



Department of  
German, Nordic, and Slavic+  
COLLEGE OF LETTERS & SCIENCE  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

# Mitteilungen aus Madison

2023

NEWS FROM GERMAN AT UW-MADISON



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Greetings from the German Program!



The 2023-24 academic year is now well underway and we in the German program have much to be grateful for. This past year our student population continued to grow, with a total of 874 enrollments in undergraduate and graduate courses in the spring and 1,050 this fall. As has been the trend for the last several years, our largest courses are those taught in English at the undergraduate level on a wide range of topics related to the cultures of German-speaking societies, past and present. While some students enrolled in our English-taught courses are German majors, most are undergraduates with no prior background in German. The diversity of our advanced-level undergraduate and graduate courses taught in German this past year was similarly strong. I invite you to read about our curriculum in a new feature in this year's Mitteilungen, "Spotlight on the Classroom."

A special highlight of the past year was hosting our 31st annual German Day, the theme of which was *Bunte Welt*. We welcomed over 350 students representing twenty-one middle and high school German programs from across Wisconsin. German Day, our signature outreach initiative, has brought thousands of students to Madison over the past three decades, many of whom have continued their study of German in college, including at UW–Madison.

At the end of the spring semester, we celebrated our outstanding undergraduate students at our annual Undergraduate Awards Ceremony. Thirty students were recognized for their exceptional work in intermediate-level courses, while sixteen others received awards for achievement in advanced-level courses. Paula Filios was the recipient of this year's Klaus L. Berghahn Award for an outstanding essay written in German. Three students received awards endowed by Ms. Lisbeth Pisk in honor of her family for exceptional achievement across multiple German courses: Malachi Clark (Lisbeth Pisk Award), Grace Bauernfeind (Pisk and Ronda Broatch Family Award), and Rachel Muhl (Dr. Karl Oskar and Theodora Pisk Award). This fall, Rachel began her career as a high school German teacher in Juneau, WI. Quoting from her acceptance speech, Rachel observed that:

*"learning German has had such a deep impact on me. It has provided me with so many wonderful opportunities and so much knowledge about the world, which has made me a more well-rounded person. I cannot wait to be able to share my experiences, knowledge, and empathy with others and hope to inspire my future students as much as my professors here have inspired me."*

This year marks some major milestones among our faculty. Jeanne Schueller, our Language Program Director and Director of Undergraduate Studies, has been appointed to the rank of Full Teaching Professor. Two years ago, UW–Madison implemented the new Teaching Professor title series and Jeanne is among the first three colleagues in the College of Letters and Science to receive this appointment. Congratulations, Jeanne!

This past spring, our dear colleagues Sabine Gross and Monika Chavez retired. Both Sabine and Monika joined the German faculty in 1992 and during their thirty-one years of service distinguished themselves as outstanding teacher-scholars and department and campus citizens. While we miss seeing them regularly in the halls of Van Hise, we are glad that both still live in Madison and remain connected with our program.



On a sad note, our beloved former German department administrator, Joan Leffler, passed away in January. Joan spent her entire working career at UW–Madison and was our colleague for twenty-three years, until her retirement in 2014. We will be honoring her memory with a plaque in our department lounge.

We are excited to welcome two new colleagues to the German program this fall, Zach Fitzpatrick and Mary Hennessy. Zach was trained at the University of Illinois Chicago and came to us from Wesleyan University, while Mary is an alum of the University of Michigan and most recently taught at UC–Berkeley. *Herzlich willkommen, Zach und Mary!*

I want to express my gratitude to you, our friends of UW–Madison's German program. Your support makes it possible for us to sponsor visitors and events that enhance what we do in the classroom, as well as offer awards and scholarships for our hard-working undergraduate and graduate students. Thank you so much!

Mit freundlichen Grüßen,

*Mark A. Loudon*  
Mark Loudon  
Head, German+ unit



College of Letters & Science  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Dean's Message

This year, UW–Madison celebrates 175 years as one of the world's premier public universities. Since its founding in 1848, UW's traditions of teaching excellence, academic discovery and public service have set the standard for institutes of higher education throughout the world. And since its own founding in 1889, the College of Letters & Science has advanced the university's commitment that innovations developed here will impact the world.

How will L&S lead for the next 175 years? By focusing on the core values that define our liberal arts mission: honing our creative talents, developing the intellectual courage to ask tough questions about the world around us, and building the connections between disciplines, people and ideas that drive tomorrow's innovations.

Our breadth is our greatest strength, from the disciplines we teach to the students who learn and thrive in our classrooms. That diversity – of thought, skills, backgrounds and lived experiences – is what makes L&S such an extraordinary place. It is why our faculty, students, staff and alumni continue to be recognized on campus and around the globe for their teaching, research and service. And it is why Letters & Science will continue to remain an academic leader and the heart of this great university.

Join me this year in celebrating this incredible milestone, and thank you for supporting us as we help lay the foundation of excellence for UW–Madison's next 175.

On, Wisconsin!

Eric Wilcots, Dean  
Mary C. Jacoby Professor of Astronomy  
UW–Madison College of Letters & Science



MITTEILUNGEN AUS MADISON is the annual newsletter of the German Program at the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

Edited by Julia Goetze, Julie Larson-Guenette, and Sabine Mödersheim

Layout by Jenna Sorensen

Cover photo: Near Bascom Hall at the University of Wisconsin-Madison during autumn on November 11, 2021. (Photo by Bryce Richter / UW-Madison)

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## Faculty / Graduate Program

### Welcoming Two New Faculty Members



#### Zach Ramon Fitzpatrick

Zach Ramon Fitzpatrick received his Ph.D. from the University of Illinois at Chicago. As a third-generation Filipino American, Zach was keen on using his doctoral studies to forge a

connection between his interests in German film and the Asian diaspora. With the support of a Mellon-CES (Council for European Studies) Fellowship, his dissertation project, *Shifting Focus: Asian German Film Representation since 1910*, uncovers a vast archive of images of “Asia” from over a century of German cinema. His research has brought him into contact with many scholars of the budding sub-field of Asian German studies. With two colleagues, he is currently co-editing a volume that is tentatively titled *New Narratives of Asian German Film History: Imagination, Collaboration, and Diasporic Representation*.

Through his research, Zach aims to reach both academic and broader audiences. This summer, the Berlin Asian Film Network invited him to a sold-out community screening. Zach provided an introductory presentation of the long, but relatively unknown, history of Asians in German cinema, so the attendees had more context when seeing two recent short films by up-and-coming Vietnamese German filmmakers.

As a new assistant professor, Zach comes to UW–Madison with a variety of teaching experiences. He spent a year in Koblenz as a Fulbright English teaching assistant. In addition to his years as a graduate teaching assistant in Chicago, he also taught German language and film courses at Wesleyan University in Connecticut and at DePaul University. This summer in Leipzig, he participated in the AATG seminar “Diversity and Social (In)Justice in German as a Foreign Language,” where participants not only reflected on teaching more diverse course materials, but also on fostering more

inclusive pedagogy in German classrooms. After his first few lessons at UW–Madison, he is already thoroughly impressed with the students’ high level of engagement and openness to exploring new topics. In future semesters, Zach would like to develop courses covering German film, Asian German studies, new media, post-migrant cultural productions, “*öffentlich-rechtlich*” (public broadcasting) television, and queer studies, just to name a few ideas.

Although Zach spent most of his childhood in Virginia, his connection to Germany began at the age of five, when his mother was a nurse and his family was stationed in the Rhineland for three years. During his graduate studies in Chicago, the Midwest won him over. He is excited to be back, now a resident of Madison. Beyond getting to know his new GNS+ colleagues and students, Zach looks forward to exploring the city’s food scene (let him know if you have any recommendations!) and catching film screenings at the UW Cinematheque and the spring Wisconsin Film Festival.



#### Mary Hennessy

Mary earned her PhD in German Studies at the University of Michigan in 2021. Her research and teaching interests include German film and media, gender and feminist theory,

modern literature, and critical theory. Before joining the faculty at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Mary was a lecturer of German at the University of California, Berkeley, and a Max Kade Postdoctoral Fellow at the Berlin Program for Advanced German and European Studies at the Free University of Berlin.

Mary’s research tells the stories of women whose labor and lives were shaped by new forms of communication and mass media and who were, in

turn, at the heart of major technological, media-aesthetic, and socio-cultural changes in modern Germany. Her current book project examines women’s multiple (often hidden) roles in the production of media to retheorize relationships between gender, labor, and technology in Weimar Germany.

While her current focus—on women typists, telephone operators, and film editors—is bound by the Weimar Republic, she emphasizes that the stories of women mediators in Imperial Germany, during World War I, and in Nazi Germany and beyond remain to be told. She is also pursuing several new interests: the role women photographers played in the Nazi image-making project; changing conceptions of genre in recent Turkish-German cinema; negativity as a response to precarity in recent workplace fiction; and the unionization of women film editors in 1970s West Germany.

Mary grew up in the scenic Texas Hill Country before earning a BA in Political Science at St. Edward’s University in Austin, Texas, and an MA in European Studies at Indiana University Bloomington. She is thrilled to return to the Midwest and is looking forward to learning about the German program curriculum by teaching intermediate German this fall. Next spring, she will offer a senior cap-stone seminar, “Weimar und heute” (“Weimar and Today”), that will delve into the culture, politics, and history of Germany’s interwar period—and its myriad echoes in the present moment.

She is delighted to be joining the GNS+ community and experiencing all that Madison has to offer. Outside of academia, Mary enjoys baking, reading, going to the movies, and riding her new e-bike.



### Graduate Program Milestones

#### Nick Ott

Prelims passed December 2022

#### Sara Ferchau

Prelims passed December 2022

#### Melanie Bernstein

Prelims passed January 2023

#### Gemini Fox

Prelims passed January 2023

#### Carsten Haas

Prelims passed January 2023

#### Finn Shepherd

MA passed May 2023

#### Chen Chen

Ph.D. passed May 2023

#### Christine Evans

Ph.D. passed May 2023

#### Sophia Strietholt

Ph.D. passed May 2023

#### Brandy Wilcox

Ph.D. passed July 2023

#### Lauren Cassidy

Prelims passed August 2023

#### Robin Cummins

Prelims passed August 2023



## Faculty News

### Sal Calomino

Sal Calomino conducted a new graduate course on German paleography with ten students in Spring 2023: Problems in Editing Early Germanic Texts. He also continued his research with medieval manuscripts at the Newberry Library, Chicago and also with documents by the singer Anna Bahr-Mildenburg illustrating her interpretive discussions with Cosima Wagner on medieval literature.

### Hannah Vandegrift Eldridge

Another busy and exciting year—perhaps the standout was co-chairing the search committee that brought our wonderful new colleagues, Zach Fitzpatrick and Mary Hennessey, to Madison! My second book appeared last October, and I’m making good progress on the new project; I get to teach parts of it this year in a graduate seminar on “Race and German Literature.” Other teaching highlights: 50 students in “Kafka and the Kafkaesque” (and a delightful Gregor Samsa lithograph print) and getting to know graduate students across GNS+ in a semester-long professional development seminar. I look forward to what 2023/2024 will bring!

### Nâlân Erbil

Teaching “Berlin-Istanbul Connections” as Comm B was one of the highlights of the past year. During the same Fall semester, I conducted a site visit to Baku, Azerbaijan for the federally funded TURFLI program, which was tiresome but more so rewarding in helping strengthen the bonds with our institutional partner. Then the Spring semester arrived with its perks despite some challenges where I presented a paper in the seminar on David Damrosch’s book *Comparing the Literatures* (2020) at the ACLA’s annual meeting. I am now happy to be back to the regular semester after administrating an intensive summer program!

### Julia Goetze

This past year, I began teaching in the German program and offered the advanced course *Democracy, gender, and extremism in modern Germany* for the first time. I also offered a graduate seminar on the *Psychology of the foreign language teacher* in spring 2023, which was cross listed with the Second Language Acquisition (SLA) program. I was able to present my ongoing research at domestic and international conferences and published 3 articles under my new UW-Madison affiliation. This fall, I have been awarded a research award from the American Council for the Teaching of foreign Languages (ACTFL) and look forward to continuing my empirical work, while also offering a new advanced course and sports and society.

### Sabine Gross

Shifting into emerita status this summer has been a most enjoyable experience, with fond memories of more than 30 deeply rewarding years in German at Madison. The very fabric of time seems to relax, eliminating much of the urgency and

rushing that govern so much of our busy lives. Having time to read is a profound and continuing pleasure, as is connecting with colleagues in a more leisurely way, attending the occasional conference “just for fun”, and taking up writing or editing projects without external constraints.

### Charles J. James

I continue as President of the Madison-Freiburg Sister City Committee as well as a member of the City of Madison’s “Sister City Collaboration Committee.” In addition, I am a member of the Kasse-Dane Taskforce and the Wisconsin-Hessen Society, representing our sister county and sister state respectively. In May 2023 I stepped down as a member of the “Governance Council” of the Verona Area International School where I served since its creation in 2010. I was recently appointed to the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee of the American Association of Teachers of German as well as a member of the Friends of the University of Wisconsin-Madison Libraries.

### Sonja Klocke

Teaching in Madison, doing research and inviting speakers to our lovely campus have all been highlights again in the past academic year. I happily accepted an invitation to talk at a conference at the Universität Potsdam in September this year, and I am looking forward to engaging at the German Studies Association conference in Montreal (as presenter, commentator, Director of our Center for German and European Studies and Network Co-Organizer of the GDR and German Socialisms Network) in October. I am pleased that six articles will appear later this year (on literature, film, and fashion) and three articles were submitted this year.

### Cora Lee Kluge

The highlight of the year for me was the 47th annual Symposium of the Society for German-American Studies (SGAS), held the end of April in Alexandria, Virginia, where I was honored with the Society’s Outstanding Achievement Award. My work with the SGAS as well as with the Max Kade Institute at the UW-Madison, together with my teaching, research, and publications in German-American Studies were undoubtedly the reason for this distinction, though I may be remembered more for the frustrations I endured while trying to organize and then unravel the Symposium that had been planned for Georgetown in the covid spring of 2020. I would like to take this opportunity to point to the field of German-American Studies as an important part of our German Program. For more information, please see the most recent newsletter of the SGAS, available online and downloadable at <https://sgas.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/44.1-SGAS-Newsletter.pdf> -- or visit the Max Kade Institute at 432 East Campus Mall on the Madison campus.

### Julie Larson-Guenette

In the past year I have continued to work on undergraduate curricular projects. Most recently, I traveled to Freiburg in July for the AYF reunion to connect with students, colleagues,

and alumni. After the AYF reunion I traveled to Berlin to visit various sites and gather materials for our language courses. Perhaps my favorite part of that trip, was time spent at the *Gedenkstätte deutscher Widerstand*. I would like to develop a new topics course based on this topic. I continue to be involved with letters, namely the collaborative public humanities *Alltag im Krieg* project (formerly *Trug & Schein*). In addition, I am starting a new project with graduate student Seth Maxfield and undergraduate Alex Cook involving Civil War era letters from the LaCrosse area.

### Mark Loudon

Two years ago I was contacted by a retired Mennonite pastor from Southern Ontario whose mother tongue is a previously undocumented language descended from a form of Palatine German brought by immigrants to Canada in the 1820s. This initial contact has led me to investigate the historical and current language situation of Mennonite and Amish communities in the Kitchener- Waterloo region. I presented the first results of my research last fall at Conrad Grebel University College at the University of Waterloo as the 2022–23 Bechtel Lecturer in Anabaptist-Mennonite Studies. The title of my presentation was “Reconstructing Linguistic History: What Did Ontario’s Earliest Amish Speak?”

### Sabine Mödersheim

Building on my research, I taught a newly developed course on “Climate Fiction: Literature and Media in the Anthropocene” for the first time in the Spring semester to an unexpectedly large group of students from diverse backgrounds. Apart from presenting at the Renaissance Society of America conference and organizing panels at the International Congress on Medieval Studies, it was an honor to be invited to contribute to an Earth Day event at the Aldo Leopold Center that brought together representatives from Madison’s sister cities.

### Pamela Potter

I spent a wonderful spring semester as a member at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, the same institution where Albert Einstein worked after fleeing Nazi Germany. It was a great opportunity to meet an impressive group of scholars and to work on my research and writing. In May, I had the honor of delivering the keynote address for a conference on music and war at the University of Surrey in the UK, after spending a lovely week in London with my family, and then headed off for three weeks in Berlin to conduct research and reacquaint myself with the ever-changing city!

### Jeanne Schueller

A major milestone in my career was my appointment to the rank of full Teaching Professor, which recognizes excellence, distinction, and innovation related to teaching and curricular leadership at the undergraduate and graduate levels. In addition to my achievements in supervising, mentoring, advising, and program design, I was recognized for my

engagement in multiple professional communities. In the spring, I was appointed to the College of Letters & Science Teaching and Learning Advisory Council and was elected by the American Association of University Supervisors, Coordinators, and Directors of Language Programs (AAUSC) to serve as German Language Convener for 2023-2025.

### Melissa Sheedy

This year, I’m excited to step into my new role as Book Review Editor for *Monatshefte* (with enormous thanks to Sabine Gross, who continues to lend incredible support). I’m eager to teach “Theater auf Deutsch,” a new-to-me course whose development over the past year has seen me travel to Berlin, sit in on Sabine’s own theater class, and scour the internet for pictures of theatrical cats to decorate my syllabus. I’m also kept busy through my work on the Women in German Steering Committee, research on queer ecocriticism, and the continued development of my class on reimagined fairytales in translation.

### Marc Silberman

I continue to do what I like best: working on Brecht, Heiner Müller, German theater and films, translating, and spending time in Berlin. In December 2022 I taught an intensive seminar on “Brecht’s Theater Theories” at Tel Aviv University, followed by the Symposium of the Brecht Society with a panel presentation on “Brecht and Tragedy.” Shortly thereafter I was in San Francisco for the MLA Convention for a session on “Brecht and Democracy.” My “summer in Berlin” consisted of the usual cultural events, plus encounters with colleagues, friends, and our own alumni who were passing through the “Hauptstadt”! I completed several forthcoming projects focused on Müller and Brecht and was interviewed by the Brazilian journal *Moringa Artes do Espetáculo* on “Brecht, o experimentador.” Now I’m looking forward to the GSA conference in Montreal where Sonja Klocke and I are hosting a reception for our alumni to introduce them to our two new colleagues.

### Katerina Somers

I am excited to begin this academic year having finished my book manuscript, *How to create an early German scriptus: a new approach to the study of historical German syntax*. I spent much of the academic year 2022/23 writing at my desk but also, thankfully, found occasion to venture outdoors. I began attending conferences again for the first time since the pandemic. Early in 2023, I was an invited speaker at the Premodern Colloquium, hosted by the University of Minnesota’s Center for Premodern Studies. In the spring, I presented a paper at the Germanic Linguistics Annual Conference in Banff, Canada.

### James Steakley

Though I saw nothing into print this past year, it was not all quiet on the publishing front – thanks to interviewers! I commented on my historical research for Jake Newsome’s



*Pink Triangle Legacies: Coming Out in the Shadow of the Holocaust* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2022), which includes a photo of a younger me, and recounted my activism in East and West Berlin for Teresa Tammer's "Warme Brüder" im Kalten Krieg. *Die DDR-Schwulenbewegung und das geteilte Deutschland in den 1970er und 1980er Jahren* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2023), where another photo even made it onto the dustjacket cover. A third interview is excerpted in Sara Friedman's "Afterlives of *Anders als die Andern* and of Weimar," forthcoming in *Central European History*. To round it off, I was delighted to reconnect with old friends at JYF/AYF reunions in Freiburg, including a 50th anniversary gathering delayed for three years by – you guessed it – Corona.

#### Adam Stern

I am pleased to announce that my class, "God & Money," has now been approved for permanent course status. Covering a range of topics and time periods, the lectures introduce

students to major writings on religion and capitalism, including works by Karl Marx, Rosa Luxemburg, Max Weber, and Cedric Robinson. In addition to counting as a cognate course for the German major, it will also be cross listed with Religious Studies and Sociology.

#### Sunny Yudkoff

This past year, I continued work on my second monograph, *Against Jewish Humor: Toward a Theory of Yiddish Joy*, presenting material at Stanford University and the University of Toronto. I also had the pleasure of co-organizing the biannual conference of the Society for Novel Studies on the theme of "The Novel and the Archive" with Professor B. Venkat Mani. With the support of the German and Dutch Programs, GNS+, the Anonymous Fund, and many departments and units around UW, we welcomed scholars of the novel from near and far to Madison in May.

## Alumni Reception in Montreal

Professors Sonja Klocke and Marc Silberman hosted a reception for German Program alumni at the annual conference of the German Studies Association in Montreal on Oct. 7, 2023. Over 35 guests showed up to meet our two new assistant professors, Mary Hennessy and Zach Fitzpatrick, and to share stories with each other.



Mary Hennessy, Kathrin Bower (Univ. of Richmond), Zach Fitzpatrick, Martin Kagel (Univ. of Georgia)



Sonja Klocke and Marc Silberman (hosts of the UW Alumni Reception)



Corina Petrescu (Univ. of Mississippi), Karolina May-Chu (Univ. of Wisconsin-Milwaukee)



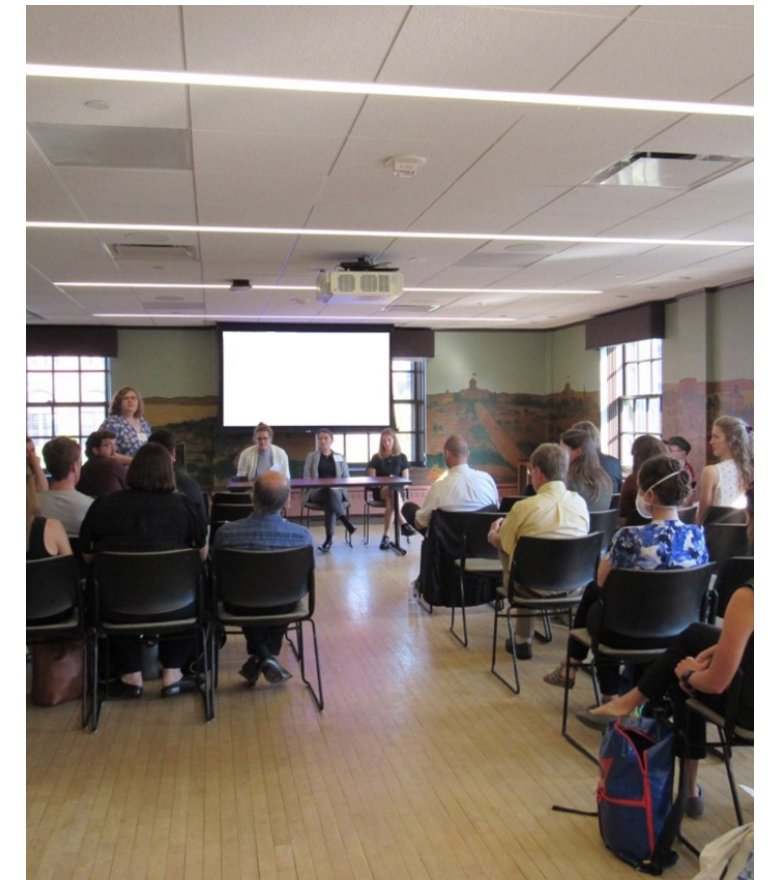
Sara Reed (Brigham Young Univ.), Jack Davis (Truman State Univ.)

## Graduate Conference "Environments in German and Dutch Studies"

By Gemini Fox & Melanie Bernstein



On September 29th-30th the German and Dutch Graduate Student Association hosted their 23rd annual conference, with this year's theme being "Environments in German and Dutch Studies." This year's conference committee consisted of Melanie Bernstein, Gemini Fox, Robin Cummins, Seth Maxfield and Cassandra Winkelman. The conference welcomed Dr. Seth Howes from the University of Missouri as the keynote speaker, who delivered the talk "Stoffwechsel mit der Natur: Before- and Afterimages of State Socialist Environments" which showcased the complicated relationship between artists and filmmakers in the GDR and the natural world. Drs. Diego Román and Julia Goetze of UW-Madison held a workshop with conference participants titled "Narrating (natural) 'environments' – Applying an ecolinguistic lens to environmental texts." In addition to graduate students from UW-Madison, the GDGSA also welcomed presenters from the University of Pennsylvania, Washington University in St. Louis, and the University of Missouri, who held talks on the GDR, conceptions of Heimat, Society and Culture, and Pedagogy.





Art Works Donated by Jost Hermand on Exhibition at the Chazen Museum

From July through November the Chazen Museum of Art showcased a new exhibition featuring recent acquisitions to the museum’s collection. This iteration of the installation especially highlights donors and artists who have UW-Madison connection in celebration of the 175th anniversary and includes donated works from Dr. Jost Hermand, Vilas Emeritus Research Professor of German.

This Weimar era portrait by Manfred Hirzel of a young Lotte Schenk-Danzinger, a prominent child psychologist, (1905-1992) is an example of Neue Sachlichkeit (‘New Objectivity’) style popular in Germany in the 1920s and early 1930s amongst artists such as Max Beckmann, George Grosz, and Otto Dix.

A display of all of Jost’s donated art works including works by Josef Pieper, Fidus, and a collection of 18th century Indian watercolors can be viewed here:

[chazen.wisc.edu/collection/?search=%22Jost%20Hermand%22](https://chazen.wisc.edu/collection/?search=%22Jost%20Hermand%22)



Manfred Hirzel’s Portrait of Lotte Danziger, Bequest of Jost Hermand

Jost Hermand Graduate Fund

Help us commemorate Jost Hermand’s legacy by contributing to the Jost Herman Graduate Fund. The fund, initiated in 2010 at the occasion of Jost Hermand’s 80th birthday by German program alumni and long-time supporters Mary and Bill Seeger to aid the department in supporting graduate student funding including, but not limited to, travel and research.

Donate to the Jost Hermand Graduate Fund:

By Mail:

Send a check made payable to the UW Foundation, indicating “Jost Hermand Graduate Fund – 132436936 German, GNS,” to:  
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Undergraduate Program

Spotlight on the Classroom

From Berlin to Madison: Jürgen Kuttner Brings the (Classroom) Drama



Students in Melissa Sheedy’s German 372 class, “Das Leben ist Theater,” were in for a treat this semester as Berlin-based director Jürgen Kuttner concluded his Midwest tour with a visit to UW-Madison in November. A trained *Kulturwissenschaftler* who earned his PhD at Humboldt University in East Berlin (1988), Kuttner has been part of Berlin’s vibrant theater scene for decades and has worked as a journalist, radio DJ, actor, and director. His famous *Videoschnipsel* show has been a favorite at the Berliner Volksbühne for over 20 years. He’s also no stranger to Madison: in 2018, Kuttner performed a memorable version of his *Videoschnipsel* in English, and we were very excited to be able to welcome him back this year. Following stops at Indiana University Bloomington, Truman State in Kirksville, and Washington University in St. Louis, Kuttner came to Madison for a visit organized by Sonja Klocke, Melissa Sheedy, and Marc Silberman.

In November, Kuttner worked with students in German 372 to rehearse and perform Bertolt Brecht’s drama *Der Hofmeister* (“The Tutor”). A reworked version of J.M.R. Lenz’s 18th-century tragicomedy, Brecht’s funny and provocative commentary on Germany’s history and future points to the pitfalls of blind servitude and class-based oppression. Under Kuttner’s direction and with the generous support of GNS+ and the Center for German and European Studies (CGES), students performed the piece at the Memorial Union Play Circle (free and open to the public!)

Beyond Kuttner’s visit, students in Dr. Sheedy’s interactive, performance-centered class also enjoyed guest lectures and workshops by Prof. emerita Sabine Gross and Prof. emeritus Marc Silberman as well as opportunities to improve their German through improvisation, experimentation, and laughter. Dr. Sheedy’s course design includes implementing an alternative assessment (“ungrading”) approach as well as topics ranging from Aristotle to Monty Python to the politics of drag. (Cats and cat anecdotes are, naturally, a given).





Geschichte und Geschichten: Reading History Through the Lens of the Leo Family

By Jeanne Schueller



Clara Louden and Wolf Leo in Berlin (June 2023)

For several years, Maxim Leo's *Haltet euer Herz bereit: eine ostdeutsche Familiengeschichte* (2009) has been an essential part of our fifth-semester German reading course. I came across Maxim Leo's book by chance while browsing books online. After reading the first few paragraphs, I knew that this non-fiction account of an East German family spanning multiple generations would be interesting and accessible. My colleague, Julie Larson-Guenette, and I developed scaffolded pre-, during- and post-reading activities to aid students' comprehension and deepen their linguistic, cultural, and historical knowledge.

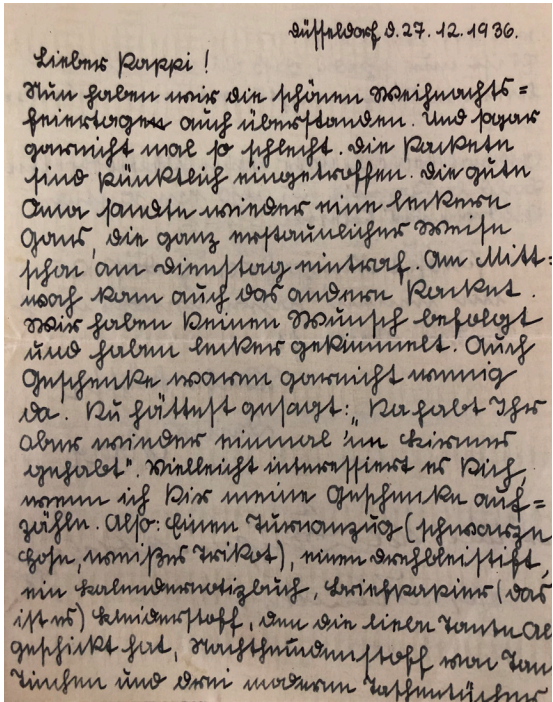
I first connected with the author's father, Wolf Leo, on Instagram in fall 2021. Wolf is a painter, printmaker, sculptor, installation artist, and writer who was born in 1942 and grew up in East Berlin. We eventually shared contact information and began writing letters, messaging, and talking on WhatsApp, which led to an invitation to visit Wolf in Berlin and his home in Grünow (Mecklenburg-Vorpommern) in the summer of 2022. In the nearly two weeks I spent with Wolf, he showed me his studio and took me around Berlin, pointing out where he grew up, went to school, and raised a family. At the Berlin Global exhibition at the Humboldt Forum, we saw two of his works: an original print of the "Demokratie" poster from the Concert Against Violence at the Erlöserkirche in East Berlin in October 1989 and a replica of "Feuerkopf," which Wolf carried during the Nov. 4, 1989, demonstration



Wolf Leo, Poster "Demokratie" (1989)

on Alexanderplatz. In Grünow, I met Maxim Leo's mother, the historian and author Annette Leo. At the Akademie der Künste in Berlin, Annette Leo showed me the archive of her father, journalist, author, and French resistance fighter Gerhard Leo; the archive also contains personal documents from her grandfather, Dagobert Lubinski, an author and member of the Communist party (KPO), who was murdered in Auschwitz in 1943.

In summer 2023, I had the good fortune to spend time again with Wolf at his home in Berlin, this time with my daughter, when he showed us his work and talked about his experiences in the GDR, his travels, and his life now. My friendship with Wolf has enriched our intermediate reading course. Students often conflate fiction and non-fiction, and many aspects of Maxim Leo's family history seem unbelievable to them, like something out of a movie. Handwritten letters composed to and by Dagobert Lubinski bring history to life in a meaningful and moving way. Seeing pictures of Wolf and Annette Leo and hearing about their lives piques students' interest and reminds them that the Leos are real people.



Letter to Dagobert Lubinski from his daughters (1936)

Stockwerk Deutsch

The International Learning Community (ILC) designated identity and performance as themes this year for roundtable dinner presentations and seminars. Julie Larson-Guenette continues in her role as the faculty director for Stockwerk Deutsch offering one-credit seminars featuring Russlanddeutsche and Bowie in Berlin. SLA and German PhD student Patricia Haberkorn is now in her third year serving as the Language Program Coordinator (LPC). Patricia and the Stockis enjoy activities such as crafts, cooking, game and movie nights, along with various campus area outings (e.g., ice-skating, performances and events). Due to budgetary and space constraints within Housing, the ILC will relocate to Kronshage Residence Hall this summer. Adams Hall will remain in the hearts and minds of Stockis who have lived there for the last 21 years.



[front to back and around the table] Charlotte, Quentin, Evan, James, Megan, Patricia Haberkorn, Josh, Jens



[left to right back row] Luis, Evan, Wolfi, Jens  
[left to right front row] Josh, Quentin, Megan, James



Academic Year in Freiburg 60+3 year Anniversary Reunion



Group photo in front of the Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg. Attendees also included alumni from University of Iowa, Michigan State University, and University of Michigan.

Rescheduled from 2020, the AYF 60+3 year Anniversary Reunion in July hosted over 170 attendees: alumni and their families, current and former faculty, and friends of AYF and the Madison-Freiburg Sister City Committee. The opening ceremony featured speakers from UW-Madison including Professor Barry Gerhart (Interim Vice Provost and Dean of the International Division) and Professor Marc Kleijwegt (Department of History and AYF Academic Director 2022-2023). Madison alumni Karen Roesler (1975-1976), David Dries (1984-1985) and Jacob Broehm (2021-2022) gave testimonials on their life-changing experiences in Freiburg. There were many activities over the course of the long weekend, including an AYF open house, guided tours of the city and university, meet-ups at the Kastaniengarten and Ganter Biergarten and a day hike along Schluchsee. The Black Forest Badgers, a music group comprised of Ulli Struve (AYF Director), AYF students, and Freiburgers performed hits from the 50s, 60s, and 70s. It was a special and memorable weekend for all!



UW-Madison alumni



Storm clouds roll in over Lake Mendota near the Goodspeed Family Pier along the Memorial Union Terrace (Photo by Bryce Richter / UW-Madison) © Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System

Dear Alumni, Friends, and Supporters of the German Program

As we move beyond the challenges of the last few years, creating and sustaining opportunities for our students remains our priority.

Your support is vital in allowing us to:

- Offer fellowships to high-achieving students
- Leverage high-impact teaching practices to enhance student learning
- Sustain the long, nationally recognized rigor and vitality of UW–Madison’s German Program.

You can contribute to an existing fund or provide a major gift that endows a new, named fund that you define yourself.

We invite you to join your fellow alumni, friends, and supporters who have made a gift to German! Your gift makes it possible for us to do more.

Use the following links to make an online gift directly to:

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Send a check made payable to the UW Foundation (indicate “German Department Enhancement Fund,” “Undergraduate Excellence Fund (German),” “Netherlandic Studies Fund,” or your choice of specific fund) to:

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For questions, please contact Mark Loudon ([mllouden@wisc.edu](mailto:mllouden@wisc.edu)).  
For planned giving, please contact Ann Lippincott (608-308-5320) or ([ann.lippincott@supportuw.org](mailto:ann.lippincott@supportuw.org)).





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## Why German?

Hear from some of our students on why they study German at UW-Madison!



**Fei Lu / Shenzhen, China; Economics and Math / German**

I chose German because –the reason was quite simple–while I was living in Austria, German was key to communicating with others. As German is spoken in various countries, I thought learning German would give me a valuable skill. However, I discovered that learning German was not just about the language itself, but also the cultural context. Learning German also meant getting to know other students and building communities. So for me now, learning German is no longer just about what doors it would open, but it also introduces me to different perspectives on viewing the world.

**Bis Mishra/ Milwaukee WI; Electrical Engineering / German**

I chose German in middle school since I had previously lived in Switzerland as a young child and was able to speak German there and I had forgotten the language. However, I continued German throughout middle and high school, finding it a fun experience. I took German in my first semester in college, initially with no expectations. I found it to be a fun and rewarding course, which encouraged me to take more classes and to declare it as a certificate. Throughout the years I was able to learn the intricacies of a beautiful and diverse language. I learned about the history of the German speaking world through its triumphs and traumas. The classes have also served as a break from my more stressful engineering courses. German has enabled me to be multilingual and I am proud of that fact.

