

Slavic Languages and Literatures

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Department Newsletter

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Letter from the Chair

Tomislav Longinović

It is truly remarkable how fast time flies—I can't believe that this letter will mark my last one as a chair in a three-year cycle. Amazingly, despite all the hardship that the state and the university have been going through during the past academic year, our department has managed to survive and thrive under very strenuous circumstances. This year has been marked by the ongoing operation of the Russian Language Flagship Center, thanks to the initiative of Professor Karen Evans-Romaine and the hard work of the faculty and staff she had managed to gather and direct in this landmark effort. This prestigious grant has reinforced the leading status of the University of Wisconsin-Madison Department of Slavic Languages and Literature both nationally and internationally. This year, the department hosted Fulbright scholar Dr. Ksenia Tveryanovich from St. Petersburg State University, who added a significant dimension to the international reputation of our department. You will see an interview with her in this issue. Thanks to the continuing support of our alumni and other benefactors led by the Lapinski and Zawacki families, we have been able to maintain and improve our mission of teaching and research in the areas of Russian, Polish, Czech and Serbo-Croatian languages, literatures and cultures. Once again, alumni support has proven to be vital, and we encourage you to continue your dedication to our program in the years ahead. This is especially true under the cur-



rent budgetary pressures, which make your support crucial for the well-being of our department.

This spring we had another class of graduate students completing the required coursework and taking their preliminary doctoral exams. Our congratulations go out to Sarah Kapp and Nick Rampton for successfully passing their exams and achieving dissertator status. In addition, our brand new PhD, Amanda Baldwin Murphy, has secured a teaching position at Colby College, yet more proof that the department continues with its excellent record of graduate student placement. Kat Scollins, whose article you will read in this newsletter, has accepted a tenure-track appointment at the University

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of Vermont, where she has taught for the past year. Along with Amanda, Matt Walker was awarded a new PhD. Matt taught this past year in a continuing appointment at the University of Pennsylvania and will move to Stanford University this coming year on a postdoctoral fellowship. Colleen Lucey has distinguished herself by winning the Humanities Exposed Award from the Humanities Center at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, which has allowed her to teach Russian literature to the inmates in the Wisconsin prison system during the 2010–2011 academic year. Assistant Professor Irina Shevelenko has been selected as a Fellow at the University of Wisconsin Institute for Research in the Humanities. Our faculty has continued to excel in all areas of academic endeavor, as evidenced by the notes in the rest of the department newsletter.

Our new class of graduate students looks very promising indeed, and we hope to make their graduate school experience at the Slavic department a worthwhile and meaningful one. I am personally looking forward to the next year and hoping that we will maintain our high standards of scholarship, teaching and service. I would like to thank the faculty, staff, students, alumni and supporters for making 2010–2011 yet another successful year at the UW-Madison Slavic department.

Have a wonderful summer and a successful year ahead!

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UW-Madison Russian Flagship Center

Karen Evans-Romaine, Director

The Russian Flagship Center at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, a collaborative initiative of the Slavic Department and the Language Institute, with CREECA and the Doctoral Program in Second Language Acquisition, experienced tremendous growth during its first year: from 4 students admitted in July 2010 to 20 students enrolled in the Flagship Program in September 2012. Three Flagship students will participate in the academic-year capstone program at St. Petersburg University: Julia Deyeva, Naira Ovsepyan, and Ryan Prinz. Naira and Ryan describe their experiences below. A fourth advanced Flagship student, Grace Tran, graduated in May 2011 and will teach English in Orel as a Fulbright fellow. The four advanced Flagship students took an intensive weekly Flagship Research Seminar with Director Evans-Romaine in which they prepared weekly presentations and wrote research papers on topics of their choice during the fall semester; during the spring semester they read, discussed, and wrote papers on Bulgakov's *Master and Margarita*. Flagship students at all levels participated in individual tutorials two hours a week, coordinated by Dr. Anna Tumarkin and led by graduate students from the Slavic Department, the History Department and the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, and in a weekly social hour, organized by SLA graduate student Snezhana Zheltoukhova. Weekly activities ranged from guest lectures to films to preparing *bliny*. Thanks to CREECA sponsorship and Snezhana's organizational efforts, Flagship students, as well as Slavic Department and CREECA faculty and graduate students, participated in conversations in Russian with CREECA guest lecturers including Moscow-based music critic, journalist, and radio host Artemy Troitsky; political scientist Oxana Shevel; Carnegie Moscow Foundation political analyst and journalist Maria Lipman; Moscow Human Rights Watch researcher Tanya Lokshina; and Dr. Alexander Martynov, Head of the Department of Foreign Relations, City of Korolyov. Additional Flagship-sponsored guest lectures by members

of the UW-Madison faculty and visiting scholars explored such varied topics as Kazakh culture and Russian-American exchanges focused on environmental and wildlife preservation. This summer the Flagship Program is sponsoring intensive second- and third-year Russian courses, coordinated by Dr. Anna Tumarkin and taught by Slavic Department Teaching Assistants Vika Kononova and Amanda Murphy (third year), Sarah Kapp and Sergey Karpukhin (second year). We look forward to another year of exciting activities for the growing Russian Flagship community. The Slavic Department has enjoyed a close partnership with the Language Institute and CREECA on this initiative, and we are enormously grateful for the administrative leadership of Associate Director of the Language Institute and the Flagship Center, Dr. Dianna Murphy; to Dr. Jennifer Tishler, CREECA Associate Director; and to Flagship coordinator Wendy Johnson, who has been recruiting for the program on campus and elsewhere in Wisconsin, Minnesota, and the Chicago area.

Undergraduate Flagship Students:

Ryan Prinz:

Coming to the University of Wisconsin four years ago I would never have imagined that my life would involve Russian; now, I cannot imagine my life without it. Thanks to the expert guidance of the TAs and professors here, a summer at Middlebury, and a semester in Moscow, I have gained access to a new world that continues to prove itself as rewarding as it is challenging; by now I answer to Ruslan as naturally as I do Ryan. Truly, the Flagship Program has played an integral role in gaining such access. If not for the Flagship, my Russian studies over the past semester would have been limited to three hours a week. Instead, I enjoyed a seminar with Professor Evans-Romaine, weekly meetings with Olga and Sergey [graduate teaching assistants Olga Permitina and Sergey Karpukhin], and invaluable conversations with a variety of experts in fields ranging from Russian politics to icons, not to mention getting to befriend other students who are just as unnaturally passionate about the Russian lan-

guage as I am. Although I am sad that my time here at UW-Madison has come to a close, I eagerly await spending the next academic year studying in Saint Petersburg and, albeit less eagerly, the career search to follow. Looking to the future, I can only say that I hope never to return to that dull period that defined my life prior to coming to Madison. I am confident that thanks to the amazing individuals that call the Slavic Department home, especially to Anna Tumarkin and Karen Evans-Romaine, I won't have to.

Naira Ovsepyan:

I'm truly grateful for the opportunity to have participated in the Domestic Russian Flagship Program at UW-Madison. In the course of the year, my oral communication skills and grammar have improved immensely thanks to my superb tutors. Additionally, I improved my reading and writing skills by completing two research papers in Russian (the first I had ever written). Lastly, my knowledge of the Russian culture, politics, and history has greatly increased as a result of the various Russian speakers, lectures, and 'social hours' we've had this year. All of this has greatly increased my knowledge of the Russian language and culture, and prepared me for my future experiences in Russia. In fact, I will be studying in Russia for a year for the very first time: first, in Ufa this summer (2011) through the State Department's Critical Language Scholarship Program, and then in St. Petersburg for a full academic year through the Overseas Russian Flagship Program. Upon completion, I hope to achieve a Superior level of proficiency in Russian and come back to UW-Madison for one more semester to complete my Political Science and Russian degrees. Eventually I aspire to work for the US government after graduating from the university, specifically the Department of State or the Department of Homeland Security, and I believe that the UW-Madison Russian Flagship Program has given me a head start on achieving my life-long dream.

Faculty News



David Bethea

This has been another busy year for yours truly. I stepped down from my seven-year Oxford connection in January: on the one hand, I will miss lecturing to, and interacting with, a different type of student and different cultural context; on the other, I will enjoy focusing more on my own students (and research projects) stateside and on simplifying life, as they say. Speaking of students, a number of current and former ones have been achieving great things of late: Keith Blasing continues to hone his skills as a working translator in Tallahassee and will take his ATA exam in June—he does this while writing his thesis on Platonov and expanding his “domestic responsibilities” with Molly Thomasy Blasing (see below); Stuart Goldberg has now received promotion and tenure at Georgia Tech and will see his book *Mandelstam, Blok, and the Boundaries of Mythopoetic Symbolism* published by Ohio State University Press momentarily; Don Loewen has recently been made Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education at Binghamton; Amanda Murphy has just defended her (splendid!) dissertation, “Beyond Tatiana: Pushkin’s Heroines at the Intersection of Life and Art,” and will be teaching at Colby College this fall; Hana Pichova is now chair of the Slavic Department at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; Molly Thomasy Blasing has followed her Fulbright year in Russia with a WARF dissertation fellowship from the Graduate School—her thesis, on the trope of photography in modern Russian poetry, is showing great promise, as indicated by the sliver of it that she read on Tsvetaeva’s photos for the 2010 AATSEEL-WI conference and for which she shared the Shaw prize; Kat Scollins, after visiting since January 2010 at the University of Vermont, has been appointed to a tenure-track position there; and this past spring Lisa Woodson won a coveted L&S Teaching Fellows Award.

This past fall (2010) I enjoyed, as always, teaching my big survey of the classics of nineteenth-

century literature and my graduate-level introduction to Pushkin’s life and works. On the scholarly front I’m continuing to make progress (slow progress!) on my “creative” biography of Pushkin. Likewise, our new annotated edition of *The Works of Pushkin/Sochineniia Pushkina* is preparing to publish our third volume, which is being edited by our own Alexander Dolinin. My other intellectual interest of late has been the intersection of science (Darwin) and philosophy/religious thought (Solov’ev, Rozanov) in the latter part of the nineteenth century.

Another undertaking that has occupied much of my time of late is more “administrative” and requires, for this aging bundle of thoughts, feelings, and (sometimes waning) energy, a shifting of gears. We’re calling it, for lack of a better catch-phrase for now, the “Pushkin Project,” and as some of you will recognize, it is an expanding and reshaping of the Mikhailovskoe summer program I have been toying with, mostly unsuccessfully, for several years. Fortunately for me, over recent months Karen Evans-Romaine of our department and Dianna Murphy of the Language Institute have been extremely generous with their time and savvy in helping me begin to hammer the abstract into concrete form. It takes a village, as they say...

In any event, the concept behind the “Pushkin Project” is as follows (apologies for the hyped language, which is clearly “donor-oriented”):

The Pushkin Project is an empowering and transformative educational experience that aims to provide American high school students from underprivileged or minority backgrounds access to the acclaimed national Russian Flagship program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Underlying the program is a multi-pronged strategy that combines the latest knowledge about best practices in language acquisition with an integrated subject curriculum focused around Alexander Pushkin, Russia’s national poet (“Russia’s Shakespeare”), whose African heritage was instrumental in his sense of identity and in crucial aspects of his life and works. The example of Pushkin has never been used this way with

an American student audience, and we believe his life story, his extraordinary ancestry, his supreme ability to turn the adverse circumstances dealt to him by life into creative behavior and a legacy that has touched millions, can be harnessed in a way to inspire young people who may have their own difficult circumstances to overcome.

Pushkin Scholars will begin the study of Russian while in high school, during their junior and senior years, as well as over the summers, through an intensive Russian language program the summer between their junior and senior years, and on an overseas program in Russia the summer after their senior year. The summer after their senior year, students will also participate in a Rhodes Scholar seminar in leadership development at Oxford University prior to their in-country experience in Russia.

We have an outstanding candidate high school in Chicago, Pritzker Prep, that is interested in partnering with us and that has a student audience whose sole foreign language instruction is in Russian. On the Madison side, the L&S and campus administrations have been very encouraging. Удачи нам (чтоб не сглазить!)

David Danaher feels fortunate to have taught his



most enrolled “Structure of Russian” class ever at UW-Madison (a dozen talented students, both grads and undergrads) as well as a small but utterly dedicated group of intermediate Czech students over the 2010–11 academic year.

He also taught his monograph course on Václav Havel (<http://web.mac.com/pes/havel/>) for the seventh time and was pleased this time around to welcome Paul Wilson, Havel’s main English translator, as a guest lecturer in the class thanks to the goodwill and support of CREECA. In November 2010, he was invited to Prague’s Charles University to give two talks on comparative ethnolinguistics applied to literature, and he has several forthcoming publications on the topic (<http://cokdybysme.net/publications.html>).



Karen Evans-Romaine thoroughly enjoyed teaching two courses for the first time: Lit Tran 205: “Women in Russian Literature,” and Slavic 818: “Teaching Methods in Slavic Languages,” the latter with a

lot of guidance from the course’s previous instructor, Benjamin Rifkin, now Dean at the College of New Jersey. The Teaching Methods course featured guest presentations by Dr. Dianna Murphy, Associate Director of the Language Institute and the UW-Madison Russian Flagship Center; Dan Davidson, Professor and Director of the Second Language Acquisition Program at Bryn Mawr College and Director of American Councils for International Education; and Richard Robin, Professor of Russian at George Washington University and first author of the two-volume Russian language textbook *Golosa*, together with Evans-Romaine and Galina Shatalina. Robin, Evans-Romaine, and Shatalina have just finished reviewing page proofs for the 5th edition of *Golosa*, Book One, to be published this summer, and during summer 2011 and academic year 2011–2012 will work on Book Two, due out by September 2012.

This year Evans-Romaine was appointed a core faculty member in the doctoral program in Second Language Acquisition and an affiliated faculty member in the Department of Germanic Languages & Literatures. Together with Dianna Murphy and Flagship Assistant Director Anna Tumarkin, she has also been busy with the rapidly expanding Russian Flagship Program. (See separate update.)

Halina Filipowicz developed and taught a new course, “Ethical Issues in Representing the Holocaust in Poland,” in Spring 2011. She will offer it again in Fall 2011. She is thrilled to have made good progress on her book manuscript and to have had two new articles published this past year, including “Re-Envisioning Solidarity: History, Agency, and the Politics of Performance,” in *Theatre and Performance in Russia and Eastern Europe: Today and Yesterday*, a special issue of *Theatre Journal* 62.3

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(October 2010): 333-47. In May 2011, she accepted an affiliate appointment in the Department of Gender and Women's Studies.



Judith Kornblatt

In April, Professor Kornblatt, along with Professor Irina Shevelenko, participated in a symposium on "Russian Icons in Context" in conjunction with a special exhibition at the Chazen Museum of Art: "Holy Image, Sacred Presence: Russian Icons, 1500-1900."

On May 23-24, 2011, Judith Kornblatt and Patrick Michelson (PhD History) organized a conference in Madison called "Rethinking Russian Religious Thought." Participants from the US and Europe evaluated the importance of Professors Kornblatt and Richard Gustafson's volume, *Russian Religious Thought*, for the development of the field, and presented recent research on the topic to be published later. The conference and resulting volume are interdisciplinary and intergenerational.



Tomislav Longinović

Tomislav Longinović taught his popular course *The Vampire in Literature and Film* for 300 undergraduates in the Spring 2011 semester, making it one of the most popular courses in the humanities at UW-Madison.

Besides serving as a chair, he has published an article in Poland, "Dziewczyna zwana Walizka: Witold Gombrowicz jako hybryda kulturowego przekładu," in *Witold Gombrowicz, Nasz Współczesny* (Krakow: Universitas, 2010), 79-86, as well as one in the United States: "Millennial Memories" in *The Other Shore (A Journal of Slavic and East European Immigrant Experience)*, 1 (2010), 33-46. His book *Vampire Nation: Violence As Cultural Imaginary* has been published this year by Duke University Press, while his article "Serbo-Croatian: Translating the Non-Identical Twins," in

Translation and Opposition, ed. Dimitis Asimakoulas, is forthcoming this summer from *Multilingual Matters* in England.



Irina Shevelenko has completed her last article related to her book-length project "Modernism as Archaism: Nationalism and the Quest for a Modernist Aesthetic in Russia." It discusses Russia's representation at the 1900 Paris Universal Exposition

(a very short version of it was presented at this year's AATSEEL-Wisconsin Conference), and it will appear in the volume entitled *Vnutrenniaia kolonizatsiia Rossii (Russia's Internal Colonization)* scheduled for publication by Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie (Moscow) later this year. Irina also presented other parts of her project at the ASEES Convention (Los Angeles) and at the symposium "Russian Icons in Context" (UW-Madison). In the summer, she will work on the book manuscript proper, which is now under contract with Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie, along with a new, revised, edition of her Tsvetaeva monograph. She looks forward to her tenure review next year and to her spring semester off as a Resident Fellow at the Institute for Research in the Humanities at Madison. Misha starts kindergarten in the fall. He is spending the summer in a Russian immersion program with his grandparents in St. Petersburg, and his progress is beyond his moms' wildest imagination.



Jennifer Tishler

Jennifer and Bill Tishler are delighted to announce the birth of their third child, William Joseph (Will) Tishler. Jennifer and the baby are both doing well. Older brother James (age

7) and his sister Mary (age 3) are excited to have him home. The Slavic Department looks forward to meeting Will at future gatherings.

William Joseph Tishler

Born: 8:29 pm on 5/31/11

St. Mary's Hospital, Madison, WI.

Weight: 8 lbs 3 oz; Length: 19"

Interview with Fulbright Scholar Ksenia Tveryanovich

Conducted and translated by Karen Evans-Romaine

Ksenia Tveryanovich is Assistant Lecturer at the St. Petersburg University Department of Philology. She defended her Kandidatskaya at St. Petersburg University in 2006. She is the author or co-author of numerous articles, mainly focusing on the work of Benedikt Livshits. She was a Fulbright lecturer at the Slavic Department in spring semester 2011, where she taught a graduate course on Russian Criticism and Verse Theory.

What do you teach at St. Petersburg University? What is your position there?

I teach courses in 19th- and 20th-century literary history and verse theory to students in the departments of philology, philosophy, political science, and journalism.

What is the subject of your research?

Verse theory, the history of Russian verse, poetics, and the history of Russian poetry of the 18th century and the first third of the 20th century.

What guest lectures (besides your graduate course) did you deliver during your Fulbright stay?

I gave a lecture for UW-Madison Slavic Department faculty and graduate students on a project colleagues and I are working on at St. Petersburg University, an electronic database of metric and stanzaic structures as a research and educational resource. At the University of Mexico, Albuquerque, I gave a guest lecture entitled “Benedikt Livshits as a Poet, Translator, and Historian of Russian Futurism.”

What are your impressions of UW and Madison?

It's difficult to respond to that question briefly. Both the city and the university made a strong impression on me. Perhaps it's strange to speak of the city and the university separately, since they seem to be one and the same. Of course, Madison is the state capital, but when you come here, you get the feeling that the university is the main part of the city — topographically, with the campus in the center; economically; and demographically, since a significant part of the population either studies and works at the university or is connected with it in some way. I don't know if that is actually the case, but to someone new to the city it certainly seems that way. Of course for any university that's a dream come true: a university in which one can work, live, and relax — an entire university world, a very pleasant atmosphere for professional development.

The library made one of the strongest impressions on me: the possibility to check books out, to order from other libraries those which are unavailable and to get those interlibrary loan books fairly quickly, the comfortable reading rooms, the electronic catalogue, the convenient hours, and so forth.

My conversations with graduate students made the happiest impression on me. Their interest in the subject and their genuine devotion to their chosen profession were a real source of inspiration to me as a teacher.

Anything else you would like to say to Slavic Department colleagues, students, and alumni?

Your department enjoys great renown and respect among Russian poetry scholars and specialists in verse theory. Leading American Slavists have worked here and work here today. The study of Russian poetry has a long tradition here: the works of J. Thomas Shaw and James Bailey have become classics familiar to younger generations of students starting in their undergraduate years. I sincerely hope this tradition will continue. I am very grateful to have been given the opportunity to teach a graduate course devoted in part to Russian verse theory. That was a great honor for me.

Slavic Department Awards

Faculty Awards and Honors

Judith Kornblatt was named President-Elect of ASEES.

Tomislav Longinović received a UW-Madison Faculty Development Seminar grant for his proposed seminar on "Psychoanalysis and Culture."

Irina Shevelenko was named a Resident Fellow for Spring 2012 by the UW-Madison Institute for Research in the Humanities.

Student Awards and Honors

Russian Awards

The department undergraduate community has been busy achieving a great deal this year. The American Council of Teachers of Russian (ACTR) awarded **Ryan Prinz** their Post-Secondary Laureate Award. Ryan also earned the J. Thomas Shaw Award for Undergraduate Excellence, as well as placing third (level 4, non-heritage learners) in ACTR's annual Russian-language essay contest. **Elliot Barts** and **Kyle Farrell** each earned honorable mention at the first-year level in the same competition.

Several students earned funding for further study through the FLAS program (Foreign Language and Area Studies). Both **Isabelle Darby** and **Kristen Hendrickson** are using the grant to spend the summer at Middlebury College's intensive Russian immersion program. **Meagan Dunham** will spend the 2011–12 academic year in Moscow and at UW, while **Niara Ovsepyan** will be in St. Petersburg on the Flagship Program.

Grace My-Hanh Tran received a Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship to Orel, Russia. Closer to home, the UW-Madison Slavic Department gave Awards for Outstanding Progress in Russian to Meagan Dunham at the advanced level and **Brian Hoettels** at the intermediate level. Сердечно всех поздравляем!

Polish Awards

The UW-Madison Polish community has been particularly active this year. More on cultural activities later, but for now, here are the Polish awards won by our talented students.

The Polanki Polish Women's Cultural Club of Milwaukee generously administers a wide variety of grants and scholarships. Our students brought home quite a few: **Magdalena Bojda** won the Janet Dziadulewicz Branden Memorial Award, **Maja Holzman** received the Arthur B. Gurda Memorial Award, and **Elizabeth Mowinski** was recognized with the Sobczak Memorial Award.

Michael and Emily Lapinski Awards

The new recipient of the Michael and Emily Lapinski Graduate Fellowship is **Svetlana Kazaryan**. Michael and Emily Lapinski Undergraduate Scholarships were awarded to **Margaryta Bondarenko**, **Sebastian Jankowski**, **Elliot Bartz**, **Nicole Rusek**, **Sebastian Sharbek**, and **Marta Studnicka**. These awards are made possible by the uncommon generosity of the late Leona Lapinski Leute. She established the Michael and Emily Lapinski Endowment in 2002 to improve the knowledge of Polish language, literature, and culture among students at UW-Madison. The gift honors her parents, Michael and Emily Lapinski, and memorializes their quest for knowledge and their Polish heritage.

Edmund I. Zawacki Award

In 1995 Mrs. Helen Zawacki established the Edmund I. Zawacki award to honor the memory of her late husband. A pillar of our department, Edmund Zawacki taught here from 1939 to 1978, serving as chair from 1939 to 1960. Thanks to the generous support of Mrs. Zawacki, this year we were able to honor recent doctoral degree holder **Amanda Murphy** for Outstanding Achievement in the Study of the Polish Language, Literature, and Culture, recognizing her inspiring love affair with all things Polish. **Olga Permitina** was likewise honored for her work on Zofia Nałkowska's Holocaust prose. The students and faculty of our department express their gratitude to the Zawacki family for sponsoring this award and supporting the Polish program.

Graduate Student Awards

Degrees Conferred

This year the department was pleased to see both **Amanda Murphy** and **Matt Walker** complete their degrees, while **Sarah Kapp** and **Nick Rampton** survived their PhD prelims and received permission to begin their dissertations.

In the meanwhile **Colleen Lucey** and **Olga Permitina** completed their MA degrees. We wish them luck in their further studies in the UW Slavic Department.

Graduate Honors

Russian instructors from our department were recognized by the University community for their fine work. **Lisa Woodson** was selected for a College of Letters & Science Teaching Fellows Award, while **David Houston** received recognition as a University Housing Honored Instructor.

The coveted J.T. Shaw Prize for best paper at the AATSEEL-WI conference was split this year (a rare occurrence, testifying to the quality of the papers presented!): Sergey Karpukhin won for his paper, "Nabokov and the Classics," as did Molly Thomasy Blasing for "*Kartochki beregite: Marina Tsvetaeva and the Poetics of Photography*." Molly also received a dissertator fellowship.

Melissa Miller and **Joey Vergara** were awarded summer FLAS grants. Melissa will spend the summer in Moscow with the ACTR Russian Teachers Program. Joey will use the funds to study Russian at Middlebury College during the summer and Czech at UW-Madison during the coming school year.

Colleen Lucey this year took up the mantle of teaching Russian literature at Oakhill Correctional Institution, having received a HEX (Humanities EXposed) grant from the Center for Humanities at UW-Madison. She eagerly anticipates a teaching position at Middlebury College this summer.

Other Graduate Student News

Keith Blasing and **Molly Thomasy Blasing** have been enjoying life together in Tallahassee, FL and are looking forward to the birth of their first child this summer. Keith is in his third year working full-time as a translator with RussTech, Inc. He recently joined the American Translators Association and will attempt the ATA certification exam in June. Molly worked for the UW Flagship program from afar this year, developing a series of web-based activities for Russian Flagship students. In addition, she had the opportunity to design and teach a popular new course, "Russian Fairy Tales," for the Department of Modern Languages at Florida State University. Molly presented papers on her dissertation research at the AATSEEL-Wisconsin, National AATSEEL and AS-EES conferences this year. She has received a Mellon/Chancellor's Opportunity Fellowship for the 2011-2012 academic year to complete work on her dissertation.

Nina Familiant

Nina's son Philipp Familiant was born on December 20, 2010. Also, the book she wrote a couple of years ago with friend Sarah Dedic, *Siberia John and The Mystery of The Amazing Zoo*, was nominated for the Midwest Book Award in the Young Adult Fiction category (<http://www.mipa.org/awards.html>).

Peter Hyson has very much enjoyed his first year with the department, bringing his Russian back up to snuff and most recently writing on Mandelstam and Bulgakov. This summer he looks forward to working aboard a lobster boat out of Portland, Maine.

From Our Alumni

Kat Scollins

I remember my disbelief in grad school when professors would warn me to get publishing right away, because “you’ll never have as much free time as you do as a grad student.” I was incredulous: how could this possibly be true? How could these professors possibly understand what it means to teach a class and raise children, all while writing a dissertation? Of course, it turns out they were right. The jump from grad student to university lecturer was a shocking one, and I now look back with longing to my grad student days, when I had evenings free—even whole days sometimes—to investigate some hunch about Gogol, to explain politics to Professor Bethea, or to split pitchers on the terrace with my fellow TAs.

In my final autumn at the UW, as I finished editing my dissertation, I learned that an 18-month lectureship had opened up at the University of Vermont, in my hometown of Burlington. The serendipity of a job opening up in my hometown right when I was finishing my dissertation was enough to overcome any misgivings I might have had about dragging my husband and young kids across the country for a temporary position and a 4-4 course load. I was lucky enough to get the position, and I immediately jumped into planning my spring semester courses: two sections of 2nd-semester Russian, an advanced Conversation and Composition course, and a large lecture course on 19th-century literature in translation. Our family left Madison a few days after my dissertation defense, and we arrived in Burlington during what would become the biggest snowstorm in the city’s history. Two weeks later, I was teaching.

Ours is a small department—just two people on the Russian side of a German and Russian Department—so the teaching and advising load is always high. My new colleagues were extraordinarily patient and supportive, and my fellow Russianist, in particular, was always willing to share anything – from a syllabus to a drink after a difficult week. Still, there was a lot to get used to in my new department:

huge class sizes (there are 30 students in each section of intro Russian, for instance); an unfamiliar teaching philosophy (focusing more on grammar and translation than I was accustomed to) and an overwhelming teaching schedule (three classes per day, with only two short breaks—during which I generally had a line of students out the door). Each night, I would get home just in time to help feed the kids and put them to bed, then I’d stay up past midnight grading, reading, and planning the next day’s classes.

I somehow survived that first semester and spent the summer madly trying to get out an article and plan the following year’s eight courses (including a freshman seminar on Russian literature, 4th-year Reading Comprehension, and a course on Russian Phonology). Some of these classes would turn out to be a ball (who would have guessed how fun intonation patterns could be?), and some will need some tweaking in the future (I’m not sure my first-year students were as excited about Turgenev as I was). The best news of the year came in March, when I learned that I’d been selected for the tenure-track position in our department. When I called one of my old UW professors to tell him the good news, though, he had an unnerving piece of advice for me: “Try to enjoy this time when all you have to do is teach; you’ll never have this much free time again!”

Amanda Murphy

This May Amanda Murphy successfully defended her dissertation: “Beyond Tatiana: Pushkin’s Heroines at the Intersection of Life and Art.” Amanda will teach Intensive Third Year Russian as an Associate Lecturer this summer, together with Vika Kononova, as a part of the new Flagship program at UW-Madison. In the fall, Amanda will begin a one-year position as a Faculty Fellow at Colby College in Waterville, Maine. She welcomes visitors!

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(Alumni news continued from page 10)

Molly Peeney

Molly Peeney returned to Madison in January of 2010 to defend her dissertation after completing the first half of the Overseas Russian Flagship Program in St. Petersburg. In August of 2010 she began her position as a “Professional Specialist” at the University of Notre Dame, where she serves as Director of Undergraduate Studies for the Russian program and teaches three courses per semester in Russian language and literature. Last year she presented a paper at ASEES entitled “Despair: The Bitter Connection Between Nabokov and Gorky.” At the upcoming ASEES conference in Washington she will participate in a roundtable on “Nabokov and Soviet Literature.”

Matt Walker

Matthew Walker (PhD, 2010) has been happily employed as a visiting lecturer in the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures at the University of Pennsylvania for the past two years. This summer he will be teaching in the Russian School at Middlebury for the first time, and in the fall he will begin a post-doctoral fellowship at Stanford University, where he will teach in the Introduction to the Humanities program and work on turning his dissertation on the history of Gogol criticism into a proper book.

Polish Cultural Events

Photos by Ania Fields

This year the UW-Madison Polish Student Association, with the support of the Slavic Department, organized two events.

First, the Polish Film Festival (November 19, 20, 21) was organized in collaboration with the UW Cinematheque by Sebastian Jankowski, a student in the Polish program and president of the Polish Students Association. This year marked the twentieth anniversary of the film festival, which was first organized by Ewa Miernowska in 1991

to promote the most recent Polish film. The event attracts hundreds of people. For more information, see the news release at <http://www.news.wisc.edu/18678>.

Second was a concert of Polish folk music celebrating Chopin’s 200 birthday (September 30, 2010, Mills Hall). The following is from the press release of performing ensembles Kwadrofonik and the Janusz Prusinowski Trio:

“Frederic Chopin’s 200th Birthday Party—A Polish Jazz Celebration” is a cycle of concerts/music shows organized in the most prestigious concert halls in the United States of America: Carnegie Hall in New York and Symphony Center in Chicago.

The purpose of the show is to present how jazz and folk music have been inspired by Chopin’s work. The performance will not only emphasize the roots of the inspirations—Chopin’s music—but, thanks to the use of jazz and contemporary music, each concert will also be a unique event, stemming from the tapestry of improvisational techniques.



Kwadrofonik performing in Madison in September

The Kwadrofonik pianist first presents Chopin’s original work as a theme, and this theme is subsequently elaborated through the improvisation of the whole Kwadrofonik quartet. Kwadrofonik’s theme is then taken up by other jazz musicians, who are put together in various instrumental or vocal-instrumental sets. We expect to have several works of Chopin (mazurkas, preludes, waltzes, parts of fantasias and piano sonatas) presented in new forms during the following improvisations. This will be

achieved through full exploitation of the sound potential of the various instrumental sets. The concert will conclude with a finale featuring all the artists. Throughout the concert, behind the scenes, Janusz Prusinowski's Trio will be playing the very ancient folk music of Mazovia which serves as an inspiration for both Chopin and for the Mazovian folk band which has adapted his works.



Performance by the Janusz Prusinowski Trio

The Janusz Prusinowski Trio was founded to play Polish music according to the best rural executive canons. Thanks to the attention paid to the details that are present in the music of Jan Lewandowski, Kazimierz Meto, Józef Zaráś, Jan Ciarkowski, Peter and Jan Gac, Ignacy Bednarz, and others, it's easy to recognize each of their own, individual sounds in the band's interpretations.

Apart from the violin, basses and a drum, the Trio's instrumentarium also consists of shawm and a wooden flute. Those instruments enrich the classic mazurka and kujawiak dance with sounds coming straight from antique nomadic and court bands from all the way from Tajikistan to Brittany. Rural dances' dynamics, together with the characteristic Polish language, form a space-time in which all the rhythmical, melodious, and sound abilities of kujawiak dance, mazurka, oberek, powiślak dance or podróżniak dance may be fulfilled. Musical dialogue between instrumentalists, manipulating heterophony and common experience in improvising, make the group absolutely exceptional. "I was here, Frederic"

In this project we try to understand which

folk pieces of music could have inspired Frederic Chopin when he wrote his greatest works. Is it possible that Chopin was influenced not only by the nuances of the folk melodies but also by their lyrics? This concert is a story, a fiction, a fantasy on what the composer might have heard in the Polish folk music deeply rooted in his soul before he left Poland forever, and whose unforgettable melodies he kept with him for use in his preludes, mazurkas, and sonatas. Combining two pianos and a rich variety of percussion instruments, we bridge harsh folk music with the quotations of Chopin's works which belong to the aristocracy of musical literature. We also play with Chopin's harmony by juxtaposing it in an unconventional and original way. In our pieces we present our journey from the source, through inspiration, to our fascination of Chopin's genius.

2010 AATSEEL-Wisconsin Conference

The annual AATSEEL-Wisconsin Conference was held on October 22–23, 2010 at UW-Madison's Pyle Center. The keynote speaker for the event was Dr. Alexander Levitsky, eminent professor and translator from Brown University. His address, "Russia and Orientalism: The Case of G.R. Derzhavin," explored Russia's status as eastern nation and its relationship to its own eastern provinces, using Derzhavin's own career as a point of reference.

Following Dr. Levitsky's lead, Saturday's sessions adopted a variety of perspectives on history. Visiting alumna Alyssa Dinega Gillespie offered some recent research in her paper, "Sex, Sin, Seduction, and the Sacred: Pushkin's *Gavriiliada* as a Meditation on the Risks and Responsibility of Being a Poet." Sergey Karpukhin opened his recent dissertation research to discussion with his Shaw Prize co-winning "Vladimir Nabokov and the Classics." The following session returned directly to the Russia of Catherine II. Victoria Ivleva's paper, titled "The Politics of Weaving: The Creation of a Public Image by Catherine II," explored issues of gender and public perception, while Michael Slager of the University of Illinois-Chicago picked up the keynote address's topic with, "The Prolific Pen of

Catherine II: The Orient as Political Metaphor.”

The following session included papers on *fin-de-siècle* Russia. Sarah Kapp approached the era aesthetically with her “A Symbolist Resurrection of Nietzschean Tragedy: The Myth of Cleopatra in Bryusov’s Poetry.” Professor Irina Shevelenko examined Russia’s self-representation to the world in a paper entitled “Representing the Empire and the Nation: Russia at the 1900 Universal Exposition in Paris.” Nick Rampton concluded the session with “Shestov on Religion: A Two-stage Distillation with Partial Results” before letting everybody out for lunch.

The first of two afternoon sessions focused on disparate means of representing experience. Darya Ivashniova started with a paper entitled ““Gargoyles in the Postmodern World: Danuta Mostwin’s *Émigré Gothic*.” Jessica Hinds-Bond, visiting from Northwestern University, followed with a survey of “Theatrical Manifestations of Russian Postmodernism,” after which Dijana Mitrović read “History in Three of Bulgakov’s Plays/Three of Bulgakov’s Plays in History.” The final session of the conference centered around works crossing over boundaries of genre and gender. Molly Thomasy Blasing offered the paper for which she shared the Shaw prize, “*Kartochki beregite*: Marina Tsvetaeva and the Poetics of Photography,” followed by Connor Doak from Northwestern with a paper entitled “*Vse stalo muzhskim?*: Masculinity in the Work of Three Russian Futurists: Kruchenykh, Maiakovskii, and Khlebnikov.” The conference’s concluding paper was Olga Permitina’s “The City as the ‘Music Snuff-Box’ (*Tabakerka*) in Elena Guro’s Poetic Prose Work ‘Songs of the City.’”

The conference as a whole was very rewarding. We were very glad to receive so many visitors, and are especially grateful to Dr. Levitsky for having joined us and added so much to our discussions. Likewise a special word of thanks is due to Jesse Stavis, this year’s conference organizer, and the organizing committee: Colleen Lucey, Sarah Kapp, and Thomas Tabatowsky. We look forward already to next October, and eagerly invite any who may wish to attend.



Obituary: J. Thomas Shaw

David Bethea

Joseph Thomas (Tom) Shaw, Professor Emeritus of Slavic Languages, died on April 4, 2011 in Madison of a continuing illness. As many of you know, Tom Shaw was the closest thing to a patriarch figure our department has known and was the doyen of Pushkin studies in North America for half a century.

Tom was born in 1919 in Ashland City, Tennessee. At the height of the Depression and despite significant financial obstacles, he enrolled at Austin Peay (then a two-year Normal School) in Clarksville, TN. He graduated from Austin Peay’s two-year program in 1938, and completed a bachelor’s and master’s degree at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

Tom Shaw’s graduate work was interrupted by World War II. As he would later write, with his usual matter-of-factness, “The Navy decided there was need for me to learn Russian. So they sent me to their language school [the Navy Oriental Languages

School, then at the University of Colorado] to take the intensive Russian language course.” With this training, fairly unique for its time, Tom was then deployed to the US Navy Aerological Station, at Khabarovsk, USSR, where he was instrumental in providing weather information in the war with Japan and the Korean War. He continued in the active and inactive Naval Reserve until his retirement at the rank of Captain. He was also active in local and church affairs.

At the end of World War II, Tom returned to graduate studies, enrolling at Harvard University. He studied both English and Russian literature, a comparative framework that would interest him in the years ahead, and wrote his thesis on the verse tale in Byron and Lermontov. He received his Ph.D. in 1950.

In 1949 Tom began his teaching career at Indiana University, remaining there on its faculty until 1961. He was then hired to be department chair at the UW-Madison, where he built our program into one with a top-tier reputation in the Slavic field. In time Tom became an internationally recognized Pushkin scholar and the founder and long-time editor of the *Slavic and East European Journal*.

Tom Shaw is probably best known in the West for his three-volume annotated translation of *The Letters of Alexander Pushkin*, first published in 1963. However, Pushkinists in Russia have long recognized him for his scholarly articles on various aspects of the poet’s work and for his studies of Pushkin’s rhyme. In an interview, he explained that his are “the only Rhyme Dictionaries and the only Concordances of the poetry of Pushkin ever to have appeared anywhere.” Since his retirement 21 years ago, Tom published or republished 23 volumes, including three published in Moscow in Russian translation. His last work, *Pushkin’s Rhyming: A Comparative Study*, was published by the University of Wisconsin Press in 2010.

The *Pushkin Encyclopedia* lists the accomplishments of 24 great scholars of the work of Alexander Pushkin; all but Tom Shaw were Russian. In 1992, Tom was elected “Honorary President in Perpetuum” of the American Pushkin Society. On a more informal note, for decades Tom supported his

students and the department in myriad unselfish and inspiring ways: he worked tirelessly with his dissertators, spending countless hours going over their formulations to strengthen their scholarly rigor and objectivity; he fulfilled numerous administrative posts—departmental chair, associate dean of the Graduate School—cheerfully and with subtle good judgment; he taught his way, focusing on demonstrated knowledge rather than opinion and avoiding undue speculation (what he termed the “critical” as opposed to the “scholarly”); and he constantly gave of himself, including a substantial portion of his estate, to promote Russian and Pushkin studies on campus and nationally. And speaking *pro domo sua*, I benefited greatly from Tom Shaw’s advice and help early on in my own career. Personally, my favorite scholarly work of Tom’s—which is perhaps the manner in which he would most like us to remember him—is his 1977 article, first appearing in *SEEJ*, on the “confusion” of parables in “The Stationmaster” (“‘The Stationmaster’ and the New Testament Parable”). This piece shows both how well Tom understood his poet’s psychology and how well he attended to textual detail.

Tom was also a lifetime member of the central American professional societies in his field: the Modern Language Association (MLA), the American Association of Teachers of Slavic and European Languages (AATSEEL) and the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies (AAASS). He was editor for its first fourteen years of the *Slavic and East European Journal* (the organ of AATSEEL). That organization honored him in 1991 for “Distinguished Contribution to the Profession.” Finally, for more than four decades, Tom Shaw’s profile has appeared in a variety of Who’s Who publications, including “Who’s Who in American Education,” “Who’s Who in America” and “Who’s Who in the World.”

If you wish to honor the memory of Professor Shaw by making a donation to the Slavic Department’s J. Thomas Shaw Fund, please see the information on donations on the final page of this newsletter and select the appropriate donation fund.

2011 AATSEEL-Wisconsin Conference

21–22 October 2011

Call for Papers

Abstracts for 20-minute papers on any aspect of Slavic literatures and cultures (including film, visual and performing arts, and language pedagogy) are invited for the 2011 conference. Comparative topics and interdisciplinary approaches are welcome. Recent conference programs and guidelines for preparing abstracts are posted on the AATSEEL-WI website at http://slavic.lss.wisc.edu/new_web/?q=node/7.

To present a paper at the AATSEEL-WI conference, please submit a proposal by 31 August 2011. A complete proposal consists of the following:

1. Author's contact information (name, affiliation, postal address, telephone, email address)
2. Paper title
3. 300- to 500-word abstract
4. Equipment request (if necessary)

Please send proposals by email to Colleen Lucey, conference organizer, at clucey@wisc.edu. Please include "AATSEEL-WI" in the subject line. All submissions will be acknowledged.

University of Wisconsin-Madison
Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures
1432 Van Hise Hall
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