than they could gain by leaving me open to you.

Alone I am nothing. Still I can always be found. And I know that I will long remain stretched out in the mind's eye of my beholder who has so loved to gaze upon me.

"What am I?"

(solution on following page)

**Solution to the Riddle**  
(see previous page)

“I am a view.”

**The Compliment**  
By Anja Siouda

The day she got the compliment  
The world became so bright  
The day she got the compliment  
They all went out of sight

The worries, rows and arguments  
They just escaped her mind  
Defeated by the compliment  
That left them all behind

And now she has a temperament  
Filled up with joy and bliss  
That makes her jump with happiness  
And feel the inspiration's kiss

**The Castle**  
By Arnaud Barras

It's unfair that he walks on broken bottles  
When the clouds are heavy with alcohol.  
He's no more choice than entering the castle  
Before the night, last resort to not stall.

There awaits him many dark temptations,  
From behind the doors he can guess smoke  
And wine, and many sensual sensations.  
He asks himself if this is not a stroke.

That's it! The blood no longer floods his brain,  
His sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste  
Are all fading like clouds after rain.

He can't wake, somehow it's too late,  
He's motionless, his will moves in vain,  
He waits for the night's early new state,  
That doesn't come until he's all rotten.

From the glasses of the dark mansion,  
Beams of light stroke his exhausted face.  
He recovers his sense with the sun's action,  
And decides to forget all about this place.

**The Park Bench**  
By Adwoa Bart-Plange

I walked towards the park bench, its sole occupant unseen  
The sun shone brightly and children played on the village green  
I got closer, and it became readily apparent  
That I would not be alone, but that was no deterrent

He looked quite benign resting there, obviously innocuous  
His black coat stiff and glossy, his stare rather vacuous  
I took a seat and for a while, we were both lost in thought  
And then he sighed, or so it seemed, from the small glimpse I caught

I felt a sudden yearning to foster conversation  
On matters I felt deserved constant consideration  
I did not tell him my name; of his I had no notion  
But I spoke softly to him, betraying no emotion

It occurred to me that this was an opportunity  
To talk of my ideas on life and its complexity  
Why are we here, who put us here, what happens when we've left?  
And what of friends and family, who carried on bereft?

It's long been my belief that issues of such gravity  
Should be shunned when with folks who only value levity  
Like my friends, who would doubtless take me for a lunatic  
If I spoke so grimly; they'd find my conduct erratic

I knew we'd never meet again, as you'll presently find  
So if he found me fairly odd, well, I'd pay that no thought  
I felt I could share with him my valuable opinion  
Leave him much to ponder at his impending reunion

And so we talked, or, I should say, I spoke, and he listened  
He did not leave or move at all, his coat mutely glistened  
He twitched his legs from time to time, looked searchingly around  
This last I believed to be when I'd said something profound

I spoke of politics and expounded on religion  
Combining them, I found, was an ill-fated decision  
And yet it happened more often than I cared to mention  
It seemed world peace was surely not anyone's intention

When of solemn matters I had given him an earful  
I turned to music in a bid to make us both cheerful  
Here, I discussed my newfound love of jazz and classical  
I thought most lyrics either hackneyed or nonsensical

I asked him what he thought of possessions, I was curious  
He seemed unencumbered, blissfully free, impecunious  
Although most may have found the life he led unreasonable  
Our mad rush to amass left us greedy and miserable

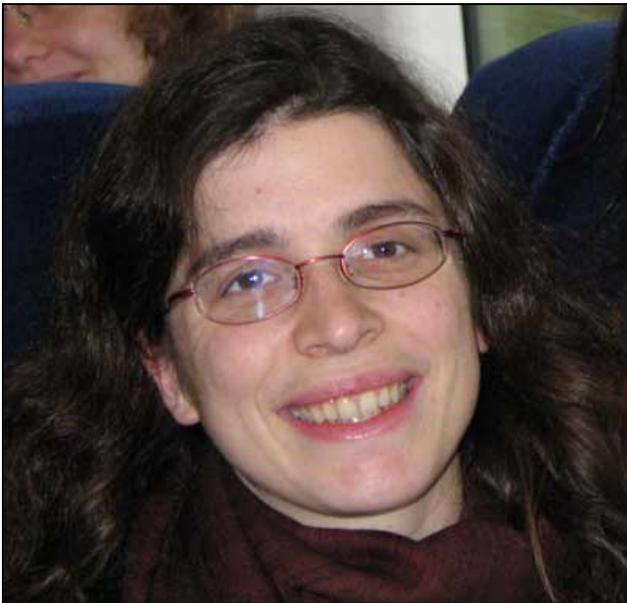
Like all of humanity, obsessed with mortality  
And how all could end with unwarranted brutality  
I asked him if he thought we'd be one day reunited  
Whether heaven existed as the pious recited

By then I was weary of the uneven discussion  
And of his beady eyes and inscrutable expression  
I suggested then that perhaps he might like to find out  
What this incessant talk of eternity was about

I kept on speaking so he wouldn't think a thing amiss  
Reached down and took off my left shoe, hoping I would not miss  
Not withholding my frustration, I struck blow after blow  
Then swept the beetle's remains onto the green grass below.

## Alumni Column

An Interview with Tania Araman, Journalist for *Migros Magazine*, by Michael Rösli



*When did you first know you wanted to be a journalist and how did you start your career? Have you been working for Migros Magazine ever since your licence?*

When I was younger (about 15 or 16 years old), I thought about becoming a journalist, but I was afraid I couldn't endure the stress. So I forgot about it for a while. Then, during my studies, I realised I very much liked the research I had to do before writing an essay, so I decided to focus on a career in documentation. After I graduated (in 2003), I found a job as documentalist, but I soon realised I missed something, that is, the part where you transmit the information you have gathered. So I came back to journalism and I started looking for an internship on a newspaper. I worked three weeks for the *Tribune de Genève* and I liked it very much. I worked six months for an online agency, writing film criticism and reviews, then I found my present job at *Migros Magazine*.

*Did you have to undergo any professional training before starting to work as a journalist?*

In Switzerland, when you want to become a journalist and obtain a *carte de presse*, you first have to find a two-year internship on a newspaper. That is what I did at *Migros Magazine*. Once you are appointed, you can sign on at the *Centre romand de formation des journalistes* in Lausanne, where you follow a nine-week course. At the end, you have to pass an exam, which I did last October.

*You are now working in Zurich. Did you find the city or rather did it find you? Is this environment very challenging for you? Or are you bilingual?*

I didn't really choose to go to Zurich. I sent letters everywhere and the only positive answer I got was from *Migros Magazine*. The office was in Zurich so I had to move there. My intention was to stay there two years (the duration of my internship) and then to come back to Geneva. But, soon enough, I kind of fell in love with the city. And before my internship ended, I asked my boss if there were any possibilities for me to stay there. I was lucky to be finally appointed after my internship ended. As for the environment, I am not really bilingual. I can manage speaking a few words in German, and understand it, but Swiss German really is a different language! Sometimes it is not easy. And as I work in a French-speaking office, I don't have many occasions to practise my German.

*What are you writing about? Do you work for a particular column or are your writing projects varied? How much freedom do you have in the choice and approach of your topics?*

*Migros Magazine* deals with a lot of different subjects: society subjects, new trends, children, health, etc. We want to be close to *Monsieur et Madame Tout-le-monde*; we try to find interesting stories about ordinary people. But we also write about famous local people. I don't have a particular column. I write about different subjects. Every two weeks, we have to suggest new subjects which are accepted or not.

*How does your workday look? Do you do your research mostly at the office or does it lead you to different places and people? Is journalism a social or a rather isolated activity?*

There is no such thing as a typical workday. It changes every day. Sometimes I have to make phone calls to fix my next appointments, sometimes I have to write three articles in a row, sometimes I have to find new subjects. That's one thing I really like about working there: the variety. Some days I stay at my office, some days I meet people all around Switzerland. I work in an open office, so I am never alone, but sometimes I have to close my mind to be able to concentrate.

*How do you see the future of your career? Is journalism your vocation or do you see it as a door which opens to other professions?*

For now, I feel very well where I am. I don't want to change. I like the kind of subjects we deal with; I like the fact that *Migros Magazine* is a weekly paper. I am not sure I would like to work for a daily paper. In the future, I might like

to work for the radio or write film criticism. But I am sure journalism is my vocation.

*What do you most like or dislike about your job?*

As I said, I enjoy the variety of tasks, of subjects, etc. I also like the atmosphere at work, I get along very well with my colleagues. And I really have the feeling that I am where I want to be, that I belong here. Sometimes however it is difficult to endure the stress and the pressure. There are a lot of things to deal with and it is difficult not to think about work, even during the evening and the week-end.

*Among all the professions our former students choose, journalism seems to be one of the most closely related to the studies themselves. Is this the case? And, if so, what were the most beneficial aspects of your studies which prepared you for your current profession?*

I think it is pretty close. During my studies I learned how to find a subject, how to look for information, how to select what is relevant, how to transmit it. That's what I do when I want to write an article. Only the sources and the style are different.

*How do you remember your studies at the English department? What was it you most liked (or disliked) about your studies?*

It seems like a long, long time ago! I remember I liked doing research before writing essays, but I wasn't as dedicated as I should have been...

*Many thanks for the interview, Tania!*

This interview was conducted by e-mail.

First of all, we would like to thank everybody who sent us their writings, ideas and pictures and thereby contributed to an interesting and diversified new issue of *NOTED*.

Have you ever thought of joining the editing crew of our newsletter? What does that mean, and what does it imply? Well, we usually meet once or twice during the semester to do a brainstorming on the next issue of *NOTED*. Then it depends on the student what his or her function will be: some people like to write articles, but are not sure what to write about and find inspiration in talking with their co-editors. Others are interested in particular topics or columns, say theatre or cinema. They might not like writing themselves but know their way around the scene, have ideas and know other students who would be happy to write a short article or do an interview for their respective column.



**NOTED WANTS YOU**

Someone might be interested in advertising *NOTED*, or want to give our newsletter a new look, thereby taking up the role of a visual adviser (or even take care of the layout him- or herself).

In short, if you wish to help editing *NOTED*, you freely decide on your own function and degree of involvement. Don't forget that these possible activities may be at the same time a useful experience for your future professional projects. The more we are in the editing crew, the more we can gather interesting ideas, and the more fun it is to guide the latest edition of *NOTED* on its way up to the printing press.

If you consider joining us, or simply have an idea, some feedback or suggestions in respect to *NOTED*, please let us know:

**[noted@lettres.unige.ch](mailto:noted@lettres.unige.ch)**

**Cornelia Toga, co-editor since October 2006:** I would encourage everyone to become a part of the *NOTED* crew. As a student in the English department, *NOTED* is already a part of your life; with your ideas and suggestions you now have the opportunity to influence and shape that part of your life. It is also a way of expressing yourself and enabling fellow students to express themselves - without worrying about the grade you might get! On an even larger scale you could also think of your involvement with *NOTED* as an opportunity to meet and work with new people on a common project, an experience that will be useful later in life.

**Lydia Sonderegger, co-editor since October 2006:** being involved in editing the newsletter is great: even though a lot of work gets done during our meetings, the atmosphere is very informal and relaxed. Writing for *NOTED* is even better: you can choose the topic and express yourself without worrying about well-structured arguments or conclusions!

**Conradin Schwarzenbach, co-editor since October 2006:** if you're thinking about getting involved in a University activity but are afraid that it might take up too much of your valuable time for studying, working and partying, we're in the same situation. Helping out with *NOTED* has been just the right amount of involvement to feel like actually doing something at the Uni apart from studying, while still having enough time for all those other important things in life. Most of all, it's been great having a creative activity which I often miss in my studies. And last but not least, there's free cake at the meetings!