



# Mitteilungen aus Madison

NEWS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF GERMAN

EXPANDING OUR CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES

## Beyond Bratwurst, Burgers, and Doughnuts

BY ANNA SPAFFORD

"Why would you want to go to Germany?! Why not Peru or Taiwan?" I remember very clearly the tone of voice my older sister used when she said this about two years ago as I was beginning the application process for my Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship. I also remember that, at the time, I had to keep reminding

**Being able to make oneself understood is perhaps the best reason I can think of for participating in an exchange program anywhere.**

myself that I really did love my sister and did not, in fact, want to strangle her just because she grossly misunderstood one of my favorite countries and did not seem to grasp the purpose of cultural exchange. The Western world did not sound at all interesting to my sister in 2010. She wanted me to come home with crazy stories of colorful, strangely cut clothing and food that she'd never heard of before. To her, as a native Wisconsinite, Germany was known territory: Lederhosen, Bratwurst, Dirndls, and Sauerkraut.

I found a similar attitude in Germany when I began teaching English at the Albert Schweitzer-Geschwister Scholl



Anna Spafford has an unexpected encounter in Berlin with an old friend in front of the Brandenburg Gate.

Gymnasium in Marl, North Rhine-Westphalia. I learned so much about the U.S. while I was in Germany, most significantly that my country is made up of about four states: California, Texas, New York City, and Washington D.C. Our politics and politicians are, of course, incomprehensible (and I suspect that it is only for his relative clarity that President Obama has

enjoyed as much popularity as he has in Europe), and our food is tasty but entirely unhealthy. You know, burgers and doughnuts.

It is easy to take for granted the things that are familiar to us. I learned many things in my time as a Fremdsprachenassistentin during the 2011/12 academic

Continued on page 3

### CONTENTS

2 Letter from the Chair  
4 Stockwerk/Literaturlenz  
5 Freiburg Sister City News  
6 Undergraduate Awards Banquet

8 Madison hören  
10 Your Gift Matters  
12 Ruminations on Retirement  
14 Faculty News

16 New Faculty Profiles  
17 Artist Pavel Schmidt on Kafka  
18 Undergraduate Program News  
19 Sommerakademie in Bonn

## Letter from the Chair



September and October in Madison are always special, and this fall we've been enjoying many days of beautiful sunshine, crisp nights, and warm days, as the leaves (tinged by an early touch of frost) are turning splendid shades of red and orange. I am now looking back on two decades since I joined the Department of German, and as I begin my third and final year as Chair with the 2012 Fall semester, watching the occasional hawk circle outside my window, departmental activities are already in full swing: my colleague Marc Silberman organized a lively and well-attended 45<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin Workshop "After

the Violence: Memory;" and just recently I had the pleasure of hosting the annual (rotating) meeting of the "Big Ten" Chairs of German Departments here in Madison for the first time in a number of years. As I look back over the year since I last wrote to you in the 2011 "Mitteilungen," there is more to report than I can possibly fit into a few lines. We

- increased our number of majors and German certificate students yet again (you will find a report by our Director of Undergraduate Studies, Mark Loudon, in this issue);
- were awarded fellowships for several of our six incoming graduate students;
- honored Jim Steakley on the occasion of his retirement last December (we include his reflections for you, see below);
- held our annual German Day in April (see report by Charles James);
- conducted a national search for two new faculty members, as a result of which Hannah Eldridge and Sonja Klocke have joined the department as most welcome junior colleagues (you will find their profiles in this year's "Mitteilungen" as well);
- hosted numerous visitors (you will find

pictures or brief articles about some of the events in these pages). A very incomplete list: In October, sound poet Dirk Huelstrunk wowed listeners with his performances. In February, we welcomed Swiss artist Pavel Schmidt and celebrated an exhibition of his works (see photos elsewhere in this newsletter), complemented by a mini-symposium on Kafka, and we spent an afternoon and evening with three authors at the annual "Literaturlenz" (see photos). In March, Hans-Thies Lehmann, one of the most high-profile theater scholars world-wide, spent a week in Madison as a Halls Visiting Scholar and brought us up to speed on "Postdramatic Theatre and Performance in Transition." In April, Sabine Berendse and Paul Clements came to campus with a memorable multi-media performance on composer Hanns Eisler, an exceptionally insightful witness to turbulent times in the Weimar Republic, in exile, and in the GDR, which was a treat on many levels – auditory, visual, musical, linguistic, and intellectual.

Rainer Godel from Halle was our Distinguished Max Kade Visiting Professor this spring – another familiar presence, since Rainer had spent time here several years ago as a Feodor Lynen Fellow; we were just as pleased to welcome him back for a semester as he was to return to Madison. And even in summer, events continue – although they may be at quite a geographical distance from Wisconsin. This past July, four of our dissertators and I joined faculty and students from Bonn, Baltimore (Johns Hopkins), Florence, and Seoul for a week-long graduate summer school at the University of Bonn, whose Chancellor, Jürgen Fohrmann, is not only a "Germanist" but a long-time Madison partner in exchanges, conferences, and other intellectual ventures. (See report by Kris Imbrigotta below.)

### Questions, comments, or news you'd like to share?

Contact us at [german@mailplus.wisc.edu](mailto:german@mailplus.wisc.edu), [sgross@wisc.edu](mailto:sgross@wisc.edu), the mailing address below, or visit us online at <http://german.lss.wisc.edu>.

*Mitteilungen aus Madison* is the alumni and friends newsletter of the Department of German at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, Sabine Groß, Chair.

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Meanwhile, the financial outlook in higher education continues to be grim. You, our alumni, are supporting an array of special events in the Department throughout the year, such as our very popular "Literaturlenz." But most importantly, you are enabling us to help students succeed, and we are very grateful. We know how much of a difference a financial award or fellowship can make as students struggle to keep up with the rising costs

**You, our alumni, are supporting an array of special events in the Department throughout the year ... But most importantly, you are enabling us to help students achieve success, and we are very grateful. We know how much of a difference a financial award or fellowship can make as students struggle to keep up with the rising costs of an education ...**

of an education for which government and society seem to accept less and less responsibility. In our department, fellowships are not just for graduate students: in addition to numerous achievement awards (many for first- and second-year students),



**Students and faculty celebrate the end of the semester on the Memorial Union terrace.**

generous donations allow us to offer the Berghahn award for best undergraduate paper (as well as a graduate award), and especially the Dr. Karl Oskar and Theodora Pisk Prize for an outstanding graduating senior.

With heartfelt thanks to each and every one of you who is able to support us and our students, and with a deep sense of connectedness to you as our alumni and fellow Badgers, I hope that

this reaches you in time to bring you my warmest good wishes, and those of all my colleagues, for the holidays and a Happy New Year – with time to reflect, to spend with loved ones, and to recollect memories that connect you to our campus!

*Alles Gute und einen schönen Gruß aus Madison,*

**Sabine Groß**

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Continued from page 1

year, from how to find an apartment in Germany to ways of creating order in a classroom of 23 hyperactive 15-year-olds and methods for explaining American football to Europeans. Misunderstandings, whether amusing or with more serious consequences, happen all the time. Being able to make oneself understood is perhaps the best reason I can think of for participating in an exchange program anywhere.

My original purpose in accepting my Fulbright grant to Germany was to improve my language skills and my knowledge of German culture. And while these improvements have occurred, I have found that it is, in fact, the depth that has been added to my world perspective that is even more valuable.

We may live in a global society, and we may be able to see on television or over the Internet events that are happen-

ing throughout the world, but that does not mean that we understand them, even when we think that we do. Life is, fortunately, a learning process. I have extended my stay in Essen to work for a year or two as a freelance English teacher, and I am very happy to say that even my sister has expressed an interest in visiting me, something that she had sworn in 2010 she would never, ever do.

## News from Stockwerk Deutsch

Stockwerk Deutsch has a new Graduate Language Program Coordinator, Claudia Arndt. Claudia first came to Madison on the Hessen Wisconsin Exchange Program in 2007. After completing her Master's degree in Germany, she returned to UW–Madison in 2009 to work on her Ph.D. in Dairy Science. Despite her many years of studying, she never experienced living in a dormitory. Claudia reports that she is enjoying the opportunity to spend time with the Stockwerk Deutsch students ("Stockis") in their German-immersion living community located in Adams Hall, a Lakeshore dorm. According to Claudia, the Stockis are open-minded, motivated, and fun to hang out with! *Na klar!*



From left to right: Samantha Peterson, Claudia Arndt, Elisa Shapson, Nuan Zhang, Molly Kettell, Sofia Linsenmeyer, and Anna Henckel.

## Hallo, Grüezi, Servus — Willkommen zum Literaturlenz!

Every year, an Austrian/German/Swiss trio of young authors braves winter in the Midwest to journey to Madison from Chicago for an afternoon and evening of readings and discussions. On February 16, 2012, we welcomed Larissa Boehning, Monica Cantieni, and Linda Stift for our winter Literaturlenz. They seemed to enjoy their time in Madison just as much as we and our students enjoyed listening and talking to them!



Linda Stift and Larissa Boehning look on as Monica Cantieni takes her turn, reading from her novel *Grünschnabel*.



On a separate occasion, Bulgarian-German writer Tveta Sofronieva, winner of the 2009 Adelbert-von-Chamisso-Förderpreis, read from her work in Madison in April 2012. She is pictured here in front of the Red Gym with department chair Sabine Groß (left) and two Milwaukee colleagues: Assistant Professor of Translation Studies Chantal Wright and Assistant Professor of German Daniel Vyleta.



The authors' visit to Madison included enough time for a visit to Lake Monona, which – to their disappointment – sported a more modest display of ice fishermen than promised. Cantieni and her colleagues nonetheless enjoyed a brief stroll on the frozen lake.



## AYF Students To Blog about Freiburg

The Madison-Freiburg Sister City Committee awarded two grants of \$500.00 each to current students in the Academic Year Abroad (AYF) program. Anastasia Murken and Joe Oswald will blog about their experiences in Freiburg to keep the members of the Freiburg Sister City group informed about what's going on in Freiburg. Read more on the Sister City Web site: [madisonfreiburg.org](http://madisonfreiburg.org) and follow the blogs here: <http://madisonfreiburg.org/blogs.htm> or at <http://abmurken.wordpress.com/> and <http://joeoswald.wordpress.com/>



Joe Oswald (front and center!) enjoys the Freiburg-Madison-Gesellschaft welcome dinner at the Greiffenegg (courtesy of Manfred Hoefer).



Anastasia Murken captures the beauty of the *Schwarzwald* while on a *Wanderung* with the AYFers.



Student bloggers Anastasia Murken and Joe Oswald.



## Department of German Undergraduate Awards Banquet held April 25, 2012

One of the annual highlights at the end of spring semester is our awards banquet, which brings faculty, undergraduate students, and in many cases their families to the University Club on Library Mall for a celebration of exceptional undergraduate achievements in German. This year, 21 undergraduate students received awards for their outstanding academic work, and 17 of our graduating seniors were inducted into Delta Phi Alpha, the National German Honor Society – all in the company of their German professors, beaming parents, siblings, and friends. This year, Ms. Lisbeth Pisk (Seattle), a generous friend of the department and donor of our major undergraduate prize, joined us to give the keynote address and present the Dr. Karl Oskar and Theodora Pisk Award in person to Barbara Jedele. Speaking about “Things I didn’t Say; Questions I didn’t Ask,” Ms. Pisk reflected on the lives of her parents and the drastic changes that Hitler’s rise to power wrought on them. Dr. Karl Oskar Pisk was a scholar, political thinker, and journalist, and his wife, Theodora Pisk, an accomplished artist. Their escape from Nazi Germany and then, after the Anschluss, from Austria, when the family emigrated to the U.S., changed their trajectories irreparably, although Dr. Pisk never gave up his passion for writing. Ms. Pisk’s reminiscences had the audience listening in rapt attention: as a *Zeitzeugin* herself, she brought a family’s fate alive for all of us through her memorable words.



Lisbeth Pisk shares a table with two Dr. Karl Oskar and Theodora Pisk Award winners, Emily Kultgen (2011) and Barbara Jedele (2012), and Barbara’s parents.



The Delta Phi Alpha inductees and undergraduate award winners (displaying their Advanced Achievement awards) can be proud of their accomplishments.



Award donor and professor emeritus Klaus Berghahn at the awards banquet with Jessica Kasmierczak, the winner of the undergraduate Berghahn Prize.



Professor Charles James inducts this year’s outstanding graduating seniors into Delta Phi Alpha, the National German Honor Society.





Freshman Becky Schultz seeks out Lisbeth Pisk to ask her more questions after the keynote address.



Lisbeth Pisk at her home in Seattle, with a photograph of her parents. The picture shows Dr. Karl Oskar Pisk (left) and Theodora Pisk (second from left) with friends in Berlin.



# Madison hören

VON DIRK HUELSTRUNK

Madison? Wisconsin? Die meisten meiner Freunde und Bekannten können mit diesen Namen wenig anfangen. Der Mittlere Westen der USA ist im deutschen Bewusstsein ein weißer Fleck auf der Landkarte. Dass Madison eine der wichtigsten Universitätsstädte der USA und ein Zentrum der amerikanischen Gegenkultur und Ökobewegung ist, weiß kaum jemand.

Im Oktober 2011 bin ich mit einem Stipendium des Hessischen Literaturrates zum dritten Mal in Madison. Ich habe Glück, dass ich bereits einige Leute kenne. Den Dichter Matt Guenette und seine Frau Julie, die eine Dissertation am German Department schreibt, habe ich während seines Stipendiums in Deutschland kennen gelernt. Fred und Jeannie Bergman kenne ich seit meinem ersten Aufenthalt in Madison 2004. Jeannie ist Science-Fiction-Poetin, Buchhändlerin und Literaturaktivistin. Sie arbeitet bei „Avols“ und betreibt im Alleingang die wichtige literarische Internetseite „madpoetry.org“. Fred ist ein echter Alleskönner. Von Landwirtschaftsmaschinen über große Industrieanlagen bis hin zu Kopiergeräten, Druckern und Computern repariert er so ziemlich alles. Dazu hat er Mathematik und Physik studiert und übersetzt Literatur aus dem Spanischen und Deutschen. Als ich vor einigen Jahren für mein zweisprachiges Kunst-Buchprojekt *Antibodies* einen Übersetzer suchte, sagte mein Bauchgefühl, dass nur Fred in der Lage wäre, meine eigenartig-surrealen Cut-up-Texte aus Medizinbüchern zu übersetzen. So ist *Antibodies* die erste wirkliche literarische Gemeinschaftsarbeit zwischen Hessen und Wisconsin geworden.

Dieses Mal habe ich einen ganzen Monat Zeit. Julie Larson-Guenette hat mich an die Leiterin des German Departments Sabine Groß vermittelt, die mich

offiziell eingeladen hat, einen Vortrag über Soundpoetry zu halten. Auch in ihrem Intensivkurs „Einführung in die deutsche Literatur“ gebe ich ein Gastspiel und diskutiere mit den StudentInnen. Fred und Jeannie Bergman haben mir darüber hinaus auf eigene Faust ein umfangreiches Reise- und Vortragsprogramm zusammengestellt. Lesungen und Vorträge an Madison College, Beloit College, Shimer College (Chicago), Teilnahme an der „Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets“ Konferenz, Galeriebesuche, Sessions mit lokalen Musikern wie den „Earth Boys“ und Jerome van Epps „Purple House“ Sessions, Ausflüge zu Outsider Art Environments wie Dr. Evermors „Forevertron“, den „Painted Forest“ oder das „Kohler Arts Museum“ in Sheboygan.

Für die hiesige Literaturszene bin ich ein Exot. Meine Texte sind minimalistisch und repetitiv. Als Soundpoet arbeite ich mit dem Klang der Sprache, mit Loops, Wiederholungen, Worthaufen. Manche sehen das als musikalisch-kompositorische Arbeit oder als Kunst. Für mich gehört es (auch) zur Literatur, ebenso wie die frühen dadaistischen Lautpoeten Hugo Ball, Raoul Hausmann, Kurt Schwitters definitiv (auch) Schriftsteller waren.

Bei meinem Vortrag am Pyle Center versuche ich einen kleinen Überblick über die Geschichte der „Soundpoetry“ zu geben. Anschließend präsentiere ich eigene Stücke. Es sind nicht viele Zuhörer gekommen, doch die Anwesenden hören sehr interessiert zu. Anschließend ergeben sich interessante Gespräche, insbesondere mit Lewis Freedman, der mich zu einer Salonlesung einlädt. Hier finde ich dann tatsächlich eine spannende Gruppe experimenteller Poeten. Vor allem der Autor, Schauspieler und Musiker Andy Gricevich beeindruckt mich mit ebenso klangintensiven wie humorvollen Nonsense-Texten.

Mein besonderes Interesse gilt dem Klang von Madison. Mit einem digitalen Aufnahmegerät will ich die Klangsprache Madisons entziffern. Natur, Menschen- und Maschinengeräusche finden sich in einem überraschend ausgewogenen Klangverhältnis, so dass bei aller Vielschichtigkeit kein Klangbrei entsteht sondern ein offener Klangraum, in dem sehr unterschiedliche Klänge zusammenfinden und eine „Klangerzählung“ ergeben. Brummende und ratternde Klimaanlage und hektische Football-Berichte im TV sind die ersten Geräusche, die ich aufnehme. Danach das gedämpfte Gemurmel arbeitender und diskutierender Studenten und Hochschulangehöriger in der Memorial Union, durchbrochen von Möwengeschrei. Abends und am Wochenende geraten die Studenten in lautstarke Feierlaune und ziehen in fröhlich quiekenden und grölenden Gruppen durch die Straßen. Im Arboretum mischen sich Vogellaute, das Rascheln von Blättern und von Prairiegras mit dem Geräusch von Autofahrern, Helikoptern, Joggern und Marching Bands. Am Picnic Point schmatzen die Wellen zu Hundegebell, Joggern, flüsternden Liebespärcchen und weiteren Marching Bands.

Auf der State-Street erzeugen zahlreiche Straßenmusiker einen kontinuierlichen Soundmix mit interessanten Überlagerungen von Klassik und Country, Mundharmonika und Blockflöte, politischen Botschaften und Werbung, Gesang und Sprache.

Das Capitol ist ein fantastischer Klangkörper, der zum Spielen einlädt. Insbesondere Kinder und Jugendliche nehmen dieses Angebot an und testen den intensiven Hall. Dazwischen ist das Gemurmel von Senatoren zu hören, unterbrochen von Protestparolen. Meetings werden durch Lautsprecher übertragen. Touristen staunen Ahs und Ohs in die



Rotunde. Verschiedene Protestgruppen und politische Aktivisten bereichern die Stadt auch klanglich. Manchmal marschieren mehrere unterschiedliche Demonstrationen nahezu zeitgleich auf das Capitol zu und ihre Parolen gehen nahtlos ineinander über. Eine Marching Band ist auch hier fast immer dabei. Nicht weit davon kann man im „Veterans Museum“ auf Knopfdruck patriotische Klänge aus dem Bürgerkrieg abrufen. Auf dem Farmers Market, zwischen Obst, Gemüse, Käse und Kürbissen versuchen sich die 9/11 Verschwörungstheoretiker, die Kreationisten, Vertreter des „Community Gardening“ und einzelne Politprotestler gegen das Marktgeschrei durchzusetzen.

Jedes Gespräch ist Geräusch. Ich führe viele Gespräche. Über Poesie, Musik, Pferde, Käse, Bier, die 1960er Jahre, vor allem aber über Politik. Die Stimmung ist gereizt. Jeder möchte mir die „Situation“ erklären. Wut und Frustration über den Verlust von Arbeitsplätzen, über



den Wertverlust ihrer Häuser, über die Finanzhaie und Großkonzerne, über die Agrarindustrie mit ihrer Massentierhaltung und den genetischen Modifizierungen. Frustration über die ideologische Schärfe und Unversöhnlichkeit, mit der sich die großen Parteien bekämpfen, hat die „pragmatische“ Gelassenheit ersetzt, um die wir steifen Deutschen die Amerikaner so beneiden. Ich erfahre auch von der Geschichte der Studentenproteste und der Kunst des Bierbrauens. Ich

bekomme erklärt, wie man Pferde einreitet, Plumpsklos und Solarduschen baut und Shuffleboard spielt. Und natürlich reden wir über Poesie. Über „Confessional Poetry“ und „Language Poetry“, über Vor- und Nachteile der „Creative Writing“-Studiengänge und -Abschlüsse, über „Spoken Word“ und über das Narrative in der amerikanischen Poesie.

Leider steht die Villa Edenfried, in der die deutschen Stipendiaten bisher leben konnten, seit diesem Jahr nicht mehr zur Verfügung, und auch die künftige Finanzierung des Austauschprogramms ist nicht gesichert. Ich hoffe sehr, dass es möglich sein wird, diesen wichtigen kulturellen Austausch zu erhalten.

*Dirk Huelstrunk ist Autor, Audiokünstler, Kulturaktivist und freier Dozent. Er lebt in Frankfurt am Main und hat uns für die Leser unserer Mitteilungen diesen kleinen Bericht über seinen Aufenthalt in Madison im Oktober 2011 geschickt. Mehr über Huelstrunks faszinierende Projekte erfährt man auf seiner Webseite <http://www.soundlikepoetry.de>*

## CENTER FOR GERMAN AND EUROPEAN STUDIES:

# Planning the Future

MARC SILBERMAN, DIRECTOR

The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) has been a generous supporter of the Center for German and European Studies since 1998, funding three cycles of five-year programming. The current cycle concludes in December of this year. DAAD announced in the summer that it is shifting its funding model to a two-year cycle, and based on the CGES's strong track record, it invited the UW to submit a proposal for further funding. The vision

is for three collaborative research groups to work in the following areas: 1) Environmental Futures, organized by Gregg Mitman (Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies); 2) Translation, Transformation, Transposition: Processes of Transfer among Languages, Cultures, and Disciplines, organized by Marc Silberman (German); and 3) Citizenship, Modernity, and Inclusion: How Gender and Nation Matter, organized by Myra Marx Ferree (Sociology). Involving over 20 faculty members from many UW departments, the groups will be hosting scholars from Germany and Europe, planning workshops and conferences, arranging a film festival, and supporting exchanges among advanced students. The CGES was also a major partner in gaining campus support for a

new DAAD professorship in environmental history, a visiting position which we expect to be filled by a scholar from Germany in fall semester 2013. In the meantime, during this last year of the current CGES funding cycle there have been diverse activities, including a roundtable on the Euro crisis, a workshop co-sponsored with the American Council on Germany about sustainability and the automotive industry, a capstone conference under the title "After the Violence: Memory," and regular lectures by German scholars and politicians throughout the calendar year. Many graduate students and faculty from the Department of German participate in and even organize events through the CGES as a bridge to interdisciplinary cooperation.

# ***Your Gift Matters***

## **Supporting the Department of German**

**We invite you to join your fellow alumni, active friends, and supporters who have made a gift to the Department of German!**

Your support allows us to attract and reward outstanding students, run “Stockwerk Deutsch,” host special events, and invite distinguished visitors. Your gift makes it possible for us to do more.

At a time when the cost of higher education continues to shift from the state to the student, we would particularly like to:

1. Enable students to study in Germany, Austria, or Switzerland for a summer or for a year by offering them stipends. With your help, we hope to provide a stipend for every student we send abroad!
2. Offer significant fellowships to two high-achieving undergraduates in our program.

We depend on your generosity – your contribution to the Department of German Enhancement Fund will allow us to reach these two goals.

**Please contact me anytime with your questions and suggestions. I am happy to talk to you!**

**Sabine Groß, Department Chair**

**(608) 262-1844 / 262-2193; or [sgross@wisc.edu](mailto:sgross@wisc.edu).**



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**Please send address changes or update your record in the Alumni Directory at [uwalumni.com/directory](http://uwalumni.com/directory).**



## ***With Gratitude*** **Donors 2011-2012**

We gratefully acknowledge our 2011-2012 donors. If your gift was received between October 1, 2011 and October 15, 2012, your name appears on the list below. (Please let us know of any inadvertent recording omissions, with our apologies in advance.) If your gift arrived after Mitteilungen went to the printer, you will be acknowledged in next year's issue.

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Anonymous Donors, Dr. Lowell Bouma, Jeffrey P. Eversman, Nathan Fronk, Kathryn A. Grady, Patrick M. Grady, Dr. Asta A. Heller, Melissa M. Hoffman, Carrie N. Jackson, Joseph W. Johnson, Max Kade Foundation, Inc. (two gifts), Jessica L. Kazmierczak, Lindsay R. Larson, Mark T. Meier, Christopher R. Nitschke and Marie E. Stark, Naomi Tischler Revzin, Marielle R. Risse, Pamela M. Schmidt and Patrick G. Hellmann (three gifts), Stephen M. Wallace, Christine S. Windheuser, Alvin C. Yoshinaga

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### **Netherlandic Studies Fund:**

R. Byron Bird, Carrie N. Jackson, Jonathan M. Mertzig

### **Dr. Karl Oskar and Theodora Pisk Fund:**

Lisbeth Pisk





# Ruminations upon Retirement

By JIM STEAKLEY

How do you know when it's time to move on? Well, it dawned on me that I was truly getting up there when the expectant and curious student faces facing me at the beginning of the term turned out to include the children of former students. (Here's a shout-out to Karoline, Otto, Alice, Steve, and Emily!)

Some months later, chance brought about a brief encounter with one such former student who was now the mother of two of my current students. As we chatted, I was startled to hear what her children reportedly liked about me, or at least found worth reporting back to her, and she to me: the disclosure that as a college student (and high school, too), I often fell asleep in class. Yikes! Too much information! I should have kept this to myself.

I don't want to make excuses, but I am pretty sure I mentioned this no more than once in the presence of my students. As I recall, it happened when one student fell asleep in class – rather noisily, shall we say – and the other students began nudging each other with a grin, evidently looking forward with some *Schadenfreude* to my reaction. Would I perhaps tap him lightly on the shoulder to wake him up, or would I slam a book down on his desk? I wimped out and let him continue to snooze, explaining sotto voce to the class that such behavior was anything but foreign to me. The rest, as the saying goes, is history. Or anecdote.

Over the years I've noticed repeatedly that students of mine have latched on to the strangest things about me and other teachers, repeating off-the-cuff remarks and recounting quirky incidents until they become iconic. But I must concede I've done it myself. When I think back on the

college teachers who impressed me most and indeed had the greatest influence on my interests and future profession, what springs to mind immediately are statements they themselves probably paid no heed to.



**I'm in the process of setting up an apartment in Freiburg, which has edged out Berlin to become my favorite home away from home. And I'm still working on perfecting my German.**

I remember Friedhelm Radandt, the graduate teaching assistant who instructed me in second-year German at the University of Chicago and ultimately led me to choose the German major. Online, I see that he subsequently rose to become the president of two small Christian colleges in Iowa and New York City. At the time I was in his class, I knew nothing about his dissertation on Goethe and Pietism – in fact I was almost completely ignorant of these topics. I only knew that Herr Radandt was always fastidiously dressed and spoke with quiet authority. I'm abashed to admit I can recall nothing

of the information he conveyed in all our many class sessions – perhaps it would come back to me under hypnosis – apart from one statement. He reported that as a refugee fleeing the Russians in 1945, he and everyone else on the westward trek were infested with fleas and thoroughly miserable because of it. For some reason that story burned into my memory.

My other great teacher at Chicago was the German-born historian Karl Weintraub. He enjoyed an almost cult-like status due to his thoroughly deserved reputation as an outstanding teacher, and that led me to join many others waiting in line for hours to register in his discussion section of "Western Civ." By the second class meeting, he had learned the names of all the students, and he called on us without waiting for us to raise our hands, showing evident displeasure with those who could not answer his questions. Without crossing the line and becoming intimidating, he succeeded in riveting our attention. Above all, I cherish him for having taught me, more than anyone else, to read closely and carefully. But again, what was actually said in those many class sessions has largely receded into the mists of time, and what I recall most vividly is an incident in the spring when he reacted to the noise from a lawnmower by shutting the windows and remarking to no one in particular that in Germany, academics received such respect that it would have been possible for a student to lean out of the window and yell to the man operating the lawnmower to turn it off because the professor was holding a class. Maybe that was a bit of myth-making, but it resonated for me.

I can report that Professor Weintraub kept his biography to himself and never mentioned, at least in my class, that he was a Jewish refugee who had been hidden for years, Anne Frank-like, in an Amsterdam closet. I eventually heard this through the grapevine and find it con-





**AYF Associate Director Ulrich Struve (left) and Resident Director Jim Steakley with some of the study abroad students in Freiburg.**

firmed in online sources. They also show that, like Madison's own George Mosse, Weintraub came to the U.S. thanks to the Quaker connection – something I was unaware of at the time. I did hear that he had worked his way through college as a nighttime elevator operator, and that seemed about as profane as I could imagine for this impeccably clad, pipe-smoking gentleman scholar. Now I dearly wish I could have heard him talk about his experiences as a refugee and an immigrant.

The final teacher I would like to mention is Professor Viola Manderfeld, who supervised first-year German instruction at Chicago and taught me third-year grammar review and composition. By coincidence, one of her descendants took German at Madison and came to me for advising. Professor Manderfeld was quite close to retirement at the time I knew her,

and she struck me as very, very old. Ha! She not only did a terrific job of teaching German but also worked up an individualized itinerary for my trip to Germany and Austria in the summer between my junior and senior years, when I had a scholarship she and Radandt had arranged to attend a Goethe Institut in Radolfzell on the Bodensee. That summer really sealed the deal for me, and I have always emulated Professor Manderfeld by encouraging students to experience Germany for themselves, be it for a summer or a semester or – best of all – a year. Once again, I remember virtually nothing of what transpired in her classroom, and there were no oddball statements to latch on to. But one factoid circulating on the grapevine made a deep impression on me: Manderfeld reportedly showed up at O'Hare airport to travel to Germany each summer without any bag-



**Jim Steakley mingles with friends and colleagues at his retirement party.**

gage, just a toothbrush. She had a place of her own in, I believe, Darmstadt.

And now I am following in her footsteps. I haven't quite managed to carry it off yet, but it's on my bucket list to make a flight to Germany with only a toothbrush. To that end, I'm in the process of setting up an apartment in Freiburg, which has edged out Berlin to become my favorite home away from home. And I'm still working on perfecting my German.

Let me close with a shout-out to all those other past students of mine, here nameless, who are not children of former students. Please know that it was my great pleasure and privilege to accompany you for a time as you learned more about our world and about your special place in it. I wish you all *eine gute Weiterreise*.

*James Steakley, who retired in December 2011, taught in our Department of German for more than three decades, having received his BA in German from the University of Chicago and his Ph.D. from Cornell University in 1978. He was the mainstay of the "Culture Track" of our undergraduate program, served as Undergraduate Advisor for many years, and repeatedly spent time in Freiburg as Resident Director of our Study Abroad Program. Jim's teaching and advising have influenced the studies, lives, and careers of countless UW-Madison students.*

## Faculty News—A Selection of Activities and Publications

### Hans Adler, Halls-Bascom Professor

The past academic year was pretty busy for me with two articles on "Philology" published and a presentation at a colloquium of the French Department on "New Sciences in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century." It was also my 11<sup>th</sup> year as editor of our *Monatshefte*, and I participated in a very inspiring art history conference in Paris on sculpture. Two duties in particular kept me on my toes: being Director of Graduate Studies in the Dept. of Comparative Literature and (very intense, enjoyable, and extremely rewarding!) serving as chair of the search committee for our two new positions.

### Klaus L. Berghahn, Weinstein-Bascom Professor Emeritus

My "retirement" continues to be filled with scholarly activities. I published articles on "Ernst Bloch liest Friedrich Schiller" (JDSG LV), "Lessings Literaturkritik als Polemik" (*Foreign Literatures* 2012/1, Peking), and on the "leaden silence" following the Holocaust in *Blicke auf Auschwitz* (Marbach). Invitations for lectures took me to the FU-Berlin ("Utopie mit Trauerflor," in May), a conference on *Möglichkeitsdenken* at the University of Cologne ("Blochs Kategorie Möglichkeit," in June), and to the University of Mississippi-Oxford ("War and Peace in the Age of Terrorism. Kant's Peace Utopia Reconsidered," in October).

### Salvatore Calomino

Salvatore Calomino has worked on several projects dealing with late medieval manuscripts and early prints. One of these projects features German and French resources on "Tristan" in the Department of Special Collections of the Newberry Library, Chicago. Colloquia were presented at the Newberry Library on this topic and on E.T.A. Hoffmann's music as well as his treatment of medieval themes. He has also been involved with a complete and annotated translation of Ludwig Karpath's *Begegnung mit dem Genius*, an important memoir of Gustav Mahler not previously available in translation.

### Monika Chavez

As chair of the graduate student recruitment committee, I can enthusiastically report that we attracted six new graduate students, all top applicants, with complete funding packages. More personally rewarding to me are accomplishments of recent graduates, who have gone on to receive tenure-track positions (Nicola Schmerbeck) or coordinate language programs (Charles Webster), or completed an impressive dissertation on L2 writing (Julie Larson-Guenette). Several graduate students gave presentations at major research conferences, demonstrating that both dissertations and graduate-course projects can rise to international importance (Katie Chapman, Frieda Fichtner, Emily Heidrich, Charles Webster, and Kelsey White). I gave conference presentations on two projects ("Why Students Choose NOT to Study German"; "Students' Readings of Classroom Talk"). Graduate student Ragnar Svare has been assisting in the analyses and presented with me on the first project.

### Sabine Groß

I spent the summer crisscrossing Germany teaching, lecturing, visiting family and friends, and hiking in Southern Switzerland in the dramatic valleys of the Ticino above Lago Maggiore. More recently, I have just returned from an international conference on the Swiss-German border, where I discussed Enlightenment thought and rhetoric in a 13<sup>th</sup>-century castle with a splendid view of the Rhine. As department chair, I get to spend a lot of time talking to colleagues and students. My favorite visitors to the chair's office are alumni who stop by to share memories and life stories, to catch up on news and look back on time spent at the UW, in German plays, with favorite professors, or studying in Germany.

### Jost Hermand, William F. Vilas Research Professor and Professor Emeritus

Jost Hermand continues as chief editor of the series *German Life & Civilization* (Oxford: Peter Lang). In the fall 2011, he taught at the Humboldt University in Berlin and in spring

2012 at the UW in Madison, giving lecture courses on the impact of German literature on the creation of a German nation state and on Nazi Culture. He gave three invited lectures, published 5 articles, wrote reviews for *Monatshefte* and the *Yearbook of the International Brecht Society*, and arranged a Humboldt Kolleg on "Deutsche Geheimgesellschaften" with Sabine Mödersheim at the UW. After a long period of research, he finally brought out his book *Verlorene Illusionen. Eine Geschichte des deutschen Nationalismus* (Köln, Böhlau 2012).

### Rob Howell

I began this past year with an invited plenary talk on early modern Dutch urban vernaculars at the Forum for Germanic Language Studies conference in January. In the course of the year I have been working with a group of international scholars (graduates of our program!) on the Corpus History of Dutch, a large database project tracing the development of Dutch urban dialects from 1200-1700. In addition I continue to work on *The Cambridge History of the Germanic Languages* with Joe Salmons and Paul Roberge (Chapel Hill).

### Charles James

I continue as Program Coordinator for World Language Education in the Department of Curriculum & Instruction. My activities in German included overseeing German Day 2012, as well as serving as a "Reader" for the Advanced Placement Test. I also serve as a consultant to the Verona Area International School, a Chinese immersion school in Fitchburg. I taught a new course entitled "Deutschsprachige Lieder." From it I spun off a one-credit course for Stockwerk Deutsch. Speaking of which, the six new "Stockis" are a lively group. Let's hope we can keep the enthusiasm up the rest of the semester ... and the year!

### Cora Lee Kluge

My activity in the last year was mainly in the field of German-American studies. My edited volume of essays entitled *Paths Crossing: Es-*



says in *German-American Studies*, based on the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary symposium of the Max Kade Institute, appeared (2011). I gave presentations on teaching the subject of German immigration (at the annual meeting of the Society for German-American Studies), and on the Milwaukee German Theater (at the German Studies Association conference). Beyond this, I continue to work on fundraising for the Max Kade Institute and on plans for the Institute's upcoming move—we hope by next summer—to the fourth floor of the University Club on the UW's Library Mall.

### Mark Loudon

This past summer (2012) I was a DAAD guest professor at the University of Freiburg. I taught three courses on German-American linguistics: "Die deutsche Sprache in Amerika;" "Pennsylvaniadeutsche Sprache und Kultur;" and "Syntax deutsch-amerikanischer Varietäten." I also taught a linguistics course for our Academic Year in Freiburg program. This year I am serving, with Cora Lee Kluge, as a co-director of the Max Kade Institute for German-American Studies. I am also chairing the steering committee for the new Mayrent Institute for Yiddish Culture, affiliated with the Mosse-Weinstein Center for Jewish Studies. I continue to serve as Director of Undergraduate Studies for the Department of German.

### B. Venkat Mani

I teach courses on 19<sup>th</sup>–21<sup>st</sup> century German-language literature and culture, world literature, and seminars on theories of transnationalism, cosmopolitanism, and postcolonialism. I particularly enjoy teaching "Introduction to World Literature" and a new course: "From Gutenberg to the iPad: World, Books, and Literature." I spent a year in Leipzig as an Alexander von Humboldt Foundation Experienced Research Scholar (2011–12) affiliated with the Leipziger Buchwissenschaft, University of Leipzig. There I worked on my book project "Borrowing Privileges: Bibliomigrancy and the Making of World Literature." I trace a genealogy of world literature that is bracketed between the expansion of national libraries in Europe in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and the

launching of the European Digital Library in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. I am also co-editing a volume on "What Counts as World Literature?"

### Sabine Mödersheim

I continued to serve on behalf of the Society for Emblem Studies, editing their newsletter and organizing conference sessions, and published articles on emblems in 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> century Russia, on art dealers in Renaissance Augsburg, and on Walter Benjamin's *Pas-sagen*. With Jost Hermand I co-organized a Humboldt Kolleg on secret societies. Participants included alumna Corina Petrescu (Ph.D. 2006) who presented on the Schulze-Harnack resistance group in Nazi Germany. Inspired by the interest of the Madison Freiburg Sister Group in sustainable urban planning (see Mitteilungen 2010/2011), I designed a new undergraduate course "Natur und Umwelt" that includes a module on "Green City Freiburg." Link to course web page: <http://german.lss.wisc.edu/smoedersheim/gr372/>

### Joe Salmons, Lester "Smoky" Seifert Professor

My biggest project this year was work with heritage speakers of Wisconsin German, led by Alyson Sewell, Joshua Bousquette, Ben Frey and colleagues, creating 165 digital sound files. We are learning amazing things about heritage language syntax, language shift, and regional English. I published *A History of German: What the Past Reveals About Today's Language* (Oxford University Press, [historyofgerman.net](http://historyofgerman.net)), co-edited *Norsk i Amerika (Norsk Lingvistisk Tidsskrift)* with Janne Bondi Johannessen, and published numerous articles (<http://joseph-salmons.net/>). In January, UW Press will publish *Wisconsin Talk: Linguistic Diversity in the Badger State*, edited with Tom Purnell and Eric Raimy.

### Jeanne Schueller

I've had a busy year developing new courses, including an undergraduate course on German language and culture through film, and a graduate course in SLA called "The Study Abroad Experience," both of which were rewarding to teach. I am finishing up work

on a second-year textbook titled *Cineplex—Intermediate German Language and Culture Through Film*, which is expected to appear in 2013 and will be launched this November at the annual ACFTL conference. I spent the summer working on the book in a small town near Freiburg and enjoyed trips with my husband and daughter to Lake Constance and Paris, as well as long hikes in the Black Forest.

### Marc Silberman

During the past year I've split my time between our Center for German and European Studies (as its director) and the department. Personal highlights of the past year include the success story of getting 7 UW departments and centers to help support a DAAD professorship in environmental history (a German scholar who will be housed in the history department and teach interdisciplinary courses) and the appearance of a volume I co-edited on *Walls, Borders, Boundaries: Spatial and Cultural Practices in Europe* (Berghahn Publishing). I'm now launching two new collaborative projects, one leading to a co-edited volume on East German cinema and the other to two new volumes of Brecht's essays in translation.

### Jim Steakley (newly retired Emeritus)

see his contribution on pages 12–13.

### Jolanda Vanderwal Taylor

I have worked on projects on campus that promote the development and adoption of high-quality and innovative learning solutions, and ones that seek to foster global competence. In the Dutch program, I've mentored teaching assistants and dissertators and have taught literature courses on topics such as "Anne Frank" and "Families and Secrets;" and culture courses: "Dutch Tolerance and Multi-Culturalism;" and "New Netherland." I have also continued to do research and publish, including annual articles about the Netherlands for the *Britannica Book of the Year*, and this year I presented scholarly research at conferences in the US and in Belgium.

## New Faculty Profiles

### Hannah Vandegrift Eldridge



I joined the Department of German at the University of Wisconsin–Madison in the fall of 2012 as an assistant professor specializing in the literature and culture of the late

eighteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries. Having grown up on the East Coast and then gotten my B.A. in German from the University of California–Berkeley, I am delighted to have settled down in the middle of the country, first with a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago and now (in a return to my flagship public university roots) at the UW. I am especially impressed by the vibrant German-speaking heritage in Wisconsin. Because of this heritage, I have the privilege and the challenge of teaching an “Introduction to German Literature” to numerous students in their first and second years—meaning that for many of them it is not only their first all-German literature course, but their first university-level literature course as well! Both students and faculty at the UW are helping me bring fresh eyes to a project on lyric poetry and the struggle to establish the role and capabilities of the human subject in modernity; I combine this interest in the lyric with enthusiastic study and practice of music and the relationship between sound and text. I have published articles on the science and poetry of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and on the boundaries of philological research. When not in the classroom or the office, I can often be found playing the violin. In a turn of events that will perpetuate nature/nurture debates, I am the daughter of a philosophy professor and have a twin sister who is also a professor of German. Eager to continue in the ‘family business’ of teaching and writing, I also look forward to discovering the university community and the city of Madison in the years to come.

### Sonja Klocke



I am excited to have joined the Department of German at the University of Wisconsin–Madison in the fall 2012 as Assistant Professor. A native of Germany, I am happy to stay

in the Midwest, which has become a second home over the past nine years. I come to the Department after serving on the faculty of Knox College (IL) for the past five years, and living in Bloomington (IN) for the previous four years. There, I received my Ph.D. in Germanic Cultural Studies with a minor in Gender Studies from Indiana University in 2007. I specialize in twentieth to twenty-first century German literature and film with a specific focus on postwar and contemporary German literature, film, and culture, including the legacy of the GDR and the Holocaust, women’s writing, minority literature, and transnational literature. Currently, I am working on a book project, “Inscriptions and Rebellions: The Female Body in Representations of the GDR from the 1960s to the Present,” and a co-edited volume on Christa Wolf. For the past three years, I have been serving on the Steering Committee of the Coalition of Women in German (WiG). I very much enjoy teaching literature and culture at the UW–Madison, and in fact I am amazed by the command of German the students display. Particularly, I love that students come to my office just to speak German, and I take great pleasure in the intellectual curiosity that emerges in classroom discussions. While still discovering Madison, I already love the city, its farmers markets, the great outdoors, and particularly the lakes. I am hoping for possibilities to go sailing in the next spring and summer. In the meantime, I am preparing for winter: an ardent skier and snow-lover, I am looking forward to the colder season and have already checked out potential skiing areas in Wisconsin.



## KAFKA AND THE QUEST FOR IMAGINATION:

# Swiss Artist Pavel Schmidt in Madison

Pavel Schmidt has been creating visual artworks “on” Franz Kafka for more than 20 years, but his drawings do not visualize the writer’s works. Rather, Schmidt confronts his pictures with particles from Kafka’s unpublished texts and provokes the spectator to discover or imagine relations, connections, or references. Schmidt places art and literature in productive tension.

Through February and into March, an exhibition of 50-plus works on Kafka by Schmidt was on display in the beautiful Hillel building on Langdon Street. Our colleague Hans Adler, who brought both the exhibition and the artist to Madison, hung the pictures himself, assisted by graduate students. The January 31 opening of the exhibit featured spirited introductory remarks by faculty and the artist himself. The Swiss Consul arrived from Chicago to join Schmidt and a sizeable crowd for the opening. The exhibition was complemented by a scholarly symposium of international Kafka experts.



Artist Pavel Schmidt



Exhibition of Pavel Schmidt's works in the spacious and welcoming Hillel building on Langdon Street.



Pavel Schmidt and Professor Emeritus Klaus Berghahn exchange views on Kafka.



Visitors from Chicago: Swiss Consul General Claude Berberat and his wife, accompanied by Consulate intern Larisa Mbilo, in conversation with Pavel Schmidt.



# News from the Undergraduate Program

BY MARK L. LOUDEN,  
DIRECTOR OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES

In past issues of this newsletter, I have reported on the restructuring we have done to our undergraduate program, which has involved instituting a Certificate (minor) in German and creating new third-year language courses that are “skills-based,” that is, focused on speaking/listening, reading, and writing. These changes have yielded strong enrollments at our intermediate and advanced levels and have also increased the number of students who major in German. Last spring the number of our certificate students exceeded 100; that trend is continuing steadily upward this year. We now have 95 majors, up from 70–75 before we restructured our program. Several students in our intermediate courses declare the certificate and then switch to the major when they realize it is feasible in the larger context of their degree program.

This spring we recognized several of our students at our annual awards banquet, the honored guest at which was Ms. Lisbeth Pisk, a long-time generous supporter of our undergraduate program. The following students received awards for outstanding work in courses at the intermediate level: Matthew Carlson, Tessa Coggio, Kyle Dorsey, Andrew Hinkens, Austin Kautzer, Katharine Kierski, McKenzie Mayer, Cassandra Osinski, Rebecca Schultz, Joseph Spafford, Robert Stupar, and Benjamin R. Vanderlei. Award recipients for work in advanced-level courses were: Eric Bowron, Alyssa Bryl, James Doing, Sungsoo Lim, Mary Newhauser, Justin Palm, and Vedran Vasic. The Klaus L. Berghahn Award for an outstanding essay in German literature

was presented to Jessica Kazmierczak, and the Dr. Karl Oskar and Theodora Pisk Award for overall excellence in German studies went to graduating senior Barbara Jedele. It was a special honor to have Ms. Pisk, who created this award in memory of her parents, present the award herself (see “Undergraduate Awards Banquet” and photos elsewhere in this newsletter). At the banquet we also inducted seventeen students into our local chapter of Delta Phi Alpha, the National German Honor

enrollments, we are broadening the range of courses we offer at the advanced level. This growth will be advanced by the welcome addition of our two new colleagues this year, Hannah Eldridge and Sonja Klocke, who bring considerable expertise in literary and cultural studies to our program. Our offerings in linguistic, literary, and cultural studies are complemented by a number of new courses in German-American studies, something that is unique among German depart-

**Drawing on the considerable resources of the UW Max Kade Institute for German-American Studies ([mki.wisc.edu](http://mki.wisc.edu)), as well as the Wisconsin Historical Society ([www.wisconsinhistory.org](http://www.wisconsinhistory.org)), which is also located on the Madison campus, we are able to offer our undergraduate and graduate students unparalleled access to primary and secondary materials related to the German presence in Wisconsin and beyond.**

Society.

A large number of our major and certificate students study abroad on our programs in Freiburg and Bonn. The Academic Year in Freiburg program, which UW–Madison administers in a consortium with the University of Michigan, the University of Iowa, and Michigan State University, remains our most popular program and celebrated its fiftieth anniversary this past year. Information on AYF is accessible online at [www.ayf.uni-freiburg.de](http://www.ayf.uni-freiburg.de). Each year our department also sponsors two students to participate in a month-long intensive course on German language and culture at the University of Bonn. This year’s Bonn summer course fellowship recipients were Andrew Hinkens and Eva Nimmer.

With our increased undergraduate

enrollments nationwide. Located as we are in the “German Belt” of the Upper Midwest, many of our students bring to their study of German an interest in the legacy of German-speaking immigration to the region. Drawing on the considerable resources of the UW Max Kade Institute for German-American Studies ([mki.wisc.edu](http://mki.wisc.edu)), as well as the Wisconsin Historical Society ([www.wisconsinhistory.org](http://www.wisconsinhistory.org)), which is also located on the Madison campus, we are able to offer our undergraduate and graduate students unparalleled access to primary and secondary materials related to the German presence in Wisconsin and beyond. Thus we are able to provide them with a comprehensive course of study that examines the linguistic and cultural expressions of German speakers, past and present, in both Europe and North



# Sommerakademie “Zeit und Literatur”

By KRISTOPHER IMBRIGOTTA

The Department of German has cultivated a long tradition of sending graduate students to study and conduct research at the Rheinische Friedrich Wilhelms-Universität Bonn. In exchange, we have hosted students from Bonn in our own department. This summer Madison and Bonn expanded that special relationship, as a group of advanced dissertators, accompanied by Professor Sabine Groß, traveled to Bonn for a week-long workshop at the end of July on the topic “Zeit und Literatur.” This international confab—collegial and rigorous throughout—brought together students and faculty from Madison, Bonn, Baltimore (Johns Hopkins), Seoul (South Korea), and Florence (Italy) to share work and ideas, sample delicious food, and explore the former German Hauptstadt and the surrounding region. Our Bonner GastgeberInnen made the entire Madison team feel most welcome and comfortable.

This Sommerakademie took place at the former Rheinlandpfälzische Landesvertretung, located in the heart of the government quarter in Bonn. The participants certainly had *volles Programm*—with a total of 20 students presenting their work, receiving feedback, and fielding questions. There were talks on a wide range of topics and authors, from Hölderlin, Goethe, and Jean Paul to Sebald, Kafka, and F.C. Delius. The graduate students from Madison contributed to the rich discussions on aspects of time in/and literature: Jack Davis presented on performativity in Christoph Schlingensiefel’s *Mea Culpa*; Karolina May-Chu discussed Sten Nadolny’s *Die Entdeckung der Langsamkeit*; Bill Waltz offered his thoughts on memory transfer and cultural history in the GDR; and I presented on aspects of reading visual historiography in

Bertolt Brecht’s *Arbeitsjournal*e.

The conference, however, was not only aimed at “Bonn aus literarischer Sicht.” Two evening guest lectures by faculty members from biology and astrophysics at Bonn complemented the student presentations. These, to our pleasant surprise, nicely rounded out the conference program and provided provocative reference points on how we humans perceive the notion of “time” from various perspectives, from the experience of reading literature to the making of the universe “aus astrophysikalischer Sicht”! (Is there a dissertation topic in there somewhere?)

The organizers made sure that the international guests were also well fed, amenably housed, and shown the true spirit of *Gastfreundschaft*. We were treated to local *rheinische Küche* at the *Gasthaus im Stiefel* and led through the “Alter Friedhof” in the old city center, where many important Bonner and Bonnerinnen are buried. Mid-week we pushed pause on the conference proceedings to take an all-day excursion. Participants

boarded a bus, along with organizers Jürgen Fohrmann (also currently the Rektor [Chancellor] of the University, who took a week out of his schedule for the Sommerschule) and Hedwig Pompe, to the Burg Vogelsang in the Eifel National Park, where we enjoyed a guided tour of the surrounding compound built in another time in German history. The complex was a former Nazi elite training institution, preserved today as a memorial and visitor center. From Vogelsang, the party headed to the Hans Arp Museum at Rolandseck for *Kunst, Kaffee, und Kuchen*. The highlight of the day was the return trip to Bonn: the group ditched the bus and traveled by boat down the Rhine, past majestic cliffs (including the famous Drachenfels), countless castles, and vineyards. “Zeit und Literatur” was a wonderfully organized, well-conceived conference, where old friends reconnected and new (and hopefully long-lasting) friendships emerged. There was even time for some ice cream!



Madison in Bonn: Kris Imbrigotta, Bill Waltz, and Karolina May-Chu.



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STILL GOING STRONG:

## 23rd Annual German Day 2012

BY CHARLES J. JAMES

Once again, Memorial Union was filled this spring with over 500 students from 28 high schools and 10 middle schools to participate in our annual German Day, which was held on April 19. In addition to the tried and true contests, such as Spelling, Poetry, Skits, Music, DVDs, and Posters, this year we tested out a new contest: Pictionary. It was by all accounts a complete success and has already found its place on next year's program. There was no specific motto for German Day this year, which meant that students had complete freedom to come up with creative ways to advertise German at their schools. Our 24<sup>th</sup> German Day will take place on April 17, 2013, in Memorial Union. We look forward to meeting new teachers, reconnecting with old friends, being inspired by enthusiastic students, and helping maintain the momentum of our German Day tradition, one that would not be possible without the assistance of many students and faculty in



**Students and teachers fill Memorial Union's Great Hall.**

the Department of German, as well as many others. Any German teachers in Wisconsin interested in participating should contact Charles J. James ([cjames@wisc.edu](mailto:cjames@wisc.edu)) for more information.

Do you have memories of visiting UW-Madison for German Day as a student? Did it inspire you to study at UW-Madison or to continue learning German? We'd love to hear your story!