

# Encompass



THE COLLEGE OF  
**ARTS + SCIENCES**  
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NEWSLETTER FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS OF THE  
IU DEPARTMENT OF COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

## *Sumie Jones: A Kamigata Anthology Literature from Japan's Metropolitan Centers, 1600-1750*

By Zachary Scalzo

This year, Sumie Jones, residential fellow at the Institute of Advanced Study and professor emerita of both Comparative Literature and East Asian Languages and Cultures, began the final phase of her most recent project, an anthology in English of early Edo-period Japanese literature. Supported by grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Toshiba International Foundation, and IU, Professor Jones will compile a volume of popular and urban literatures from the Kamigata region (centered around the cities of Kyoto and Osaka) from 1600 to 1750, translated into English.

But Professor Jones will not be undertaking such a laborious project entirely on

her own. As with the two other volumes, she has elicited the help of a co-editor, Professor Adam L. Kern at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, as well as a team of assistants here at IU Bloomington to bring the project to completion. "I have always enjoyed collaboration," she explains. "By exchanging messages on source texts, interpretation, etc., one learns much." But she also recognizes the importance of her collaborative approach beside the benefits for the physical products. "One of my goals for this particular project was to nurture many able younger scholars. I have discovered talents among them and watched them take on more and more important tasks. I consider it my success."

Of these younger scholars, a team of three current

assistants, Comparative Literature Ph.D. candidate and chief assistant Ali Frauman has been with the project longest. Ali completed an M.A. in Japanese literature at IU before joining the CMLT doctoral program. Having joined the project in August 2014, her duties include corresponding with other members of the team, taking dictation, and providing insight into the process of editing both translations and introductory material. She is excited to be a part of a team making these texts accessible to an English-speaking audience: "In compiling translations—most of which appear in English for the first time—and publishing sizable introductions to accompany them, Sumie and her co-editors are finally giving

*(continued on page 4)*



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# Encompass

This newsletter is published by the Department of Comparative Literature, with the College of Arts and Sciences, to encourage alumni interest in and support for Indiana University.

For activities and membership information, call (800) 824-3044 or visit <http://alumni.iu.edu>

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# From the Chair

This is my last letter from the chair, as I stepped down from a very rewarding four-year stint at the end of June. What a privilege it has been to serve Comparative Literature from 2013-2017! I extend a warm welcome to Professor Paul Losensky, our incoming chair. He took up his new position as of July 1, 2017. I have every confidence that he will be as enthusiastic about supporting the Comparative Literature community as I have been, and he will be as eager to hear from you as well.

One of the triumphs of the past twenty-four months has been a successful outside review of our department, which concluded with a final conversation with our college leadership just after the end of the spring 2016 semester. While preparing for the event, we assembled a 700-page self-study of our unit and I learned much about our colleagues and our fascinating history while putting it all together. Special thanks go to Rosemarie McGerr and Sarah Van der Laan for their dedicated help with this labor and also to all the other colleagues who participated in assembling our materials. We made new friends while going through the process—comparative literature scholars Peggy McCracken (University of Michigan) and John Hamilton (Harvard) were our external evaluators—and we very much enjoyed working with them.

Studying our field for our

review made me think once again about how open to the world IU Comparative Literature has been all along, and how tremendously important this aspect of the discipline remains in an era plagued by alarming new types of xenophobia. This year the applicant pool for our graduate program included students from eight countries in addition to the U.S.—Algeria, Belarus, China, Iran, Mexico, Norway, Poland, and the Ukraine. This in itself is a wonderful statement about the international significance of comparative literary studies, and it reminds us that people from all around the world are interested in coming to Bloomington to study with us.

As usual, I would like to select a few highlights from the year. Eileen Julien, Akin Adesokan, and their colleagues, supported by an NEH grant and many offices of the university, conducted a successful conference on Africa last summer. Eileen Julien and her collaborators hope to continue this investigation in yet another conference to come. In fall 2016, we put out a special edition of *The Yearbook of Comparative Literature* (vol. 59), which has been published by the University of Toronto Press for some years. This issue was devoted to the thought of the late and highly distinguished Matei Calinescu. It is based on a conference dedicated to his work. A number of alumni,



who had worked with Professor Calinescu, contributed to this volume. I am sure that other former students of his and of IU Comparative Literature in general will enjoy reading the papers published in this issue. At the end of 2016, Smith Provost Katherine Rowe, our Wertheim lecturer, made a case for a whole new range of comparative study of media platforms that could and should be incorporated into our discipline. The lecture was followed by a packed reception in the University Club, attended by students, alumni, and friends of Comparative Literature.

This spring brought us a new book by Eyal Peretz, one of our most productive scholars. His latest work, which puts forth a new theoretical framework for understanding the historical significance of film in relation to the history of the modern arts, is entitled *The Off-Screen: An Investigation of the Cinematic Frame* (Stanford University Press, 2017).

Willis Barnstone came back to Bloomington in the spring of 2017 to give a memorable talk and reading from *Poets of the Bible*, his forthcoming Norton book of translations of poetic jewels hidden in the Greek and Hebrew texts. Many current graduate

students enjoyed meeting this prolific poet, translator, and scholar. His new book, already with fine advance notices, will be officially released in June. Also, this spring, Sumie Jones, professor emeritus in our department and now residential fellow at IU's Institute for Advanced Study, published *A Tokyo Anthology: Literature from Japan's Modern Metropolis 1850-1920*, in a splendid paperback edition from the University of Hawaii Press. Professor Jones's work has also been supported by NEH over the years and she has even managed to fund several of our graduate students to help in preparing this volume.

My work on the NEH Council continued through 2016-17 (a fascination in itself), but I'd also like to emphasize that our fine scholars have won their awards completely on their own. I congratulate them. I am completely recused from all discussions of IU grant applications.

Turning to the comparatists of the future, I would like to publicly thank Claire Riley, Zack Scalzo, and our department's Student Advisory Board as a whole. Today's SAB leaders are not only obviously smart and talented but they are also an especially warm and

welcoming group of graduate students who are extending their outreach to a new generation of undergraduate students who are choosing to major in our field. It has really been rewarding to support their many projects this year.

I will be off on sabbatical next year, and I will miss the stimulating intellectual life of our unit and the many related cultural activities here at IU. I wanted to leave our readers with just a few examples of the many activities that take place in the culturally rich community we share in Bloomington these days.

As always, please send us your news. Comparative Literature has a long reach, extending all across the country and around the world, and it is always wonderful to hear about what you are doing and very, very important to us here in Bloomington, Indiana.

So do stay in touch.

Sincerely,

David M.  
Hertz,

Professor  
and Chair of  
Comparative  
Literature



### *Literature from Japan (cont.)*

English speakers access to a culture and literary tradition which have otherwise been out of reach.” Of particular note, she explains, is the discussion-based approach to editing Jones encourages as the team—comprised of specialists in a variety of disciplines including Japanese language and literature, history, and translation studies—works through translation manuscripts and their introductions: “I feel like our primary strength comes from being such a large and diverse group of people, from various locations, age groups, and with many different specializations. The dialogue this creates during the revision process allows for a refined and skillful final product.”

Alan Reiser, also a Ph.D. student in Comparative Literature, is the most recent addition to the team of assistants. His fluency in the Japanese language is evidenced both by a past career in Japan and the translations that he presented at the fall 2016 Ilinca Zarifopol Johnston Memorial Colloquium. His linguistic skills make him an ideal Japanese-Language and Bibliography Assistant to Professor Jones, a position he has held since June 2015. Charged with corresponding with libraries, museums, and private collectors in Japan

regarding original versions of texts, as well as maintaining and organizing many of the graphic works incorporated into the volumes, Reiser appreciates not only the hands-on experience with translation and publication processes, but especially values the range of works presented in the project. “The project reflects a vibrant, diverse creativity of Japanese authors throughout these rich periods that has long been inaccessible in English,” he explains, adding, “I’ve particularly benefited from wonderful conversations about intricacies of Japanese culture that have arisen while sorting out details.”

It is no surprise that Professor Jones’ team has always been comprised of capable students, a large proportion of them pursuing advanced degrees in Comparative Literature. Frauman considers Comparative Literature students to be among the most qualified to assist with projects like this: “They’re more likely to have experience reading texts from a variety of different cultures and time periods and can use that experience when discussing the translations and introductions.” And Professor Jones agrees. “I have not consciously sought out CMLT graduate students, but I generally favor them, as comparatists are, by training,

broad-minded,” she explains. “I have had great assistants from other disciplines as well, but Cimberli Kearns, Julia Whyde, Kristin Reed, and Sally Morrell stand out as great assistants who were also CMLT students. My current assistants, each with a talent and expertise of their own, form a perfect team.”

*A Kamigata Anthology: Literature from Japan’s Metropolitan Centers, 1600-1750*, to be finalized over the next three years, will focus on works concerning the cities of Kyoto and Osaka and will feature poetry, prose, drama, graphic narratives, and texts that push against and between genres. This volume will join the well-reviewed *An Edo Anthology: Literature from Japan’s Mega City, 1750-1850* (2009) and the forthcoming *A Tokyo Anthology: Literature from Japan’s Modern Metropolis, 1850-1920* (2017), all published by the University of Hawaii Press, thanks to newly won grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Toshiba International Foundation, and IU.

Zachary Scalzo is one of the two chief assistants to Professor Jones for her Edo-Meiji Anthology Project. He is a Ph.D. student in the Department of Comparative Literature and joined the project in September 2015.



## Eileen Julien: A Profile

Interviewed by Roy Holler

**E**ileen Julien is director of the Institute for Advanced Study and a professor of Comparative Literature, French and Italian, and African Studies at IU Bloomington. She has written numerous articles and book chapters, and is the author and co-editor of several books, including a memoir, *Travels with Mae: Scenes of a New Orleans Girlhood* (2009). Her article “The Extroverted African Novel” (Moretti 2006), which challenges the story of the “rise of the novel” and offers a theory of why some African novels travel and others don’t, has created a lot of interest. Eileen has received Guggenheim, Fulbright, and Bunting Institute awards and a National Endowment for Humanities grant for the 2016 summer institute, “Arts of Survival: Recasting Lives in African Cities,” which brought 21 faculty and 3 graduate students to Bloomington from universities and colleges across the U.S.

Here are a few excerpts from my conversation with Professor Julien.

“This year has been exhilarating and exhausting! In the best of times I am caught between teaching, running the Institute for Advanced Studies, and too many outside projects, a lot of which are wonderful! I am in three departments, on the editorial board of *Africa Today* and *Black Camera*. Like everyone who’s been around as long as I have, I am constantly being asked to write for tenure cases, promotion cases, and reviews. I was in the UK for a panel on “The Extroverted African Novel” in September, in Dakar for the 50th anniversary of The World Festival of Black Arts in November, a good friend invited me to speak at Hollins University in October—I couldn’t say no, and it was a lot of fun—and I was invited to Milan to join the Accademia Ambrosiana. And that was my schedule only through January!

I am the Africa Coordinator for the Literature of World History. This is a lengthy, ten-year collaboration of writers from all over the world, in four volumes covering six regions. It is a comparative study of literature from “the beginning.” I didn’t have to do this, but it is a



project that puts Africa at the table, starting with ancient Egypt—not just in the 20th-century post-colonial, anti-imperialistic context where Africa usually shows up...

I want to edit a book on my father’s letters. My father wrote letters to the editor for fifty years and some are fabulous. I want to write a book on Kalidou Sy, my deceased husband, about the way he would paint in his studio and then come into the kitchen and cook, a paintbrush in one hand, a wooden spoon in the other. And I want to write a book about the poetics of “Black Paris,” that cosmopolitan crossroads of early and mid-twentieth century. Retirement, where are you?

A student in my Intro to African Lits course asked once if a novel we were reading was related to the things going on in the U.S. I smiled and laughed and said, “I am afraid for my son, who is 15, when he goes out on the street.” She looked at me with enormous surprise and said, “but why?!” American schools have done a terrible job educating our young people about American history. I think we have a big role to play, if we can ever get it right...

There is something joyful about swimming. I am in my own world and I think thoughts, I get ideas. I love the feel of the water going by, and

(continued)

the feel of my body like a machine, with all the pistons working, it clears my head...

We want to give you money, give us a good reason to do it. The Institute for Advanced Studies has been around since 1981. It promoted collaborative, interdisciplinary research without requiring “results,” the idea being that faculty need time to be creative without pressure. Now we have an additional mission, helping associate professors get to promotion. But I don’t want the IAS to be simply a cash register. So, we’ve created residential fellowship programs and “promotion cohorts,” where associate professors work interdisciplinarily: comp lit professors talking to biologists and historians talking to people in informatics, who are talking to folks in the Jacobs School of Music, all working together and helping each other create better research projects and promotion statements. We bring seasoned faculty to read and comment on their projects and statements. Our motto: a place for intellectual vitality and community!

We have created other programs as well, like our Summer Repository Research Fellowship Program with IUB partners, like the Kinsey Institute, the Mathers Museum, the Archives of Traditional Music, the Lilly Library, the Black Film Center, the Paleontology Lab, etc. Scholars from the outside apply and sometimes they pair

up with associate professors or other IU faculty. This program has gotten an incredible response. We are constantly trying to perfect and refine...

Tell the truth. You decided to make an argument and halfway there, you realize something is not right, don’t keep going! Go back and start over. Tell the story that you know is true, and in your words. Chinua Achebe said this too. Tell the story you can tell. Other people will hear you. Don’t write to please the crowd, don’t write for your tenure committee, write for you.

Submit, resubmit, resubmit, resubmit. If your manuscript doesn’t get accepted the first time, try again and again and again. Also, you should not write alone. You need other people giving you feedback, helping you think it through. In my experience, that’s critical.

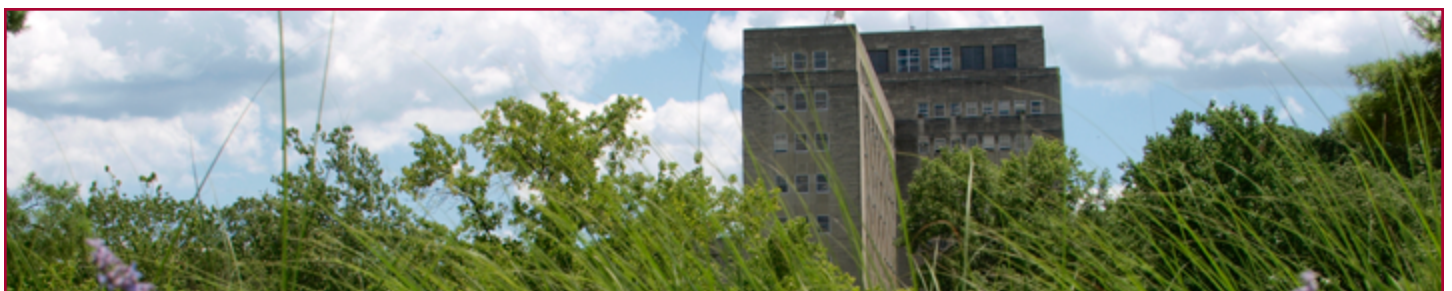
If I could talk to one person, it would be James Baldwin. I teach him in the Black Paris course and I have come to admire this man. I’d like to ask him about France, about living abroad, about his complicated relationship with the U.S. I read his work and say, oh, this is where X got his idea and that is where Y got her idea! I admire his frankness, his openness, he is so incisive. From my point of view, he didn’t get everything right—who does?—but what a mind. And he was courageous.

## The 2016 Albert Wertheim Lecture in Comparative Drama

*By Rosemarie McGerr*

**H**ow might we understand the relationship between playgoer and playing space in a networked world? This was the question at the core of the 2016 Albert Wertheim Lecture in Comparative Drama, which took place on December 5 at the University Club, Indiana Memorial Union. Our guest speaker, Katherine

Rowe, Provost and Dean of the Faculty at Smith College, titled her presentation “Virtual Globe Theatres (Playgoing in a Networked World).” Professor Rowe addressed the phenomenon of virtual Globe Theatres in gaming, social networking, and other digital platforms and offered the perspective of a scholar of early modern drama and media history whose innovative teaching and research explore the



history of reading, writing and performance, from the Renaissance to the digital age.

Known for books such as *Dead Hands: Fictions of Agency, Renaissance to Modern* and *New Wave Shakespeare on Screen*, Professor Rowe is also co-founder of Luminary Digital Media, a social reading platform that is bringing literary works to mobile devices, including iPad apps of the Folger Library Shakespeare editions. In addition, she is co-editor of *The Cambridge Guide to the Worlds of Shakespeare*, a transhistorical, international, and interdisciplinary study of the world in which Shakespeare and his contemporaries lived and what the world has made of Shakespeare as a cultural icon over the past four centuries.

Her topic for the Wertheim Lecture brought an enthusiastic audience of students and faculty from the field of digital humanities, as well as the language and literature departments and the Department of Theatre, Drama, and Modern Dance, who engaged with Professor Rowe in a lively question period after her talk and during the reception that followed.

On the next day, after Professor Rowe's lunch with CMLT graduate students, the department held an interdisciplinary colloquium at the College Arts and Humanities Institute on "Virtual Globes: Comparative Drama and the Digital Humanities" in order to expand on issues raised during Professor Rowe's lecture. On the panel of speakers, Professor Rowe joined doctoral student Zachary Scalzo (CMLT) and faculty members Sonia Velázquez (Religious Studies and CMLT), Ellen MacKay (English), Jennifer Goodlander (Theatre, Drama, and Modern Dance), and Rosemarie McGerr (CMLT). Emeritus Professor Angela Pao (CMLT) moderated. After short presentations from the panel, discussion continued with questions and comments from the graduate

students and faculty in the audience. Professor Rowe commented afterward that she had not participated in this kind of follow-up event for a lecture before and found it so productive that she would recommend it to her faculty at Smith.

The Wertheim Lectures in Comparative Drama commemorate the work of Albert Wertheim, who was Professor of English, Comparative Literature, and Theatre and Drama and passed away in April 2003. Professor Wertheim came to IUB in 1969 with a doctoral degree in English literature from Yale University (1965) and particular interests in Elizabethan, Jacobean, and Caroline drama and 20th-century European and American modern drama. Over the years, the scope of his research grew to include a wide range of postcolonial literatures, with a special focus on the work of Athol Fugard. His scholarly publications include over fifty articles; five co-edited anthologies on contemporary British, American, and postcolonial drama and fiction; and two books—*The Dramatic Art of Athol Fugard: From South Africa to the World* (2000) and *Staging the War: American Drama and World War II* (2004). One of Professor Wertheim's major contributions to the study of comparative drama at IU was his instrumental role in helping to bring the papers of Athol Fugard to the Lilly Library, where they are preserved and accessible for enhancing both scholarship and performance.

Our department's goal in this lecture series has been to host a comparative drama speaker for enough time to engage with students and faculty in several ways, which we believe reflects the legacy of Professor Wertheim. The department is very grateful to Judy Wertheim, Ted Widlanski, and Martha Jacobs for the generous support that makes these events possible.



# Faculty News



**Akin Adesokan**  
Akin Adesokan published "African Literature in the World: A

Teacher's Report," in *PMLA*, 131.5 2016; a short story titled "We Deserve A Share of Our Kinsman's Money" in *Glänta* 3-4: 15, 2016 (originally in Swedish); a translation titled "In A Polygamous Home," (excerpted from his translation of the Yoruba novel, *Aye D'Aye Oyinbo*, by Isaac Delano) in *Imagine Africa* 3; and contributed a chapter on "African Anti-Colonialism" in *The Encyclopedia of Postcolonial Studies*, Blackwell Publishing, Blackwell Reference Online 2016. He was invited to the Princeton Institute for International and Regional Studies, where he gave a lecture titled "Colonial Capital or African City?: Emergent Publics in Lagos," on November 17. On April 8, he was invited to speak at a symposium at Columbia University, titled "Other Desires: The African City," and a participant (by Skype) at the IU Rework Symposium, IU Gateway/Humboldt University in Berlin on March 11. He was a seminar leader at the NEH Summer Institute "Arts of Survival: Recasting Lives in African Cities" held on the IU campus (July 6-26). He also contributed a competitive

paper, "Raoul Peck: Filmmaker, African," during a conference titled Iconography of Patrice Lumumba and the Work of Raoul Peck, at Antwerp University, Antwerp, Belgium, February 18-19, and another titled "From Political Pamphlets to Concert Party Theaters: Lagos Consuming Publics," during the African Literature Association Annual Conference in Atlanta, Georgia, on April 7.



**Jacob Emery**  
Jacob Emery published two articles in the last year. One, "Species

of Legitimacy: The Rhetoric of Succession around Russian Coins" (*Slavic Review*, Spring 2016), dates back to work he did in graduate school; the other, "Sigizmund Krzhizhanovskiy's Poetics of Passivity" (*Russian Review*, January 2017), relates to the October 2016 conference he organized at IU together with Alex Spektor, "Planting the Flag: The Nonfiction of Sigizmund Krzhizhanovskiy." In addition to opening this conference, Emery participated in the faculty roundtable at the IU symposium "Thinking with Jacques Derrida," presented work in progress at ASEES in Washington D.C., at the "Radiant Futures" symposium hosted by NYU's Jordan Center, at the "Passive Resistance" conference at IU's gateway campus in India, and gave an

invited talk on Nabokov at Princeton University. Among publications scheduled to appear in 2017 are his book *Alternative Kinships: Economy and Family in Russian Modernism* (Northern Illinois University Press); the articles "Custom House of Hades: Why Dickens and Gogol Traffic with the Underworld" (*Yearbook of Comparative Literature*) and "Romantic Aesthetics and Cybernetic Fiction" (in *The Russian Posthuman*, edited Colleen McQuillen and Julia Vaingurt); and a review of Lars Kleberg's *Vid avantgardets korsvägar: om Ivan Aksionov och den Ryska modernismen* (*Slavic and East European Journal*). In 2017 we will also see the reprinting of his 2008 *PMLA* article "Kinship and Figure in Andrei Bely's *Petersburg*" in a centennial anthology of scholarship on Bely's *Petersburg* and the publication in Russian translation of his 2014 article "A Clone Playing Craps Will Never Abolish Chance" for *Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie*. At the moment, Emery is co-editing (with Tamar Abramov, Julia Bekman-Chadaga, Julia Vaingurt, and Cristina Vatulescu) the *Svetlana Boym Reader*, currently under review. He has also received funding for a Spring 2017 research leave through the College Arts & Humanities Institute and New Frontiers foundations to complete his second book, which deals with Romantic aesthetics and their evolution in relation to informatics technologies.



# Faculty News



## David Hertz

Among the highlights from the past year, Professor Hertz gave a talk on

“Nostalgia, Theory and the Arts,” at the ACLA, which took place at Harvard University in March 2016. He had the pleasure of contributing to a three-day series of presentations organized by IU alumna Claire Chen for the occasion. He also continued to serve on the NEH Council in Washington D.C. In September, he attended the White House ceremony for the Arts and Humanities medalists. While there, he joined with NEH colleagues to shake hands with President Obama and pose for a photo.

## Bill Johnston

In May 2016, Bill Johnston was awarded the Found in Translation

Award for his translation of Tomasz Różycki’s mock epic poem “Twelve Stations” (Zephyr Press, 2015). In January 2017, Johnston published “English Teaching and Evangelical Mission,” an ethnographic study of an evangelical-run language school in Poland. Later this year “Oxygen,” a selection of Julia Fiedorczuk’s poems translated by Johnston, will be published by Zephyr Press. Johnston is completing work on Adam Mickiewicz’s “Pan Tadeusz,” Poland’s national epic, which will be published in 2018 by Archipelago Books.



## Eileen Julien

In spring 2016, Eileen Julien presented the paper “On

Duality’: In Honor of Professor Biodun Jeyifo” at the annual meeting of the African Literature Association

in Atlanta and moderated a discussion at the annual meeting of the Conseil International d’Etudes Francophones in Senegal on “Challenges in the Contemporary Arts in Senegal,” featuring Senegalese writer Ken Bugul and Senegalese filmmaker Angèle Diabang. In November she presented “Pre-négritude Modernities In Writing; Post-négritude Modernities in Painting” at a symposium in Dakar, Senegal, commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the First World Festival of Black Arts held in Dakar in 1966. Julien was a discussant on a panel on “African Literature and Universality” at the African Studies Association meeting in Washington in December. She was a respondent to a set of papers focusing on her publication of some years ago, “The Extroverted African Novel,” during the meeting of the African Studies Association of the U.K. in September, and in October she was invited to speak at Hollins University, where she presented “Loss, Love and the Art of Making Gumbo.” In January, she was inducted into the African Studies Class of the Accademia Ambrosiana in Milan. *The*



*David Hertz (second from right) attends the 2015 National Humanities Medal ceremony at the White House.*

*(continued)*

*Locations and Dislocations of African Literature: A Dialogue Between Humanities and Social Science Scholars*, co-edited by Julien and Biodun Jeyifo, appeared in spring 2016. Julien continues to serve as Director of the IU Institute for Advanced Study.



**Paul Losensky**

Paul traveled to Southern California frequently in the spring

of 2016 to participate in seminars at UC Irvine and UCLA and to deliver a lecture at UCLA. He spoke on biographical writing and poetics in early modern Persian literature. He also spoke at the University of Michigan in the fall and lectured on the connections between poetry and architecture in the work of the contemporary Iranian-American sculptor and architect Siah Armajani at the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art in Kansas City. Together with Bill Johnston, he published an account of IU's Certificate of Literary Translation ("A Graduate Certificate in Translation Studies") in *Teaching Translation: Programs, Courses, Pedagogies*, ed. Lawrence Venuti (New York: Routledge, 2017). He contributed an article to *Encyclopaedia Iranica* on the Indo-Persian poet Zohuri Torshizi and submitted translations of

selected poems by the 16th-century poet Mohtasham Kashani for an upcoming anthology entitled *Empires of the Near East and India: Sources for the Study of Safavid, Ottoman, and Mughal Societies*, ed. Hani Khafipour. He also chaired the jury for the Roth Award Committee for Literary Translation from Persian.



**Daniel Lukes**

In February 2017, Daniel Lukes' book *Triptych: Three Studies of*

*Manic Street Preachers' The Holy Bible*, a collaboration with Rhian E. Jones and Larissa Wodtke, was published by Repeater Books. His section of the book analyzes the literary influences of the landmark 1994 rock album. In October 2016 he gave the paper "Interviewing Mr. Vollmann" at "A Sense of Inexhaustibility: A Colloquium on William T. Vollmann," at Boston University. His next book project will be *Conversations with William T. Vollmann*, a collection of interviews, under contract with University Press of Mississippi, for publication in 2018. For this book he conducted archival research at the William T. Vollmann Collection at the Rare Books and Manuscripts Library at Ohio State University in Columbus. In July 2016, he saw the paperback release of his co-edited volume *William*

*T. Vollmann: A Critical Companion* (University of Delaware Press, 2014). He has also recently taught courses on science fiction, comedy and laughter in popular culture and literature, and literary theory.

**Rosemarie McGerr**



In May 2016, Rosemarie McGerr presented a paper on "Statues, Statutes, and Justice in *The*

*Pilgrimage of the Soul*" at the annual International Congress on Medieval Studies, the largest conference in the field, which took place at Western Michigan University. In July 2016, she presented a paper on "Voicing Identity and Diversity in *The Second Shepherds' Play: Polyphony as Medieval English Dramatic Experience*" at the New Chaucer Society Biennial Congress, at Queen Mary College, University of London. McGerr has been invited to write the essay on "Representing Gender in Medieval Literature" for the *Wiley Blackwell Companion to World Literature: The Medieval World*, ed. Ken Seigneurie, Christopher Lupke, Frieda Ekotto, and B. Venkat Mani. In December 2017, she will present the keynote address for a conference on *The Second Shepherds' Play* at Colgate University that will include a production of the play using the medieval songs she has found to fit the play's

references to singing. Her article “The Judge as Reader, the Reader as Judge: Literary and Legal Judgment in the Poems of Dante, Machaut, and Gower” will be published in *Machaut’s Legacy: The Judgment Poetry Tradition in the Later Middle Ages and Beyond*, ed. R. Barton Palmer and Burt Kimmelman (University Press of Florida) in fall 2017.

**Eyal Peretz**

Eyal Peretz’ new book, *The Off-Screen: An investigation of the Cinematic Frame*, was released in March by Stanford University Press.



**Anya Peterson Royce**  
 Anya Peterson Royce received several grants from

IU: one from the Themester program on beauty for her course “Sensual Knowledge,” another from the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies for the speaker series “Zapotec Artists and Their Art: Heritage and Innovation,” as well as a research travel grant from New Frontiers. A third edition of her book *Prestigio y Afiliacion de una Comunidad Urbana: Juchitan, Oaxaca* was published (Oaxaca: Coleccion Xhono Gui’Chi’. Fundacion Exce llentiam A.C., 2016). Five of her poems appeared in the collection *Birds of a Feather* (Bloomington, IN: Crow Dancing Art, 2016). Thirty



*Glencolmcille, from Anya Royce Peterson’s pilgrimage in Donegal for Saint Colm*



*“V. Guzebenda regada 2013,” from Anya Peterson Royce’s photo exhibit in Oaxaca*

of her photographs taken in Juchitán between 1971 and 2014 were presented in an exhibition entitled “Guidxi Stine’ Ne Ca Xpanda’/ Mi Pueblo y Sus Retratos” at Casa de la Cultura, Juchitán, Oaxaca; three images from this exhibit are shown here. She conducted field research in county Donegal, county Sligo, and county Galway, Ireland, on sacred landscapes, photographing and recording



*“Mateo watching his oxcarts,” from Anya Peterson Royce’s Oaxaca photo exhibit*

soundscapes of the natural environment of pilgrimage, July-August 2017. Professor Royce was honored with the Trustees Teaching Recognition Award in May 2016.



**Sarah Van der Laan**

Sarah Van der Laan presented papers by invitation at two conferences to mark the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first publication of Lodovico Ariosto's *Orlando furioso*, the greatest and most influential Renaissance epic romance: one hosted jointly by The Johns Hopkins University, Loyola University, Towson University, and Goucher College in October, and the other at the University of Chicago in November. She also presented a paper at the annual meeting of the Renaissance Society of America in Boston in March (where she seized a free evening to attend the men's short program of the world figure skating championships). Her essay, "Circean Transformations in Milton's *Masque*," was published in *The Seventeenth Century* in June 2016.

complete two chapters for a monograph tentatively titled "*Promiscuous Grace: Rethinking Beauty and Holiness with St Mary of Egypt*," which she hopes to complete by year's end. In 2016 there were celebrations of the deaths of Shakespeare and Cervantes throughout the world. In addition to the funeral banquet "Bring Out Your Dead! Dancing on the Graves of Shakespeare and Cervantes," which Velázquez co-organized, she presented work on Cervantes' plays and novels at University of Southern California-Huntington's Early Modern Institute, University of Illinois Chicago's Catholic Studies Center, Princeton University, and on "Don Quijote's Untimely Utopia" as Phi Beta Kappa keynote speaker for DePauw University's Humanities Festival. In the spring of 2017 MLN will publish a critical cluster on "The End of the Poem in the Spanish Golden Age" that Velázquez edited with contributions that explore the intersections between theology and poetics, visual and textual endings, as well as the end(ings) of poetry and the beginnings of the novel.

**Sonia Velázquez**  
Sonia Velázquez received a College Arts & Humanities Institute faculty research grant to



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## Adjunct Faculty News



**Rebecca J. Manring**

Rebecca J. Manring's biggest event of the year was leading

several sessions on her current translation project, Rūparāma's mid-17th-century Bengali epic the *Dharmamaṅgala*, at the first Middle Bengali Reading Retreat-cum-Workshop, in Miercurea Ciuc, Transylvania, Romania. An international conference award from OVPIA allowed her to travel to Sapientia University, where sixteen scholars from around the world met for ten delightful days of reading Middle Bengali all day long, interspersed with hiking in the nearby hills and reading on mountaintops, and then enjoying evenings socializing in local pubs. Reading with the very few other scholars who work on materials from this period allowed her to make tremendous progress with her own work, and of course the fellowship of like minds was a true delight.



**Russell Scott Valentino**

Professor Valentino's translation of Miljenko Jergovic's 1,000-page novel *Kin*

(2013) from Bosnian-Croatian received support from both the PEN/Heim Translation Fund and a National Endowment for the Arts Literary Translation Fellowship. This translation is under contract to be published by Archipelago Books in May 2017. He published the essay “An Accidental Pilgrimage,” in *Inspired Journeys: Travel Writers in Search of the Muse*, edited by Brian Bouldrey (University of Wisconsin Press) and the translation “The Siege Starts Without Warning,” an essay by Miljenko Jergovic comparing the sieges of Sarajevo and Aleppo, commissioned by the *New York Times*. Professor Valentino served as president of the American Literary Translators Association and on the Advisory Council for the Banff International Literary Translation Centre and the Advisory Board for the National Book Foundation’s “Translation in America” project. At IU, he is serving as Associate Dean for International Affairs in the College of Arts and Sciences.

## *Emeriti* News

### **Ernest Bernhardt-Kabisch**

Ernest Bernhardt-Kabisch is continuing to translate the books of noted German musicologist Constantin Floros. This past year he published renditions of two of Floros’ books: *Music as Message: An Introduction to Musical Semantics* and *Gustav Mahler’s Mental World: A Systematic Representation*.

He is currently working on a translation of Floros’ most recent study, “Listening and Understanding. The Language of Music and its Interpretation.”

### **Claus Clüver**

In May 2016, Professor emeritus Claus Clüver gave an invited lecture on “Écfrase e adaptação – casos de transposição intermediária?” at two conferences on topics of intermediality, one at the Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, Belo Horizonte, the other at Uniandrade, Curitiba, Brazil. At IU, he gave an illustrated lecture on “Brazilian Concrete Poetry in its International and Intermedial Contexts,” sponsored by the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies (CLACS) as part of the Brazilian Studies Group Talk Series “Brazil on the World Stage” on February 18, 2016. In October he and Yara Clüver mounted the exhibition ‘ideogramas’: Brazilian Concrete and Post-Concrete Poetry from the Collection of Claus and Maria Clüver” in the Lilly Library (October 15 to December 15, 2016), where on December 1 he presented a lecture, with visual and musical examples, on ‘ideogramas’: Brazilian Concrete and Post-Concrete Poetry and its Transposition by Composers and Translators.” He also participated in a panel on “Border Forms: Figurations of the Postutopian in Brazilian Poetics and Concretism” at the American Portuguese Studies Association Conference, Stanford University, October

14, 2016, on the topic: “Exploring the Structures of Chance: Brazilian Concrete Poetry in its International and Intermedial Contexts.” Clüver completed an essay entitled “A New Look at an Old Topic: Ekphrasis Revisited,” which will appear in the forthcoming issue on intermediality of the literary journal *Todas as Letras* (Universidade Mackenzie, São Paulo, Brazil).

### **Eugene Eoyang**

Eugene Eoyang is currently editing a collection of essays on comparative literature with Gang Zhou of LSU, entitled “Comparative Literature Around the World: Global Practices.” The Anna Balakian Prize for best first book by a comparatist, conferred at the International Comparative Literature Association Congress in Vienna in July 2016, was awarded to Alexandra Berliner for her book *Brodsky Translating Brodsky: Poetry in Self-Translation*. Eoyang served as a judge alongside David Hertz (of IU), Kim Uchang (Korea University), Monika Schmitz-Emans (Ruhr-Universität Bochum), Manfred Scheming (Universität des Saarlandes). The Horst Frenz Prize for best graduate student presentation at the ACLA conference (Harvard, March 2016) was awarded to Yael Kenan (of the University of Michigan) for his paper, “Dialogue in Monologue’ – Addressing Darwish in Hebrew.” Eoyang served as conveyor alongside the other judges, Professors Steven Sondrup (Brigham

Young University) and Ronald Bogue (University of Georgia). Eoyang's review of Debjani Ganguly, *This Thing Called the World: The Contemporary Novel as Global Form* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2016, 300 pages), appears on pages 88-89 of *WLT*. He has also recently finished the paper "The Incommensurability of Translating 醉 as 'Drunk'" for a special issue of *Frontiers of Literary Science in China*, which he is co-editing with Junjie Luo, of Gettysburg College.

### **Breon Mitchell**

Since retirement, Mitchell has continued translating literary works from German. The most recent to appear is by Günter Grass, *Of All That Ends*, a series of texts in prose and verse completed shortly before his death in April 2015, illustrated with pen and ink drawings (NY: HMH, 2016). Breon and his wife, Lynda, also served on the MLA's Scaglione Prize translation committee this past year and attended the prize ceremony in Philadelphia. They were joined by Adriana Calinescu, who was recognized during the first award of the new MLA Matei Calinescu Prize for a distinguished work of scholarship in 20th- or 21st-century literature and thought. The winner was Paul K. Saint-Amour for *Tense Future: Modernism, Total War, Encyclopedic Form* (Oxford University Press, 2015).

### **Bronislava Volkova**

In 2016, Bronislava Volkova

published *Být stromem který zpívá / Being a Tree that Sings* (Červený Kostelec: Pavel Mervart), a bilingual book of poetry with author's color collages. *Z druhej strany duše, Banská Bystrica: Skalna ruža*, a selection of poems in Slovak translated by Ondrej Kalamar, was published with a partial grant by Borns Jewish Studies Program, IU. Another album of collage and poetry, *Prostor bez hranic*, was published in Prague. Her original poetry in various languages (Czech, Russian, English, Bulgarian, Spanish) was published in various journals, anthologies, and Internet publications in Russia, the Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Colombia, Bolivia, and the U.S. She also gave readings of her poetry in the Czech Republic, Crimea, Bulgaria, and Russia. Her collages were exhibited in Prague. She received a diploma for maintaining the traditions of Czech language and success in the area of literary translation from the European Congress of Writers and was Laureate of the literary prize "Prague Muse" with a medal for literary contribution from the European Congress of Writers.

## **Alumni News**

### **Susan Douglas**

After a career in health care administration and marketing and ten years running a small non-profit, Douglas "retired" and now works part-time as a Library Assistant at the South Carolina Governor's School

for the Arts and Humanities, a public residential high school for emerging artists. She makes nearly daily use of her research skills and has had so many opportunities to use her Russian knowledge that she's now taking Russian lessons to improve her fluency.

### **Cynthia Erb**

Cynthia Erb's most recent article dealt with *Avatar*, environmentalism, and new religions. It appeared in *Journal of Film and Video* and will be republished in a collection entitled *Religion and Media*, forthcoming from Routledge in 2017.

### **David L. Garrison**

David L. Garrison's (M.A., 1978) poem "Playing Bach in the DC Metro" was read by "Game of Thrones" star Tara Fitzgerald on the BBC radio program "Words and Music."

### **Michele Hilmes**

Michele Hilmes received the B.A. in Comparative Literature in 1975 and graduated in the Film Studies track. She visited Bloomington this year to present the James Naremore Lecture for the Media School. Hilmes was also presented with the Distinguished Career Achievement Award by the Society for Cinema and Media Studies in Chicago. She is Professor Emerita in the Department of Communication Arts, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

### **Eleanor Kutz**

Eleanor Kutz received her Ph.D. in Comparative Literature at

IU in 1971. She is Professor Emerita, UMass/Boston. She has recently been collaborating with two former graduate students on a new textbook that has just been released, focusing on the new sites, demands, and literacies involved in composing in a digital age: *Writing Moves: Composing in a Digital World* (Fountainhead Press, 2017) by Eleanor Kutz, Denise Paster, and Christian Pulber.

### **Ashley Hope Pérez**

Ashley Hope Pérez, currently an assistant professor of comparative studies at The Ohio State University, has two forthcoming articles: "Images, Self-Narration, and Radical Pragmatism in Simone de Beauvoir's *Les belles images*" in the 2017 French issue of *MLN* and "Material Morality and the Logic of Degrees in Diderot's *Le neveu de Rameau*" in the May 2017 issue of *Modern Philology*. Her most recent novel, *Out of Darkness*, received the 2016 Tomás Rivera Book Award, the 2016 Américas Book Award, and a 2016 Printz Honor for Excellence from the American Library Association.

### **Joe Reese**

Joe Reese received his Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from IU in 1983. His play *Lunacy* was presented at Khaos Theatre in Indianapolis in April, 2017.

### **Gregg Richardson**

Gregg Richardson received his M.A. in Comp Lit at Bloomington in 1982, when Claus Clüver and Ulrich Weisstein (they were called "The Grand Teutons" at the time) were chairs.

Richardson then went on to work in a variety of capacities in the corporate world, the public sector, and the religious sector, before completing a second M.A. through IU in Religious Studies in 1986 under Judith Berling and Mary Jo Weaver, and going on to doctoral studies in Asian Theatre at the University of Hawaii, followed by a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology at the California Institute of Integral Studies in San Francisco, specializing in Clinical Neuropsychology. He then spent 17 years in that specialty with Kaiser Permanente hospitals in the San Francisco Bay Area until retiring last year. He also co-authored a book on aging and chaired an international peace organization along the way. He now continues to provide psychological services and classes and returns to Bloomington at least twice a year. He is glad the Comp Lit Department continues to thrive.

### **Brenda Deen Schildgen**

Brenda Deen Schildgen, Ph.D., Comparative Literature, IU, 1972, is Distinguished Professor of Comparative Literature at UC Davis. She is the 2008 recipient of the UC Davis Prize for Undergraduate Teaching and Scholarly Achievement, and a recipient of NEH, PEW, and National Center for the Humanities fellowships. In summer 2014, she directed a National Endowment for the Humanities Institute on Dante's *Commedia* in Florence. Author of more than fifty articles focused on Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio as well as Chaucer, Augustine, and biblical hermeneutics, she

has published in *Dante Studies*, *Modern Philology*, *Journal of Comparative Literature*, *Religion and Literature*, and *New Literary History*. Among her books are the most recent, *Divine Providence, A History: Bible, Virgil, Orosius, Augustine, and Dante* (2012); *Other Renaissances: A New Approach to World Literature* (2006), translated into Arabic (2014); *Heritage or Heresy: Destruction and Preservation of Art and Architecture in Europe* (2008); *Dante and the Orient* (2002), translated into Italian (2016) and Arabic (2009); *Power and Prejudice: The Reception of the Gospel of Mark* (1999). Just published is a collected volume of essays, *Reading the Past Across Space and Time: Receptions and World Literature*, ed. Brenda Deen Schildgen and Ralph Hexter.

### **Henry Schvey**

Henry Schvey received his Ph.D. in Comparative Literature in 1977 (also an M.A. in West European Studies in 1971). He recently published a memoir, *The Poison Tree* (2016). The book has received many positive reviews, including in *The Common Reader* and in *Kirkus*. Schvey has also directed a production of Golda's *Balcony* for the New Jewish Theatre in St. Louis, and a modern dress *Macbeth* at Washington University, where he has taught since 1987 (and served from 1987-2007 as Chair of the Performing Arts Department).

*Encompass*

# Graduate

## Student News

### Rowena Galavitz

Rowena presented a paper at the biennial GEMELA (Grupo de Estudios sobre la Mujer en Espana y Latinoamerica) conference in San Juan, Puerto Rico, in early October 2016. GEMELA is a group dedicated to studying women's cultural production in Spain and Latin America before 1800. The title of her paper was "Reading Rosa of Lima: The Collages Up, Down, and Sideways," a study about two collages, discovered in the early 20th century, by the 17th-century Peruvian saint. Rowena received a grant from IU's College of Arts and Science to attend the conference. She hopes to travel to Lima this summer to continue her research on the subject and eventually write an article. In addition, she will travel to Spain to continue her work on Hipolita de Jesus, the subject of her master's thesis.

### Roy Holler

During 2016, Roy was invited to spend a semester as a visiting student researcher at the University of California, Berkeley. During this time, he was working with Professor Chana Kronfeld of the Department of Comparative Literature and attending her seminar. Professor Kronfeld has joined Roy's dissertation committee and will continue to offer her guidance. In other news, his essay, "Freedom's Just Another Word. The Paradox of



*Moustapha Ndour interviews author Ngugi Wa Thiong'o*

Motherhood in *Beloved* and *Dolly City*," was awarded the 2016 Tutungi Prize for the best Master's Project submitted in the previous year.

### Michael Montesano

At the African Literature Association Annual Conference in April, Michael delivered the paper "Revolt in Retrospective: Visions of Insurrection in Aimé Césaire's Prose, Poetry and Drama." In June and July, he participated in the Fulbright-Hays Group Programs Abroad for the intensive study of Yoruba at the University of Ibadan in Ibadan, Nigeria. Throughout the fall semester, Michael co-organized the inaugural Latin American Indigenous Film Series "More than Tradition," at the IU Cinema and the Black Film Center/Archive. In November, Editorial Palimpsesto 2.0 of Sevilla, Spain, published Michael's first book of poems, *We Hailed at the Twilight*, in a Spanish-English bilingual edition. The book is available through Amazon booksellers

under its Spanish title, *Clamamos al atardecer*.

### Sally Morrell

Sally Morrell, ABD, was awarded the College of Arts and Sciences Dissertation Research Fellowship for the 2017-2018 academic school year for her dissertation, "Translation, Imitation, and the Legacies of Petrarch and Hafez, 1500-1615." Sally presented sections of her dissertation at the 2017 biennial meetings of the International Comparative Literature Association (ICLA) and the Association for Iranian Studies (AIS), both in Vienna, Austria. She will also be presenting at the 2017 American Comparative Literature Association (ACLA) conference this July in Utrecht, Netherlands.

### Moustapha Ndour

Moustapha Ndour was awarded the College of Arts and Sciences Dissertation Research Fellowship for 2016-2017. He is a 2016 Award winner of the African Studies Association



(ASA); winners were recognized during the 59th ASA Annual Meeting at Washington, D.C., in December, 2016. Ndour won the Royal Air Maroc-ASA Student Travel Award. The Royal Air Maroc-African Studies Association Student Travel Award aims to increase the exchange of students and ideas between Africa and the United States and to award outstanding scholarship by future scholars of African Studies. Ndour interviewed prolific author Ngugi Wa Thiong'o at ASA, too. They had a great talk on contemporary African literature including the perspective of writing and publishing in African languages.

#### **Allison Posner**

Allison Posner was awarded the College of Arts and Sciences Dissertation Research Fellowship for 2017-18. Her dissertation explores questions of ethical and authentic representation of trauma in various works of Holocaust literature. She will be living in New York City.

#### **Alan Reiser**

Doctoral student Alan Reiser has been awarded a Nippon Foundation Fellowship for the 2017-18 academic year to study at the Inter-University Center in Yokohama Japan. IUC-Yokohama

is the premier American program for the teaching of advanced Japanese and is the only program in the world to offer specialized training for specific professional disciplines.

#### **Emerson S. F. Richards**

Emerson S. F. Richards has been selected for the inaugural joint fellowship exchange between the John Rylands Research Institute at Manchester University and the Lilly Library. She will spend the fall semester in the JRR's archive, working primarily on a 14th-century Anglo-Norman Apocalypse. She will present on Irish High Crosses at the American Society of Irish Medievalists' annual meeting at Glenstal Abbey, Co. Limerick, in September. Emerson is also very pleased to accept a two-year appointment on the Graduate Student Committee of the Medieval Academy of America, 2017-19.

#### **Claire Riley**

Claire Riley was awarded a Portable Title VIII Fellowship for Summer 2017 and a Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowship for the 2017-18 academic year.

#### **Dylan W. Rinker**

Dylan W. Rinker currently holds an M.A. in French from IU and a B.A. in French from Drury

University. His research areas are Comparative Mythology, specifically the mythical trickster figure and wisdom literature in medieval and classical Europe.

#### **Zachary Scalzo**

Zachary Scalzo presented his work on translating an Italian drama at ALTA39: Translation & Crossings in Oakland, CA (October 6-9, 2016). He received a College of Arts and Sciences Travel Award to attend the conference and present at the panel "Translation and the Internal Logic of the Text," moderated by Bill Johnston. One of the crucial challenges facing the translator is to establish and maintain the internal literary and linguistic logic of a text. This task requires a careful holistic reading of the original, and often involves subordinating micro-level decisions to broader considerations of textual cohesion and consistency. The quest for cohesion can of course be considerably complicated by the presence of multiple styles, voices, and even languages in the source text. Five examples were explored, ranging from dramas from Yiddish, Russian, and Italian, to Chinese poetry and Polish fiction. In addition to Scalzo, the participants were Rachael Daum, Victoria Miluch,

*(continued)*



# Graduate Student News

Sean Sidky, and Kimberly Wright. Scalzo also read some of his translations of Italian poetry as part of the International European Poetry Workshop at Ivy Tech on November 17, 2016.

## Sean Sidky

Last October, Sean Sidky attended and presented at ALTA 39: Translations and Crossings as part of a panel that included several IU Comp Lit students; he also received a travel award from the College to attend this event. Sidky also organized the 5th Annual Jewish Studies Graduate Association Conference, titled “Dreams of Home: Home and Homeland in the Jewish Imagination” at IU, held in early February 2017. He organized the first joint IU-Purdue Jewish Studies Graduate Student Workshop, held in late February 2017, funded by a grant from the American Academy of Jewish Research.

## Melissa Sokolski

The President’s Diversity Fellowship program was established in 2014 to attract outstanding diverse students to pursue a Ph.D. degree at IU. The fellowship allows scholars to pursue excellent, world-class research, scholarship, and creative activity. Scholars also engage in discovery and contribute to the diversity of community and ideas. This past year, the fellowship was held by Melissa Sokolski. Sokolski, who received her B.A. in English and German at IUB and completed an MA in Media Studies at NYU, is now pursuing her Ph.D. in Comparative Literature and studies postcolonialism and new media, with a focus on Pacific and Polynesian islands. This spring, she also received the Matias L. Ochoada Fellowship, an award given to a high-achieving graduate student of Filipino descent in memory of Matias L. Ochoada, a researcher at the IU Cyclotron Facility.

## Departmental Student Award Winners 2017

### Outstanding Senior Award:

Megan Vinson

### Annie Geduld Memorial Prize for Outstanding CMLT Students:

Em Brewington

Alexis Rueff

### Albert Wertheim Essay Prize in Comparative Drama:

Undergraduate: Em Brewington

Graduate: Melissa Sokoski

### Associate Instructor Excellence in Teaching Award:

Allison Posner

### Gilbert V. Tutungi M.A. Project Prize:

Elizabeth Ryba

### Newton P. Stallknecht Memorial Essay Prize:

Alexandria Frauman

### C. Clifford Flanigan Memorial Colloquium Prize:

Sean Sidky

### Ilinca Zarifopol Johnston Award:

Elizabeth Geballe



# Graduate

## Student Spotlight

by Sean Sidky

Alan Reiser is a third year Ph.D. student who joined the department in 2014, having already achieved a handful of degrees in Comparative Literature, Classics, and Japanese, and having raised two wonderful children. Alan was born and raised in Utah, before moving to California in his early twenties to then Tokyo briefly, then back to Utah. I managed to catch him between bouts of frantically preparing for classes. Stumbling over how to begin the interview, I asked him the most basic question I could think of:

### **So, Alan, what did you do before coming to Bloomington?**

I spent years working as a software localizer, first in Silicon Valley, and then in Tokyo. We taught our kids at home for a few years, and when they were ready to start college, they both studied at the University of Utah. I joined them and got my master's in Comparative Literature.

### **And IU was the next step?**

I was looking for graduate programs that were strong in Classics, Japanese, Comparative Literature, and Folklore — so naturally it was a pretty short list, with Indiana at the top. Interesting trivia? Both my son and daughter had taken some distance learning classes from Indiana during our homeschool years, and I have an uncle and cousins who are IU grads, so IU runs in the family, really.

### **What are your kids up to now?**

My daughter, who studied Costume Design at the University of Utah, is the Wardrobe Supervisor at Utah Opera Company, and my son just graduated with an M.A. in Electronic Arts and Engineering.

### **This is your first semester teaching for Comp Lit, right?**

Yep, I'm thrilled with my current East-West class. I've also been fortunate to teach in Classics and Japanese over the last couple of years.



### **What's been your favorite aspect of teaching?**

I know what I should say: it's talking to students in office hours, and spending time diagramming sentences in class and one-on-one. That's all true, but if I had to pick one thing, it would be showing them how much language and culture shapes what they know and who they think they are.

### **And your favorite part of being at IU?**

It's the breadth of competency here. In addition to Comparative Literature, I've taken graduate-level courses in my minor fields of Folklore and Japanese, Classical Greek literature, and Religious Studies, and now translation.

### **Dare I ask what you enjoy most about Bloomington? Or, maybe an easier question: the biggest difference between here and, say, Utah?**

If you must! It's a really bikeable city: there are bike paths, the traffic is slow enough even in town to enjoy biking, there's an interesting landscape — Utah is just flat or mountains, little in between. I really like biking everywhere. The

(continued)

biggest difference... humidity. And mold. Utah's bone dry. But the air here is clean, with none of the smog that Utah has.

***The important question then—tell me about Phaedra, your beautiful pet dog.***

Oh! She's been with us for 10 years – a super sweet shelter pup we got the year I went back to school. But the week we brought Phaedra home, she got loose and fought some of the neighbor dogs. I was studying Greek drama—Euripides' Hippolytus—at the time. One of my classmates said of the character Phaedra in the play: “She really wants to be good, she just can't help but be scandalous,” and that had to be her name. Ten years later, I still read to Phaedra in Greek and Japanese. She's mellowed a bit, but is still the same Phaedra—she takes to boys quickly, other dogs, not so much.

***So how is her Greek?***

I'm pretty sure her Greek is better than mine. I've never heard her make a mistake in Greek, anyway. Plus, she can down a gyro much faster than I can. Luckily I have the edge over her in Japanese. It's the ramen and chopsticks, I think; the opposable thumbs.

***Alan, you just received a fellowship to spend a year in Japan. Can you tell me a bit about that?***

It's called the Nippon Foundation Fellowship, and I'll be spending the next academic year at the Inter-University Center in Yokohama. The IUC was set up by Stanford University around fifty years ago and is supported by many of the top universities in North America. All the fellows

are graduate students who are at least proficient in Japanese. In addition to advanced language instruction, we'll study domain-specific issues like law, medicine, business, literature, etc.

***Is there a research component to the fellowship, or will you be doing some research while you're there?***

There's no research involved in the fellowship, directly, but I do hope to talk with several living authors about their work and about translation issues in preparation for my dissertation.

***What's the topic of your dissertation going to be?***

Can I say, “post-modern mythologies”? I'm interested in the ways that culturally specific, non-Japanese, folkloric tropes are transformed and how mythological methods are used to cross and redefine cultural boundaries.

***What are you most looking forward to about the fellowship?***

I left Japan in 1998. It's another world to me now. I want to dream again in Japanese.

***They say dreaming in the language is the moment you know you've made it.***

Right. It seems so trivial, but it is huge. For me, the ability to compose in a language follows the ability to dream in the language. I used to dream in Japanese, but not now. Phaedra dreams in Greek.

***And Phaedra?***

She'd rather stay with mom in Bloomington. Big yard, and she doesn't like noodles.



# *Undergraduate* Spotlight

For this year's Undergraduate Spotlights, Megan Vinson and Em Brewington interviewed each other.

## **Megan Vinson**

### ***What was your senior project?***

I wrote a senior thesis as an honors project. It's on superhero comics and femininity. I critiqued several of the canonical texts of modern comics for exploiting women's bodies in pain to create psychological complexity for male heroes while simultaneously diminishing the voice of women in pain. I then explored narrative structures of women-led comics in comparison. My conclusion was that feminine heroic narratives are rooted in the idea of home. A hero's understanding of what it means to be heroic is intertwined with their relationship to friends, family, and home. Moreover, though this pattern consistently appears in women-led comics, this is not a women-exclusive narrative, but rather a style of heroism. Comics like Spiderman are feminine narratives because of the explicit role Spiderman's home and family take in shaping his understanding of heroism.

### ***What are your favorite extracurricular activities?***

Reading to shelter dogs. The animal shelter has a Read and Relax program to help shelter dogs relieve stress by being able to calm down by listening to someone's voice. It combines my two favorite things: reading and cuddling with dogs.

### ***Why did you choose Comparative Literature?***

I get excited by books. Literature is how we understand so much of ourselves. It is where we work out so many of life's big questions. Who are we? What kind of life is a good life? What is justice? What is love? What is our purpose? What does it mean to be human?

### ***What's the coolest book you have ever been assigned?***

It would have to be a five-way tie between *If On a Winter's Night a Traveler*, *Oryx and Crake*, *Persepolis*, *One! Hundred! Demons!*, and the *Song of Achilles*.

### ***What's your favorite spot in Bloomington?***

The fireplace in the Union. It's the perfect place to sit and read a book.

### ***Piece of advice for younger students?***

Do whatever makes you happy. Even if other people don't quite understand it. Don't be afraid to pursue whatever it is that makes you feel excited and passionate.

### ***Favorite food?***

It changes. Currently lavender tea and yellow curry.

### ***Favorite movie?***

*Oh Brother Where Art Thou* and *Singing in the Rain*. I love them! I love them! I love them!

### ***What's the next book on your to-read list, place on your to-travel list, thing on your to-do list?***

The next book on my to-read list is *Jerusalem Delivered* and *The Handmaiden's Tale*. To-travel is Seattle to see whales. To-do is the super exciting world of thesis revising.

### ***Favorite Children's book?***

*Horton Hears a Who*.

### ***What's your spirit animal?***

Shiba Inu.

### ***What's a weird career goal you had as a kid?***

I wanted to be Batman. No, really. When I was a kid, I wanted to rescue girls who had been kidnapped and beat up bad guys who took them.

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## Em Brewington



*Em at the Louvre.*

### ***What was your directed study about?***

I chose to do a directed study last semester with Jeffrey Johnson; the unofficial title of the study was “Dramas that Pushed the Envelope.” Theater and drama are unsung passions of mine that I really wanted to explore further in this directed study, and I especially love the way that drama can be used to push the boundaries of the stage to critique society, create entirely new theatrical techniques, or cause a stir in some other way. The directed study culminated in a final creative project, and I wrote a script about a teenage boy sent to a mental institution to “cure” his homosexuality, which was a “treatment” used up through the early 1970s. Writing this script gave me a chance to challenge myself creatively, as I’ve never written a script before, as well as to think about stage conventions (and how to break them). It also was meant to be a way I could form my own commentary about the current state of U.S. politics. The directed study was a great opportunity to do things I haven’t been able to do in a typical class!

### ***What are your favorite extracurricular activities?***

I play games to support children’s hospitals. (No, really!), I’m a part of Extra Life, which is a national organization that unites gamers of all kinds to fundraise for children’s hospitals, usually through livestreaming. My friends and I raise money for Riley Children’s Hospital in Indianapolis. It’s a really neat way to do something I love for a good cause. I usually stream video games, but I also play Dungeons & Dragons with my friends, and we are starting a podcast that will also fundraise for Extra Life!

### ***Why did you choose Comparative Literature?***

I started in the English department, but I soon realized that there were many perks to switching to Comp Lit. My other major is French, and I’ve taken a few courses now that have combined my majors and given me a better understanding of both. I also love that I can take courses that are different than what’s traditionally offered in English, like internationally focused courses and comparative arts classes. The small department was also a plus for me, and I’ve come to know my professors and peers very well. Both departments have their perks, but Comp Lit was definitely the better fit for me.

### ***What’s the coolest book you have ever been assigned?***

*Equus*, a play by Peter Shaffer about a boy who is being treated by a psychiatrist because he blinded several horses and has created an entire religion surrounding horses. Aside from the attention-grabbing premise, it’s really fascinating, poetic, and strange; the stage and costume design that Shaffer intended is also completely different than anything I’ve ever seen.

### ***What’s your favorite spot in Bloomington?***

Hartzell’s. Their Chocolate Sweet Basil ice cream has my heart.

### ***Piece of advice for younger students?***

Don’t be afraid to switch majors, career paths, dorms, whatever. Almost all the best things in my college career, I’ve found because I’ve

switched something--my friends because I moved into Collins two weeks after freshman year started, my major and passion because I switched departments .... If you aren't happy where you are, there's no reason to stay there!

***Favorite food?***

Ice cream. I'm very serious about my love for Chocolate Sweet Basil.

***Favorite movie?***

A French movie called *À la folie... pas du tout*, or in English, *He Loves Me, He Loves Me Not*. It's a movie you should know absolutely nothing about before you watch it, because it's an experience you should live for yourself.

***What's the next book on your to-read list, place on your to-travel list, thing on your to-do list?***

Next book on my to-read list: *Girl Mans Up* (I want to teach, and I've been reading young adult literature to think about how I would incorporate it in a classroom).

Place on my to-travel list: San Francisco. I've been before, but it was years ago and I would love to live there one day; I'm considering taking the train there next summer!

Thing on my to-do list: Finish out the semester strong, and then go home and see my dogs (and my parents and siblings, of course).

***Favorite Children's Book?***

*Harry Potter*; it had such a huge impact on my childhood and I still really love the series!

***What's your spirit animal?***

A fox. They're cunning and intelligent, but also fun and full of personality, if not a little weird.

***What's a weird career goal you had as a kid?***

I really wanted to be an archaeologist so I could hatch and play with dinosaurs. I think this started because of the Discovery Center at Universal in Orlando, where they "hatch" dinosaur eggs. I was pretty heartbroken when I found out that dinosaurs are all 100 percent dead.



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