

# Comparative Literature Newsletter

## Letter from the Chair

This year, my fourth as chair of the Program in Comparative Literature, I requested a review. Susan Curtis, the chair of IDIS programs, set up a mechanism and met with me to discuss the results, which I am gratified to say were favorable. The main complaint was the need to increase a sense of community, and I have to admit I fell down on the job with regards to hospitality this year when due to lingering problems from last year's hurricanes I had to cancel a planned party on November. It just goes to show how things that affect one part of the country, or the world, affect us all.

I hope the articles in this newsletter give readers a sense of the goals and accomplishments of the program. Its main task is to provide a formal mechanism for linking the departments of Foreign Languages and Literatures and English. For four years the program has been run by a steering committee that has worked very hard, usually with little recognition, to help with admissions, programs, courses, prelims, the M.A. exam, and visiting speakers. I want to salute Beate Allert (German), Angelica Duran (English and Latino studies), Daniel Hsieh (Chinese), and Shaun Hughes (English) for making their expertise available to the program on a daily basis. But many others also contribute as members of Ph.D. committees. At heart, a program like Comparative Literature is about its students and their goals, but it is also about keeping the subject matter alive and expanding the world of knowledge. From this perspective nothing is as intriguing as the meetings of Ph.D. committees when we sit down with students who are defending their dissertation prospectus, a moment when I am amazed at how students are pushing the frontiers of learning and when I find out how much my colleagues know. Shaun Hughes is a special case, as everyone knows. From his vast personal library, some of which is shored on rolling shelves in his basement, he is able to check bibliographical citations in fields as disparate as Old Norse, Arabic, and Chinese. At the other extreme is someone like Bob Lamb, who works on American literature, not languages, but has shown incredible willingness to help shape a number of dissertations on fiction, modernism, and feminism, even when the topics—comparative studies of American and Chinese literature—stray beyond his normal range. The program simply could not function without help from people who move beyond their own borders. To thank only those who have recently sat in on dissertation defenses is to mention Dick Thompson, Marcia Stephenson, Paul Dixon, Elena Coda, John Duvall, David Blakesly, Tom Adler, Howard Mancing, Joe Palmer, Aparajita Sagar, Herb Rowland,

Ben Lawton, Patsy Schweickart, and Geri Friedman. But there are many others who make the program work, people like the John Kirby, Keith Dickson, and Patrice Rankine in Classics and all of those in Spanish who take time from their main fields of inquiry to oversee our students in their careers as teaching assistants.

If I had to point to a single accomplishment in four years it would be the way Comparative Literature has helped nurture the Chinese program at Purdue. We instigated a search for someone to teach 20<sup>th</sup> century fiction and were more than gratified to help FLL hire Dr. Weijei Song, who will teach Chinese starting this summer. Another program goal has been to help graduate students teach in both English and FLL, switching from English to Chinese, or Italian to English, or German—whatever will help students present themselves on the job market.

We perhaps have the most work to do to expand the presence of Comparative Literature at the undergraduate level and as a topic for what Purdue calls engagement. To that end I hope that my current teaching project, tentatively titled "First Lines: A Project in Global Diversity," will help introduce the public to the languages and literatures whose understanding should be a necessary part of any person's liberal arts education. Over a dozen graduate students and faculty have contributed short reading and conversations on the topics from the Bible and Homer to Goethe and American Sign Language, featuring the literature of Greece, Rome, China, Japan, Turkey, Russia, Germany, France, Spain, and the increasing interplay of Spanish and English in America. Videos for this project, which I am editing even as I write this letter, can be reached through various addresses, including the program's website and boiardo.com.

The program has its ups and downs, like any institution. Studying can take its toll. Rewards are often distant. There is more than one road to Rome. Comparative Literature is surely one of them.

Charlie Ross  
May 6, 2006



## First Lines: A Project in Global Diversity

First Lines: A Project in Global Diversity, is designed to introduce students in Comparative Literature but also the people in the community to countries and cultures through different languages. It draws on faculty and graduate students from the College of Liberal Arts as well distinguished visitors. The selection of passage is perhaps old fashioned but the method, which uses modern multimedia to establish a familiarity with world languages and literatures, is post-modern. In designing this project, Professor Ross tried to consider what a visitor from Mars, or a busy executive, might want to know about literary history. "You can't just assign all of Shakespeare, nor does Shakespeare really need to be represented. Right now I'm thinking of using him to cover film and Japan. Obviously there are countless numbers of great literary works, but to create a workable global introduction, lines have to be drawn. The project stresses the sound of the language to acquaint people with the varieties of literary styles, ways of writing poetry and prose, around the world. My biggest regret so far is not having found someone to represent the great tradition of drama from India, particularly Kalidasa."

The line-up, so far, is: Sandor Goodhart—Genesis/Hebrew; Keith Dickson—Homer/Greece; Patrice Rankine—Sappho/Greece(perhaps also New Testament); John Kirby—Virgil/Rome; Mahmoud Guweily—Koran/Arabic; Turgay Bayandir—Koran/Turkey; Allen Mandelbaum—Dante/Italy; Sylvia Oliveira—Os Lusíadas/Portugal; Mou Xianfeng—T'ang poetry (8th c.)/China; Shaun Hughes—Beowulf/Old English; Ann Astell—Chaucer/Middle English; Paolo Panaro (visitor)--Tasso/Italy; Liang Ying—*Hong Lou Meng* (18th c.)/China; Daniel Hsieh—more on China; Brady Spangenberg—Goethe/Germany; Tatjana Lyaskovitz—Pushkin/Russia; Robert Lamb—Huckleberry Finn/American; Tom Broden—Baudelaire/France; Louis Urea (visitor)--an interview on writing fiction today/Latino; Angelica Duran—Neruda/Spanish; and Ronnie Wilbur—American Sign Language.



## Statius Translation Topic of Classics Lecture

On September 29, 2005, Charles Ross delivered a lecture titled "Translating Statius" in the Classics Lecture series organized by Patrice Rankine of the IDIS Program in the Classics at Purdue. The lecture celebrated the publication in January 2005 of Professor Ross's translation of Statius *Thebaid*, subtitled *The Seven Against Thebes*.

Why has a Renaissance professor translated a classical epic? "The very term Renaissance means rebirth of renewal," says Ross, who teaches Shakespeare in the English department and is chair of the IDIS Program in Comparative Literature. "Although historians often use the term "early modern" to refer to the period roughly between 1370 to 1560 in Italy and 1500 to 1660 in England, literature scholars still like the term "Renaissance," since in that period so many art forms found renewal based on the works of ancient Greece and Rome. Therefore Renaissance professors need to be versed in classical culture, as well, of course, as medieval culture. Renaissance studies are therefore interdisciplinary by nature, at least as far as I'm concerned. I am very grateful to Professor Rankine for providing me with such a large audience in such a distinguished venue."



Professor Ross gives lecture to Indiana University Department of Classics, October 6, 2006.

Statius provides a unique link among three IDIS programs: Classics, Medieval and Renaissance Studies, and Comparative Literature. "The real reason I translated Statius was because his epic had such a huge effect on medieval and Renaissance literature," Ross continued. "I focused my introduction on his influence, rather than the conditions in Rome at the time he wrote in the first century A.D. Statius is also a perfect author for comparative literature studies. C. S. Lewis, author of *The Chronicles of Narnia*, wrote in 1932 a classic essay on how Dante read Statius. I tried to update that essay in my introduction by adding other authors."

As part of the lecture, Ross argued that Statius created a group of seven unforgettable warriors. A modern equivalent can be found in the film *The Magnificent Seven* or its source, Akira Kurosawa's *Seven Samurai*.



Professor Ross in Rawls Hall, showing a clip of Steve McQueen and Yul Brenner during the filming of *The Magnificent Seven*.

## Lynn Fellowships Awarded to Comparative Literature Students

Over the past two years, students in the Program in Comparative Literature have received the Lynn Fellowship from the Office of Interdisciplinary Studies. The Lynn Fellowship is intended to recruit outstanding Ph.D.-track students to interdisciplinary graduate programs at Purdue. Each fellowship provides a four-year award package to the fellow, which includes one year of stipend support from the Graduate School and three additional years of support from the interdisciplinary graduate program. The fellowship also provides a tuition remission.

### 2006

#### **Liang Lv**

Liang will begin her studies in the Ph.D. program in August 2006. She comes to Purdue from Nankai University in China where she received her M.A. in Comparative Literature in May 2006. She received her B.A. from Wuhan University in China in Chinese Language and Literature. Her major academic interests are comparative literature and literary theory. She specializes in Modernism, Bakhtin, theatre theory, Green Literature.

### 2005

#### **Roberto Ferreiro, Jr.**

Roberto is on a four-year leave from his home university in Brazil. He has an M.A. degree and is currently working on his Ph.D. He came to Purdue on the recommendation of Professor Antonio Tillis. In his first semester he worked as a T.A. in the Classics Program's "Mythology" course. Spring semester he was a T.A. in Portuguese.

### 2004

#### **Brady Spangenburg**

Brady completed his undergraduate work at Simpson College in Iowa. He chose the Purdue program in Comparative Literature on the recommendation of Professor CoryAnne Harrigan, who graduated from Purdue a few years ago with a degree in Renaissance literature from the Department of English. Brady taught as a TA in both the German program and the English Department. After completing his Master's Degree this May, he will spend a year in Germany. We hope to see him back at Purdue in 2007-2008. His current interest in Renaissance studies. In addition to German and English, he is a student of Latin literature. In the spring semester he read, translated, and scanned the verse of Virgil and Ovid with Professor Charles Ross.

Or rather, travels without Charlie. For the American Comparative Literature Association's annual meeting, in 2005 at Pennsylvania State University, Professor Charles Ross traveled by air, while four intrepid graduate students banded together to save money, registered for a Purdue University vehicle, and drove all the way to Happy Valley. Here is a report by Mou Xianfeng:

During March 11-13, 2005, the American Comparative Literature Association (ACLA) 2005 Annual conference, titled "Imperialisms—Temporal, Spatial, Formal," was held at Penn State University. Four graduate students from Comparative Literature, including Tu Chao-Mei, Hsiung Yuwen, Mou Xianfeng, and Liao Yilin, participated in the event. The trip was jointly funded by Professor Charles Ross, Chair of Comparative Literature, and the Foreign Languages and Literatures department. Seminars at ACLA are organized into A (about 8:00-10:00a.m.), B (10:00-12:00), and C (2:00-3:50 p.m.) streams. One distinctive feature of the schedule is that each seminar basically consists of eight to twelve participants who stick to each other throughout the whole conference (two and three days respectively) so that the whole group can have in-depth discussions. That arrangement appears to be very productive. Besides, panelists can go and listen to other seminars when their own is not in session.

It was during such a chance, on March 12, when we went to listen to Eugene C. Eoyang, a professor from Lingnan University, Hong Kong, delivering a paper that we met Professor Ross himself. Eoyang's paper, titled "Macintosh Apples and Mandarin Oranges: Functions and Dysfunctions in Chinese-Western Literary Comparison," dealt with the issue of comparability between these two discourses. I personally found that very helpful for me to design my own research project.

Another climax of the meeting was a plenary presentation by filmmaker by filmmaker Trinh T. Minh-ha titled "The Debt," which was about her war experience in Vietnam, her life here in the States, and stories about traditional Vietnamese culture. During the subsequent banquet, people socialized, prizes were awarded, and the theme for 2006 annual meeting—"The Human and Its Others"—was announced. The 2006 ACLA meeting is to be hosted by Princeton University from March 23-26.

On March 13, Chao-Mei, Yuwen, and Yilin went to Professor Ross's panel while I read my own paper. After that, we headed directly home, talking and laughing, and arrived back at Purdue by midnight. It was a good experience.

Professor Ross adds: Having met Professor Eoyang the night before at a reception held by Djelal Kadir, former chair of Comparative Literature at Purdue and now teaching at Penn State, Professor Ross found his way next to the distinguished former professor at Indiana University and invited him to join the Purdue group at the final banquet. Since then, as Mou Xianfeng reports, we have found his thoughts on creating comparative topics very useful in structuring dissertations that combine Chinese and English or American literature. I am happy our students found their way safely by themselves—like birds flying outside the nest—through the wilds of Ohio to Pennsylvania and the town whose name has such a Chinese ring to it.



*Tu Chao-Mei, Mou Xianfeng, Liao Yilin, Charles Ross and Hsiung Yuwen at the ACLA.*

## **Purdue-gift**

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## Renaissance Comparative Prose Conference

The emergence of prose is of course the idea behind the niche that this Purdue conference has filled, off and on, for twenty years. It was started by Jon Lawry and continued by Clayton Lein, who often funded it out of their own pockets. We also want to mention in this brief history our former colleague Seth Weiner, no longer at Purdue, who ran the second incarnation of this conference. It was a Falstaffian sight to see him chuckling over his Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*. Starting in 2002, the annual affair was retitled as the Renaissance Comparative Prose Conference in the hopes of attracting papers on Renaissance figures like Montaigne or John Florio. Since its reincarnation, it as been run by graduate students in English. In 2005, Professor Angelica Duran assumed most of the responsibility for the conference, taking over for and assisted by former English Department graduate student Mardy Philippian, who is now teaching at Simpson College in Redding, California. The conference took place at Purdue from November 3-4.



Erica Rude Artiles, graduate student in English.

The conference begins from the groundwork of people like E. E. Stoll, who worked on the development of English prose a century ago, and works like *The Senecan Amble*, by George Williamson, or of those old Ph.D. exam questions on Bacon's essays. The point has been not to ask what Bacon was saying, or how he revised his thought (which Professor Richard Strier has written so well on), but how Bacon helped give birth to that great transparent thing, that instrument of supple thought, the combination of unrivalled word choice and sentence variety that has marked English prose. Against this touchstone of English studies we have sought to add a transnational element, although even in four years that work was hardly begun. We still have not had a paper on Urquhart and Motteux's translation of *Gargantua and Pantagruel*.

In was a good year, nonetheless, producing another wide selection of papers by contributors from across the country and on subjects from Italy, France, Brazil, and England, and New England. The highlight was a keynote talk by Professor Richard Strier, Frank L. Sulzberger Professor at the University of Chicago, who spoke on "From Idiosyncrasy to Blankness: The First Person Pronoun from Montaigne to Descartes." Other papers in this comparative conference were "Remembering Substance: Montaigne's Memorial Metaphors," by Dorothy Stegman, Ball State University; "Transforming Biblical Narrative into Epic Verse: Marko Marulic's *Judita*," by Trevor Laurence Jockims, Stony Brook University, SUNY; "Fair and Balanced News from the Continent: English Newsbook Readers and the Thirty-Years War," by Julia Schleck, New York University; "Prophecies and Politics of John Milton and Anna Trapnel," by Meredith Molly Hand, Florida State University; "Women of Faith and the Pen: Anna Maria van Schurman (1607-1678), Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (1648-1695), and Anne Bradstreet (1612-1672)," by Joy A.J. Howard, Purdue University; "The Value of Women in Alberti's *Della Famiglia*," Erica Rude Artiles, Purdue University; "The 'Poor, Italian Ladies': The Women of Italy As Viewed by English Travel Narrative Writers in the late 17th Century," by Karen Kaiser Lee, Florida State University; "The State of England's Camp: Courtesans, Curses, and the Violence of Style in Thomas Nashe's *The Unfortunate Traveller*," by Joseph Campana, Kenyon College; "Roger Williams—Compared to What?" by David Read, University of Missouri, Columbia; "Grammar and Pacifism in the Works of Erasmus, More, and Colet," by Jeffrey Gore, University of Chicago, Illinois (and a former student at Purdue); "From Prose to Verse: Spenser's Re-Writing of Chaucer's *Melibee*," by Neal Migan, Baker College; "The Power of the Medieval Self in Sidney's *Defense of Poesy*," Nancy Riecken, Purdue University (Calumet); and "Ariosto in Prose," Charles Ross, Purdue University.



Mardy Philippian concludes the 2005 Conference.

Working off-campus and unable to attend this year for happy family reasons were David Wood and Vicky Scala-Wood.



Professor Richard Strier, left, with Charles Ross.

Contributors to the conference were the Purdue Comparative Literature Program, Department of English, Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, Medieval Studies Program, Women's Studies Program, and Classics Program; and the Department of English, Simpson University. A selection of papers will appear in a future issue of *Prose Studies*, edited by Ron Corthell, Kent State University.

Angelica Duran, a member of the coordinating committee for the Renaissance Comparative Prose Conference and a Comparative Literature faculty and steering committee member, shares her thoughts on this year's keynote speaker. "Purdue's Comparative Literature Program has been very fortunate with its keynote speakers for the Renaissance Comparative Prose Conference – most recently John Shawcross from the University of Kentucky and Achsah Guibbory from the University of Illinois (now at Barnard College). So, while this year's conference was filled with so many highlights, I would like to focus on this year's keynote speaker,

Richard Strier from the University of Chicago. He was very generous with his time, from the beginning of his stay at Purdue. After the two-hour long drive down from Chicago, he provided graduate students from my class with a memorable evening at Khana Khazana Restaurant for dinner. We were joined by Charlie Ross and, serendipitously enough, joined by David Read, a friend of Charlie's from graduate school at the University of Chicago, who now teaches Renaissance literature at Missouri. During the conference itself, Professor Strier attended each of the panels and provided helpful comments to the speakers. His keynote speech was fascinating and convincing. Putting on a conference is a large task, but the opportunity to bring major scholars to our campus and enjoying all their contributions to our lively community makes it well worth the effort."

## My Recent Adventures at MLA and ACLA

by Ying (Lillian) Liang

In Dec 2005 I attended MLA (Modern Language Association) annual conference in D.C., and in March 2006 I attended the ACLA (American Comparative Literature Association's) annual conference in Princeton. Both were first time adventures.

There are three basic differences between MLA and ACLA. First, ACLA participants are mostly comparative literature people. For instance, out of the 11 people at my panel, six are from comparative literature. Second, MLA is much bigger. During the three day MLA convention, there were over 700 meetings, over 70 social events, and over 3,000 program participants while the three day ACLA conference held 126 meetings and attracted around 1,050 program participants. Third, ACLA participants are largely graduate students while MLA are faculties. Since grad students go to MLA, they are mostly for job interviews, I was often times the only student at meetings.

The best thing about MLA is it opened my eyes to many things. And I really mean it. The best part of ACLA was the feel. People are mostly grad students, like me; a lot of people are from comparative literature; and, since I presented my paper very early at the whole conference, after I finished, I could float around quite a bit and didn't really feel the stress.

Unfortunately, there were not enough sessions on East Asia in both MLA and ACLA. Out of the 700 meetings at MLA, only four were exclusively about East Asia. Among the 16 papers in these four sessions, eight were about China (including Taiwan), four about Japan, four about Korea; eight were about visual arts, two were about poetry, six miscellaneous, which makes people feel like the novel becomes a forgotten genre. Out of the 126 meetings at ACLA, only three were exclusively about Asia (Asian diaspora, Asian revolution, and cultural interface between East and South Asia)

Among the sessions I attended at MLA, I want to single out all the sessions about "teaching world literature" or "comparative literature and the undergraduate curriculum". Most presenters talked about their years-long experiences of teaching these courses. Virtually two sessions were standing room only. Audience asked mostly about what texts the speakers chose: what texts represent world literature, what regions represent world, what segment can pass as a "vacation", and how exotic they can go. One thing that the speakers (including Damrosch) talked a lot is teaching with and against translation. They all argued for engagement with translation (though with varying degrees and under varying conditions), giving many theoretical reasons, though some speaker mentioned one practical reason, which is they don't want to exclude white American students. They also discussed the positive outlook of team teaching between English and foreign languages depts.

The job information center at MLA is very helpful. I went through everything in there. I guess this is why the convention attracts people. I actually think ACLA should improve on this, since ACLA is attended mostly by grad students, and grad students care not only about publications but also about jobs.

Toni Morrison's interview at ACLA was quite successful. I didn't expect much in the first place, to be honest, because I saw her on TV a few times before. But it was amazing that she is so articulate, so expressive. And she has a big smile! "How language sounds", "how silence sounds", "art provides meaning that no other disciplines do", etc immediately become often quoted expressions during later talks at the convention.

The banquet at ACLA was not good. \$30 only got us broccoli, chicken, pasta, green beans, cabbage, and cake. Sodas were not even free. I sat all the way through waiting for the dance and eventually got only a smattering of it.

But all in all, the more conferences I attend, the more I feel getting into the discourse community. In the past, I could only talk about my areas of interest, now I can converse on a more specific and professional level. Although I still love everything, I know now what to look at a conference. And hopefully I don't just look, I also see.



*Ying Liang at the MLA Convention, Washington, D.C., December 2005.*



*Ying Liang with her husband in front of a well-known national monument.*

## Graduate Student News

**Manuel Apodaca Valdez** (Ph.D. student) has accepted a position as an Assistant Professor at Wittenberg University in Springfield, Ohio, beginning in August 2006. He will be teaching beginning, intermediate and advanced courses of Spanish language and culture. He will graduate with his Ph.D. in summer 2006.



Manuel Apodaca Valdez

**Catalina Florina-Florescu** (Ph.D. student) entered the program in Comparative Literature in 2003, after completing her M.A. at Purdue. Originally from Romania, as is her husband, she was eligible for Purdue's Puskas Fellowship. Following a university-wide competition last year, she won the fellowship for work on her dissertation. Initially, she was interested in people with cancer and AIDS who left behind testimonials in literature, visual arts, and cinema. After reading Catherine Waldby's book, *The Visible Human Project*, which turns on the metaphor of inscription, Catalina decided to look at how the body itself has a story that reproduces the classical theme of "memento mori" (remember you will die). The resulting dissertation takes Bakhtin's notion of the chronotope and applies it to the body to produce what Catalina is tentatively calling the "Corpus-Chronotope: The Body Afflicted with Pain, the Body in Coma, the Body that Literalizes the Cartesian Split between Mind and Body." Professor Tom Adler, currently interim dean of the College of Liberal Arts, is directing the dissertation. Catalina's future plans are to teach drama in conjunction with the visual arts, cinema, and bioethics. This spring, it was announced, Catalina was selected for a PRF Research Award for 2006-07.



Catalina Florina-Florescu

**Yuwen Hsiung** (Ph.D. student) presented a paper titled, "Ugly Creature from the Imperial Wilderness: Cao Yu's 'The Wilderness,'" at the 2005 ACLA meeting at Penn State. Last summer, she got married back home in Taiwan. Her conference paper was accepted by the CompLit Symposium at the University of Toronto in March 2006. She is currently writing her dissertation on contemporary Chinese drama.

**Jin Lei** (Ph.D. student) won a PRF Research Award for 2005-06 for work on her dissertation, "Gardens of Good and Evil: Chinese Strange Tales and American Gothic Stories, 1644-1860." She plans to defend in Summer 2007.

**Yilin Liao** attended a conference in Nanjing, China, entitled International Conference on Chinese Literature: Dialogue between Tradition and Modernity in July, 2005. Her paper, "Falling Down and Raising Up: A Comparison of the Well Image and the Red Lantern Image in *Wives and Concubines* and *Raise the Red Lantern*," was accepted at the ACLA meeting. Another paper, "Once Upon a Time in a Mountain" was accepted by the AAS in San Francisco in April.

**Mou Xiangeng Mou** (Ph.D. student) is currently working on her dissertation.

**Célia Pratas Mantinha** (Ph.D. student) is working on her dissertation on Franz Kafka and Clarice Lispector. She is from

Portugal and lives near Lisbon where she has taught and worked as a researcher. She enjoys writing poetry, short stories, plays and recently wrote her first romance entitled, 'O Lugar da Cegonha,' which she has submitted to a national literary contest. Reading, writing, daydreaming and sports such as Taekwondo are some of her favorite things.



Célia Pratas Mantinha

**Kenneth Richards** (Ph.D. student) is working on his dissertation, "Cyclist: Dalton Trevisan's 'o ciclista' and an Intertextual Bicycle Perspective," while teaching English at a community college in Berlin, Germany.

**Chao-Mei Tu** presented a paper titled, "Female Body Transformed: Li Sinian in Classic Chinese Tales," at the Midwest Conference of Asian Affairs, in September 2005. A paper titled, "Revolution in Negotiation: The Case of Farewell, My Concubine," was accepted at the ACLA meeting at Princeton. Another paper was accepted by the Association of Asian Studies for a conference held in April 2006 in San Francisco. She got married here in Lafayette on January 6, 2006, and a baby is due this year as well. Because of the baby, she will not be able to travel home during the summer. "Too bad, I miss the food in my hometown so much. Now I can only drink flavorless milk for the summer," she said.

## Alumni News

**Marianne Marroum** (1993) has been teaching at The Lebanese American University in Lebanon since 1993. She was hired as an Assistant Professor of Cultural Studies. The courses she has been teaching are mostly college requirements, "Cultural Studies I, II, and III." These are civilization sequence courses. They deal with the world's cultural development from Antiquity to the present. She has also taught a number of times "Introduction to Philosophy" and "Sophomore Rhetoric" (teaching writing through short stories).



Marianne Marroum

**Brady Spangenberg** graduated in May with a Master's in Comparative Literature. Some of his areas of focus include Renaissance and contemporary literature in English as well as Latin and German literature. Starting in October, he will partake in an exchange program with the Albert-Ludwigs-Universität in Freiburg, Germany. There he will help build, organize, and run an English language writing center as well as take courses in German literature. His holidays are mostly spent in Iowa with family and friends; though before his studies begin in Freiburg, he plans on visiting friends in Munich (Oktoberfest!), Kiel, and Passau.

## Comparative Literature Students Teach Two Languages

Incoming students in Comparative Literature generally receive a teaching assistantship in one language. Some students, however, are able to teach more than one language. We think this double capacity should increase employment opportunities for qualified graduates. Fortunately the Program in Comparative Literature, working with the departments of English and Foreign Languages and Literature, is able to give students experience teaching more than one language during their graduate student careers at Purdue. Usually this involves taking a second mentoring program, allowing students to compare not only literatures, but teaching pedagogies. For example, Brady Spangenberg entered the Master's Program as a TA in German, but this year he mentored in English composition and is teaching in the first-

year program. Simone Caroti, who specializes in Science Fiction, has been teaching Italian since he arrived at Purdue, but in the 2006-2007 school year, he will teach English 106, the basic first-year composition. This should not be difficult for Simone, whose English is excellent.

Some students move in the other direction, switching from English to a foreign language. Liang Ying, a native of China, has been teaching English composition since 2002. Next year she will be mentored in Chinese and teach courses in that language. Mou Xianfeng, who has taught English as well as English as a Second Language, is scheduled to do the same. We congratulate these talented students who have the skills and work ethic to be qualified to teach in two different languages.

## Former Purdue Graduate Returns to Speak on German and English Literature

On March 4, 2005, the German section in the Department of Foreign Languages & Literatures, the Comparative Literature Program, and the Department of English at Purdue University sponsored two lectures by Professor Monika Schmitz-Emans, Professor für Allgemeine und Vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft, Germanistisches Institut, Ruhr-Universität Bochum, Germany.

The first lecture, in German, was "Piranesis Wanderungen durch die Literatur" (in German). The second lecture, in English, was "Water Writing: Fluid Language and the Voices of the Sea."

Professor Schmitz-Emans is an active scholar whose recent lectures cover an enormously varied selection of literary works and critical approaches. Besides images of women, she has written on images of China in German literature, theories of romanticism, "The Machine as Allegory and Literary Text," and many other issues of comparative literature. She has also contributed to Purdue's on-line comparative literature journal *Comparative Literature and Culture*.



## Fearless Former Leaders

Djelal Kadir, chair of Comparative Literature at Purdue University from 1985-1991, is now the Edwin Erle Sparks Professor of Comparative Literature at the Pennsylvania State University. Founding President of the International American Studies Association and former Editor of the international quarterly *World Literature Today*, he has served on the editorial board of PMLA and continues to serve on the editorial board of a number of scholarly journals. He is co-editor of *Literary Cultures of Latin America: A Comparative History*, 3 vols. (Oxford, 2004) as well as the *Longman Anthology of World Literature*, 6 vols. (2003) and *Other Modernisms in An Age of Globalization* (Heidelberg, 2002). He guest edited a special issue of PMLA on "America: The Idea, the Literature" (January 2003). He is the author of *Columbus and the Ends of the Earth: Europe's Prophetic Rhetoric As Conquering Ideology* (Berkeley, 1992); *The Other Writing: Postcolonial Essays in Latin America's Writing Culture* (Purdue, 1993); and *Questing Fictions: Latin America's Family Romance* (Minnesota, 1987). Professor Kadir is a regular lecturer around the world for a number of international organizations, including UNESCO, The British Council, The Royal Swedish Research Council, and the International American Studies Association. He served on the Purdue University faculty between 1973 and 1991. When asked for a photo, Professor Kadir, known for his unique sense of humor and honor, told us that he had recently shaved his beard.

Edith W. Clowes, who chaired the program from 1991 to 1997, is professor of Slavic languages and literatures at the University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas. She is the author of numerous



Edith W. Clowes

articles and books on German and Russian philosophy and the interactions of philosophy and Russian fiction in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. They include: *The Revolution of Moral Consciousness: Nietzsche in Russian Literature, 1890-1914* (Northern Illinois University Press, 1988; translated into Russian: *Nitsshe v Rossii*, St. Petersburg, 1999), and *Russian Experimental Fiction: Resisting Ideology after Utopia* (Princeton, 1993). Her most recent book is *Fiction's Overcoat: Russian Literary Culture and the Question of Philosophy* (Cornell University Press, 2004).

John T. Kirby chaired the Program in Comparative Literature from 1994 to 2001. During that time he wrote the program's first website, and oversaw a comprehensive revamping of the M.A. curriculum; the latter resulted in the publication of his book, *The Comparative Reader: A Handlist of Basic Reading in Comparative Literature* (New Haven 1998). His other books include *The Rhetoric of Cicero's Pro Cluentio* (Amsterdam 1990), *Classical Greek Civilization* (Detroit 2000), *The Roman Republic and Empire* (Detroit 2001), and *Secret of the Muses Retold* (Chicago 2001). Professor Kirby has won the Murphy award at Purdue and been named a Fellow of the Teaching Academy. He was named Indiana Classics Professor of the Year. He won the Centennial University Teaching Award from the Classical Association of the Middle West and South and has won the American Philological Association's Award for Excellence in the Teaching of the Classics.



John Kirby in action

## Graduate Student Adventures

Maria Hagipolykarpou, in the dark glasses, a graduate student from Cyprus, takes time off from earning her M.A. to celebrate a Cypriot national holiday with other Purdue students from Cyprus by selling gyros on the Mall, April 19, 2005.



In the second photograph, Simone Caroti enjoys some grappa at the reception for Valeria Finucci, Duke University, who spoke on "Of Women and War: Moderata Fonte's *Thirteen Cantos of Floridoro and the Seduction of Chivalric Romances*," for the Newberry Library Romance and Epic Seminar, sponsored by the Purdue Renaissance Consortium, which is now part of the IDIS Program in Medieval and Renaissance Studies. Also from Purdue. In the middle in the background, is Richard Scèvres. Valeria Finucci is on the left, talking to John Watson of the University of Minnesota, with his hand on forehead. This photograph was taken April 16, 2005.



## WITTIG LECTURE: GERMAN

English and American students of literature often list their most important novelists of the twentieth century, James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, William Faulkner. But Germany arguably produced some of the most influential novels of the century. On September 11, 2004, Elizabeth Wittig lectured on authors like Thomas Mann and Gunter Grass the Austrian women writer Jelinek. Professor Wittig, who received her Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from Purdue in 1986, has just been honored in Germany. Her talk was co-sponsored by Comparative Literature and German.



Elizabeth Wittig

## LARSEN LECTURE: CHINESE

Simone Caroti (back to the camera in picture on left) talks to visiting lecturer Professor Wendy Larsen from the University of Oregon. On April 20, 2005, Professor Larsen (picture on right) spoke on female martial arts figures in Jackie Chan movies. Her talk was co-sponsored by Women's Studies and Comparative Literature.



## JUI-HUI WANG: CHINESE ART

Jui-Hui Wang, a former student who received his Ph.D. from the Department of English, is now professor at Beijing University, where he is associated chair of the Department of English. In 2005 he was a visiting Fulbright Scholar at Harvard University. In April 2005, he lectured on the hidden meanings of Chinese art. He also exhibited his own artwork.



Professor Jui-Hui Wang presenting.



Jui Hui's original artwork



Jui-Hui Wang and wife, Luo Xiao-Yan, and Charles and Clare Ross.



Jui Hui's original artwork

## Recent Seminars

Seminars are an important part of the Comparative Literature program. Each semester a different faculty member is given the opportunity to offer a seminar to graduate students. Often these seminars lead directly to dissertation topics. Recent seminars have included:

### Images as Texts: Ekphrasis and Visual-Verbal Dynamics,

spring 2003, taught by Beate Allert. Readings included a variety of examples from the rhetorical tradition, from Classical, German, French, English, and American sources in literature and culture with focus on literary/visual theory and text/image relations. Just as Horace paralleled paintings and poetic texts, Less-



Professor Allert's spring 2003 seminar.

ing emphasized distinctions between the poetic in literature, painting, and music but was long misunderstood in his approach to visual-verbal dynamics. W. J. T. Mitchell claimed that texts have colonialized images by replacing and eventually absorbing them for the sake of our present visual culture. This comparative literature seminar considered these and other basic premises to the ongoing debates on images and texts. It explored visual and verbal dynamics from a variety of theoretical perspectives, including the textualizing of images, the visualizing of texts, translatability among the senses, scopic regimes, the resistance of painting and other modes of visibility to textualizing, ekphrasis, metaphor, allegory, citation as montage, and simulation.

**Twentieth-Century World Fiction**, fall 2004, taught by Charles Ross and Dan Morris. For this seminar we asked participants to recommend an important novel from their own country. The result was an eclectic assortment of works that allowed the seminar to interrogate the meaning of world fiction and standards of evaluation. After starting with Thomas Mann's *Death in Venice* and Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, as points of departure, we turned to recommendations that included Lu Xun, "Madman's Diary," Vladimir Nabokov, *Invitation of a Beheading* (Russian, set in Germany); Franz Kafka, *The Metamorphosis* (Czech/German); Moacyr Scliar, *The Centaur in the Garden* (Brazil); Orhan Pamuk, *The White Castle* (Turkey); Bruno Schultz, *The Street of Crocodiles* (Poland); Ignazio Silone, *Bread and Wine* (Italy); Albert Camus, *The Stranger* (Algeria/French); Naguib Mahfouz, *The Day the Leader was Killed* (Egypt); Aleksander Solzhenitsyn, *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* (Russia). David Damrosch, *What is World Literature*, was also analyzed.

**The Spirit of Comedy**, spring 2005, taught by Elena Coda. The course explored the social, cultural and philosophical meaning of comedy and laughter. We focused primarily on theater, and we read a different array of comedies, ranging from the Erudite comedies of the Italian Renaissance, (Aretino and Machiavelli) to the political farces of Gogol, Durrenmatt and Dario Fo; from the absurdist comedies of Beckett and Stoppard to Ensler's acclaimed and controversial play *The Vagina monologues*. Together with these texts we also studied various theoretical and philosophical investi-

gations of comedy and laughter: among others we read Plato, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Baudelaire, Bergson, Freud, Cixous, Eco, Bakhtin and Kundera. These are some of the questions that we tried to answer during the seminar: Is laughter a sign of the human capacity for reason or a sign of the human tendency to sin (Umberto Eco)? Is laughter always disruptive or critical of the status quo, or it is only apparently so? And finally: What is it trying to unveil?

For Fall 2005, Professor Angelica Duran taught the cross-listed course "English 534/665 FLL639: **Comparative Literature, The 17<sup>th</sup> Century.**" The class incorporated a number of on-campus events as it read clusters of genres throughout the semester. Readings and events for the "Literary Criticism" section included Englishman Philip Sidney's *Defence of Poesie* paired with Argentinean Jorge Luis Borges' *Ars Poetica*, and U.S. scholars' literary criticism, including Bloom's *Anxiety of Influence*, Scholes' *The Rise and Fall of English and Strier's Resistant Structures*. The class enjoyed coffee and dinner with these last two very generous critics, who visited Purdue to give the keynote speeches at the Woodman Lecture and the Renaissance Comparative Prose Conference. Readings of British sonnets – Shakespeare's (yes, all 154 of them), Donne's *Holy Sonnets*, and Milton's – were read alongside Borges' sonnets as well as 17<sup>th</sup> century Spanish sonnets in English translation by Spaniard De Quevedo and Mexican De la Cruz. "Pastoral" readings were Milton's *Lycidas*, Spaniard Gongora's *Solitudes*, and the short story "Wash Far Away" by 20<sup>th</sup> century U.S. writer John Barryman. With "educational prose tracts" we opened up from the British (Milton's *Areopagitica*, Margaret Cavendish' *Blazing World*, Locke's *Essay on Human Understanding*, and Shelley's *Frankenstein*) and Spanish (*Vives' Disciplinis*) to French, with Descartes' *On Method* and Montaigne's "On Experience." The 10 students in the class were undaunted as we entered our last two genres, "drama" and "the novel." Indeed, these last two sections might have been their favorites, as we paired reading Milton's *A Mask (Comus)* with Chicano José Rivera's *Marisol* with a group field trip to the Purdue production of the Rivera play (the last play to be housed in the Experimental Theater); and we paired reading Cervantes' *Exemplary Novels*, Philips' 17<sup>th</sup> century translation of *Tears of the Indians* (one of the primary texts of "the Black Legend" of Spanish atrocities in the New World) and Chicano Richard Rodriguez' *Hunger for Memory* with a panel of guest speakers from the Departments of Audiology, English, and Foreign Languages and Literature .

For Spring 2006, Angelica Duran is teaching "English 266: **World Literature**," a required course for the Comparative Literature major. Unlike the multiple readings in her Fall 2005 graduate class, the class is reading only four texts. Those texts happen to be four "epics": Roman Ovid's *The Metamorphoses*, the anonymous Spanish *El Cid*, Italian Dante's *The Divine Comedy*, and British Milton's *Paradise Lost*. "Epics" is in quotation marks because the class is exploring specifically the concept and definition of "epic." External activities that contribute to the class as much as do the readings are attendance at the Purdue production of Shakespeare's *A Winter's Tale* and the creation of a cake for the Bug Bowl Cake contest in April, with the cake design based on a "bug" that shows up in one of our readings, perhaps the spider from *Metamorphoses*, or the worm in *Paradise Lost*.

Below is a list of current students and their degree tracks. They are grouped by their entry year.

1992

Kenneth Richards (Ph.D.)

1997

Carla Nelson (Ph.D.)

1999

Manuel Apodaca-Valdez (Ph.D.)

2000

Mahmoud Guewaily (M.A.)

Yoshiko Matsuura (Ph.D.)

2001

Yuwen Hsiung (Ph.D.)

Lei Jin (Ph.D.)

Celia Mantinha (Ph.D.)

2002

Ying Liang (Ph.D.)

Xianfeng Mou (Ph.D.)

Teresa Nunes (Ph.D.)

Peirui Su (Ph.D.)

2003

Tatjana Babic (Ph.D.)

Catalina Florina-Florescu (Ph.D.)

Yilin Liao (Ph.D.)

Colleen Neary-Sundquist (Ph.D.)

Chao-Mei Tu (Ph.D.)

Shaojing (Rita) Wu (Ph.D.)

Dongmei Xu (Ph.D.)

2004

Simone Caroti (M.A.)

Tetyana Lyaskovets (Ph.D.)

Jose Newton Pereira Filho (Ph.D.)

Laura Poggi (M.A.)

2005

Monica Arnett (M.A.)

Roberto Ferreira, Jr. (Ph.D.)

Martina Jauch (Ph.D.)

Cong Yin (Ph.D.)

2006

Carmen Lleinin Figueroa (Ph.D.)

Liang Lv (Ph.D.)



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