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RETROSPECTIVE OF GERMAN COLLOQUIUM SPRING 2003

Cassandra Campbell
Yuliya Komska
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Casey Servais
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In the first colloquium session of the semester, **Thomas S. Grey** of Stanford University presented his paper "Masters and their Critics: Wagner, Hanslick, Beckmesser, and *Die Meistersinger*." Adding historical depth and nuance to the debate concerning anti-Semitism in Wagner's *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, Grey's paper discusses the professional and sometimes personal feud between Richard Wagner and the music critic Eduard Hanslick.

Grey gives a detailed history of the relationship between Wagner and Hanslick, beginning with Hanslick's rejection of Wagner's musical aesthetics in the 1850s and continuing through Wagner's public declaration of anti-Semitism in 1869, following the premiere of *Meistersinger*. He discusses the interactions between Wagner and Hanslick, including their meeting in 1861-2 and Hanslick's rather negative review of *Meistersinger* upon its premiere.

The real issue here, however, is Wagner's famous anti-Semitism and the possibility of viewing Beckmesser, the figure of the critic in *Meistersinger*, as a parody of Judaism. Grey's paper discusses the possible construction of Beckmesser as a Jewish figure and, by extension, of Hanslick as the Jewish

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MOZART AND THE KEYBOARD CULTURE OF HIS TIME

Emily Dolan
Wiebke Thormählen
Francesca Brittan

This ambitious three-day conference, which was co-sponsored by the Mozart Society of America, the Cornell Department of Music, and the Institute for German Cultural Studies, began Thursday, March 27, with an evening chamber concert of arrangements of Mozart's music to and from the keyboard. Performing these often bizarre works were **Wiebke Thormählen** and **Michael Sand**

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INTERSECTIONS WITH ROBERT WALSER

Marlon Kuzmick

Co-organized by **Samuel Frederick** (German Studies) and **Dorian Stuber** (Comparative Literature), "Intersections with Robert Walser" was a two-day conference (April 11-12) intended to "spread the good word" about Robert Walser. The title suggested, firstly, that the notion of an "intersection" with Walser might be a useful metaphor for a non-violent (i.e. non-reductive) reading practice and, secondly, that Walser himself might provide a productive, generative site of intersection for a variety of critical/theoretical practices and questions (concerning modernism and modernity, phenomenology and affect, and other issues). The title also may have alluded to the variety of experiences (film, seminar, walk) that the organizers had planned as multiple paths towards a possible encounter with Walser.

The conference's first day saw Stuber deliver his colloquium paper, "Feeling for Robert Walser" (discussed elsewhere in this newsletter). In the evening, conference participants attended a special screening of *Institute Benjamenta, or This Dream People Call Human Life* by the Quay brothers. Ultimately, the film turned out to be a point of contention among the members of the following day's roundtable discussion. Some found the film faithful to the spirit, if not the letter, of Walser's *Jakob von Gunten*, and even believed that the film's dreamscape offered moments that surpassed Walser's original text. Others, however, felt that the film's motif system (its proliferating stags, in

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**IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE HOLOCAUST:
GERMANS AND JEWS SINCE 1945
CONFERENCE**

On February 22 the Institute for German Cultural Studies sponsored a conference entitled "In the Aftermath of the Holocaust: Germans and Jews since 1945." Professor **Vicki Caron** of the Department of History and Program of Jewish Studies organized the conference, which was co-sponsored by the Institute for European Studies, the Department of German Studies, the Department of History, the Program of Jewish Studies, the Society for the Humanities, and the University Lectures Committee.



Vicki Caron

The conference opened with a presentation by **Wulf Kansteiner**, Professor of History at SUNY Binghamton. The title of his lecture was "What is the Opposite of Genocide? The Pursuit of Jewish-Christian Reconciliation on West German Public Television."



Wulf Kansteiner



Stephan Braese

Stephan Braese, *Privatdozent für Deutsche Literaturgeschichte* at the University of Bremen, presented a lecture entitled "The Other Memory: Jewish Authors in German Postwar Fiction." "Aesthetics, Representation and Postmemory in Contemporary German-Jewish Culture" was the title of a lecture by **Leslie Morris**, Director of the Center of Jewish Studies and Professor in the Department of German, Scandinavian and Dutch at the University of Minnesota.



*Leslie Morris (r.) with
Stephan Braese*

Gavriel Rosenfeld, Professor of History at Fairfield University, presented a lecture entitled "Alternate Holocausts and the Mistrust of Memory."



Gavriel Rosenfeld

The conference ended with a lecture on "Sacred and Secular Narratives in the Jewish Museum Berlin" by **Michael Steinberg**, Professor of History at Cornell University.



*Michael Steinberg (l.) with
Andreas Langenohl*

The well-attended event offered a rich and detailed reassessment of the cultural configuration between Germans and Jews after 1945. What made the symposium memorable for speakers and audience alike were lively discussions of the five lectures. There was definitely a strong sense that the contributions were opening up unexpected and fruitful perspectives.

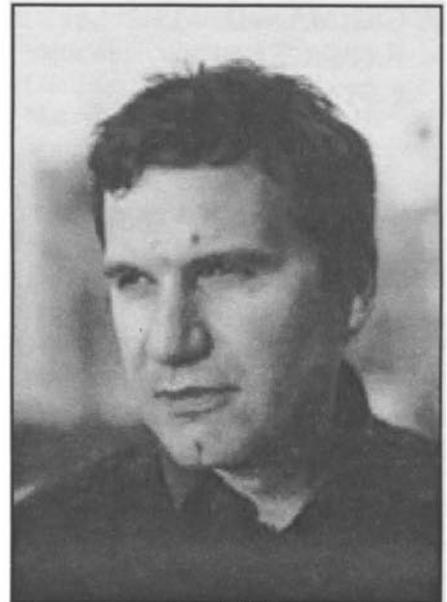
LESLIE ADELSON DELIVERS INVITATIONAL LECTURE

Leslie Adelson of the Department of German Studies was invited to give the prestigious Annual Invitational Lecture of the Society for the Humanities for the 2002-2003 academic year. Her lecture was entitled "The Turkish Turn in Contemporary German Literature: Towards a New Critical Grammar of Migration." In this lecture she called into question certain conceptual frameworks employed to theorize identity formation and cultural contact, claiming that a "new grammar for cultural contact" is necessary to understand and represent adequately the complexities of contemporary, postnational experience. For Professor Adelson, Turkish-German literature in the 1990s provides an instructive example of a type of literary innovation that points beyond the simplistic dualities of East/West, past/present, self/other, and victim/perpetrator.

The idea of "between two worlds" has been a dominant paradigm for imagining cultural contact and interaction. The Third World of post-colonialism and the First and Second Worlds of the Cold War are just two examples of a widespread "world"-based schema for thinking about political, social, and cultural issues in the era following the Second World War. In the particular case of Germany, theorists have tried to determine the cultural and social "location" of Turks in Germany as "between the two worlds" of home/foreign, East/West, Muslim/Christian, Europe/Turkey, and so on. Professor Adelson argued that the dominant rhetoric of this predominantly spatial figure prevents an adequate understanding of people's experiences as migrants. This notion presumes a kind of originary, essentially intact world, and operates with dualisms that no longer make sense. Professor Adelson called the idea of "between two worlds" a cultural

fable, or a fiction that is used as a reference point when imagining a succession of events. This cultural fable, while having had currency in imagining the "encounter with the material history of modern migration," seems less and less fitting to capture contemporary experience.

In this way, the work of the author Emine Sevgi Özdamar represents an important conceptual reconfiguration of the divisions and pairings of East and West, German and not German, past and present. For Professor Adelson, Özdamar's work is an important, yet often overlooked inflection of what is sometimes called *Wende-Literatur*, or the literature surrounding German unification in 1990. Özdamar establishes structures of cultural affinity between Turks and Germans, showing not a clash of two different worlds, but the sharing of common landscapes. Professor Adelson discussed how Özdamar produces a "locality" in space, time, and history without making use of the cultural fable of the "world." By referencing German political and cultural landmarks of the past, the author remembers and reconfigures her own history and the history of Germany. Özdamar employs the technique of what Professor Adelson called "suspended referentiality," where representative cultural or political signs are enfolded into the literary text, but are left open-ended and ambiguous in their signification, leaving much to readerly speculation. By letting her Turkish narrator reference the Nazi era for example, the Özdamar subverts the idea that a person of Turkish origin in Germany has no relation to the past of Germany, as an ethnically German person would. Özdamar constructs a postnational past, present, and future in which strict dichotomies of self and other, familiar and foreign, German and not-German are problematized and complicated. She presents "new conditions for remembering twentieth-century German national histories in an increasingly postnational present that Turks and Germans in the Federal Republic already share." •



Oswald Egger

NEW SERIES OF ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE TO BEGIN

Dr. Oswald Egger (shown above) will be the first Artist-in-Residence in a new series of visiting authors which is beginning this semester at Cornell. The new program was created with the participation of the Dean of Arts & Sciences, the Provost and is being administered by the Institute for German Cultural Studies.

Dr. Egger, who was born in the Südtirol in Cermes, Italy, now makes his home in Vienna. He is one of the leading contemporary avant-garde poets and poetologists in the German language. While at Cornell, he will be involved in a mini-seminar for graduate students, give a reading from his literary work in German, visit languages classes and participate in a conference for the Cornell community, including graduate and undergraduate students.

The dates of Dr. Egger's visit here are October 27-November 27. A more detailed program and definitive schedule are being finalized at the Department of German Studies. •

**THE GERMAN-JEWISH
EXPERIENCE
A SYMPOSIUM**

Erica Doerhoff

On Sunday, April 27, scholars gathered for a symposium on "The German Jewish Experience: Trends and Streams in the Nineteenth Century," which was sponsored by the Program of Jewish Studies and the Morris Goldstein Endowment for Jewish Studies Curriculum Enhancement. It was co-sponsored by the Department of History, the Department of German Studies, the Institute for German Cultural Studies, and the Society for the Humanities.



Allan Arkush

Allan Arkush (Binghamton University) opened the symposium with a lecture entitled "Heinrich Graetz on the Enlightenment and the Haskalah." In this lecture, Arkush argued against the common reading of Graetz as a pro-Enlightenment historian. According to Arkush, Graetz does not read Moses Mendelssohn as an Enlightenment thinker but rather as a religious thinker who prepared the Jews to fulfill their historical role. Arkush suggested that Graetz's interpretation of Mendelssohn is part of a political program that focused not on the Enlightenment, but on the need to prepare for founding a Jewish State.

Maria Benjamin Baader (University of Toronto) presented a paper entitled



Maria Benjamin Baader

"When Jewish Men Prayed like Women: On the Culture of Prayer in Jewish Homes and Synagogues." In this paper, Baader analyzed a transformation of the Jewish culture of prayer that occurred in the nineteenth century. Prior to this period, men recited formulaic Hebrew prayers and addressed God in a community while woman addressed God personally and individually through flexible prayers in the vernacular Yiddish. Baader showed how in the nineteenth century prayers for both men and women emerged in the German language that followed the model of prayer once considered feminine.



Steven Kepnes

In his paper "Ethical Monotheism and Jewish Liturgy from Mendelssohn to Cohen," **Steven Kepnes** (Colgate University) argued that both Moses Mendelssohn's and Hermann Cohen's Jewish writings are not "shadows of their philosophical writing" as is sometimes claimed, but rather are of crucial importance. Kepnes showed how for both of these thinkers ritual connects thought to communal action and overcomes the dichotomy between body and mind and behavior and belief.



Marsha Rozenblit

Marsha Rozenblit (University of Maryland) closed the symposium with a paper entitled "On the Meaning of German-ness to German Jews in Austria-Hungary." She argued that a study of Jews in Hapsburg Austria suggests the complexities of Jewish identity in modernity and problematizes the categories used to define identity. She showed how the particular political situation of Austria-Hungary allowed the development of a "tripartite identity" consisting of a Hapsburg political identity, a German cultural identity, and a Jewish ethnic identity. •

Erica Doerhoff is a graduate student in the Department of German Studies.

SYMPOSIUM ASKS: IS KAFKA A UNIVERSAL AUTHOR?

Joshua Dittrich

Two students meet in a hallway in Goldwin Smith Hall. One notices that the other is carrying a paperback edition of Franz Kafka's short fiction and remarks, "I didn't know you were an English major!" This anecdote, which professor Peter Uwe Hohendahl offered as an introduction to this semester's IGCS symposium on Kafka, is interesting for at least two reasons: (1) the student's assumption that anyone carrying around a Kafka volume must be *studying* it; and (2) the further assumption that the context for the study of Kafka, a Czech Jew who wrote in German, would be in the English department. Indeed, two of the major questions addressed either directly or indirectly in the symposium were: Why *study* Kafka and in what (disciplinary) context?

The first speaker, **Jonathan Monroe** (Comparative Literature), squarely faced the question of what is at stake in the contemporary study of Kafka. Drawing heavily on Slavoj Žižek's *The Desert of the Real*, Monroe insisted on the relevance of Kafka's work as a "symptomatic knot" in which issues related to the public/private, virtual/real, and utopian/dystopian distinctions are tangled. Turning specifically to "The Metamorphosis," Monroe read the character of Gregor Samsa as raising important questions about the figure of the businessman in a global economy. For Monroe, the story also problematizes the relationship between innocence and repression: Does it suggest a return of the

repressed or a return of repression? And finally, Monroe asked, what are the implications of thinking of Kafka as a specifically European writer within a global political context?

The second panelist, **Barry Maxwell** (American Studies), directed his remarks to a close reading of the *sonics* of Kafka's story. Kafka's fiction in general, Maxwell holds, is as sonic as it is graphic, replete with "sonic smudges, sound broken off because broken away from sense and desire, freakishly loud ejaculations



(l. to r.) Diana Reese, Samuel Frederick, Dorian Stuber

alternating with blurred mumbling, [...] shattering crashes and everywhere the sounds of lock mechanisms [...] too loud to remain unnoticed, unremarkable." Although other readers of Kafka (namely Adorno and Deleuze/Guattari) discuss the sonic dimension of Kafka's writing, they do not acknowledge the elusive, yet crucial role it plays within Kafka's narrative process. The noises (and the silences) one "hears" in Kafka are not incidental, not side-effects or ruptures within the unfolding of the narrative, but are in fact integral to Kafka's narration. Maxwell demonstrated this point through a close and provocative reading of sound in "The Metamorphosis."

The final panelist to address "The Metamorphosis" was **Dominic Boyer** (Anthropology). He sketched out a Marxian-Foucauldian reading of the story as a crisis in the bio-political organization of the family. Within the fictional world of Kafka's story, one is either a producer, a parasite, or dead, a view which Gregor's metamorphosis rather nicely illustrates, and which is supported by the return of the father-as-producer and finally the promise of new (re)productive powers located in the young body of the sister. Boyer noted that Kafka wrote at a time

when various competing discourses of modernity (namely of dehumanization, of commodification, and of rationalization) were painting rather grim pictures of modern life, and he suggested that Kafka's story of bio-political crisis may be interpreted as somehow speaking to those discourses. The most interesting questions for Boyer are: At what level may Kafka be seen as speaking to these discourses? Does Kafka simply have an intuitive perception of them, or is he making a conscious (or uncon-

scious) intervention?

The second panel began with **Dorian Stuber** (Comparative Literature), whose remarks on "In the Penal Colony" presented not only a particular reading of the story, but also theorized a radically new model of reading. Faced with a difficult text which "tempts us to allegorize, explain-away or otherwise short-circuit its strangeness," but which at the same time "resists the explanation it seems to demand," Stuber asserted that the reader of Kafka must learn to read with his "eyes wide shut." To elaborate this concept, Stuber integrated a Deleuzian model of reading (reading as plugging in a machine) with his own reading of Kafka's

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THOMAS KRAMER SPEAKS ON "MOSAİK"



Thomas Kramer

On April 7, **Thomas Kramer** of the Humboldt University in Berlin presented a lecture entitled "Populäre Literatur der DDR zwischen Karl Marx und Karl May: Der Comic 'Mosaik' 1955-1990." The Institute for German Cultural Studies and the Department of German Studies sponsored the talk. In his presentation, Kramer traced the history and development of the popular GDR comic book "Mosaik" during its thirty-five years of publication. The lecture was based on his recent book *Micky, Marx und Manitu: Zeit- und Kulturgeschichte im Spiegel eines DDR-Comics 1955-1990: "Mosaik" als Fokus von Medien-erlebnissen im NS und in der DDR.*

According to Kramer, the authors of "Mosaik" shared a common educational background: they received their education prior to the foundation of the GDR and had a traditional, largely conservative, bourgeois education. Kramer argued that the comic book authors drew upon this educational foundation when writing the comic, and he demonstrated how the comic book integrated many materials from the bourgeois literary tradition. The authors also drew on other sources, including Hollywood film productions, Karl May novels and images from the Nazi era. By showing images from both the comic book and source materials, Kramer demonstrated the ways in which the authors of the comic book adapted and integrated material from diverse sources.

ENZO TRAVERSO LECTURES ON GERMAN-JEWS IN EXILE

On April 23, **Enzo Traverso**, Maître de Conférences in Political Sciences at the Université de Picardie Jules-Verne (Amiens), presented a paper entitled "Auschwitz and the German-Jewish Culture in Exile." In this lecture, Traverso discussed the unique status of several German-Jewish exiles during and after the Second World War. He argued that thinkers such as Theodor W. Adorno, Primo Levi, and Hannah Arendt, were able to theorize the Holocaust and the role of fascism in the larger context of European history in a way unlike other European and American intellectuals. Traverso linked their important, and as of yet under-appreciated theorization of the twentieth century to their outsider, exile, or pariah status. The lecture was sponsored by The Society for the Humanities and the French Studies Program. •

HEINER MÜLLER CONFERENCE SEPTEMBER 26-27

Cornell Professors David Bathrick and Peter Hohendahl along with visiting Professor Frank Hoernigk from Humboldt University in Berlin are organizing a two-day conference on Heiner Müller, postwar author, playwright, and political activist who died in 1995.

The conference will begin on Friday, September 26 in the A.D. White House and will continue through the day on Saturday, September 27. One of Müller's plays will be performed Saturday evening in the Theater Arts center.

Plans are being finalized at this time. The conference and performance are open to the public. •

GERMAN COLLOQUIUM SERIES FALL SEMESTER 2003

Professor Daniel Purdy of the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures, Pennsylvania State University, will open the Fall 2003 German Colloquium Series on September 12 with the presentation of his paper "The Building in *Bildung*: Architectural Theory and the Aesthetics of Autonomy, Kant, Goethe, Moritz." He will be followed on October 10 by Amalia Herrmann, graduate student in the Department of German Studies at Cornell. The title of Herrmann's paper is "Why Hölderlin?"

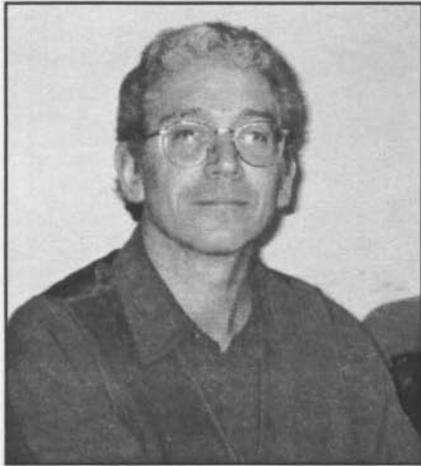
On October 24, Professor Gerhard Kurz of the University of Giessen in Germany will give his paper entitled "Gossip as Literature—Literature as Gossip." Cornell graduate student Nicholas Mathew from the Department of Music is scheduled to present "Beethoven's *Augenblicke*" on November 7 and Adelheid Voskuhl, graduate student at Cornell's Department of Science and Technology Studies, will give a paper on "*Bewegungen, die offenbar Rührung zu verrathen scheinen: Music-making Automata and Jean Paul's Early Satirical Works in Late 18th Century Germany.*"

Professor Eric Rentschler of the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures at Harvard University will close the series on December 5 with his paper entitled "Ridges and Ruins: Generic Topographies in German Film History." •

DAAD WEEKEND SEPTEMBER 20-21, 2003

The DAAD Weekend, organized by the Department of German Studies, is scheduled this year for September 20-21. Theme of the program is "Flower Power? The German Green Party Turns Twenty. Revisiting Environmental Politics in the 21st Century." Professor Diana Reese is in charge of organizing the event. •

pedantic critic, and concludes with a reception history of *Meistersinger* that includes parodies of the opera.



Thomas S. Grey

After outlining the history of the Wagner-Hanslick conflict during his colloquium talk, Grey went on to discuss the character of Beckmesser with respect to his portrayal as a Jew. Through close analysis of Beckmesser's text and music and by comparing it to the text and music of the other figures of the opera, Grey concluded that the characterization of Beckmesser, while certainly containing elements that could be interpreted as parodying stereotypes of Jews, is not an explicit statement of anti-Semitism on the part of its composer.

The question and answer focused on alternative reasons behind the compositional anomaly of Beckmesser. Colloquium attendees discussed the possibility of Beckmesser as a parody of sixteenth-century poetry or of the compositional ineptitude of music critics. The perspective of the audience was also debated, as other Wagnerian characters, notably Lohengrin and Siegmund, have also been received as potentially Jewish figures by both Jewish and non-Jewish audiences. Grey concluded by stating that one can draw no conclusions, given the fundamentally ambiguous nature of the history of the Wagner-Hanslick opposition. Despite Wagner's anti-Semitism and popular characterizations

of the music critic in the history of *Meistersinger*, it was and remains impossible to know the composer's intentions in creating the unique figure of Beckmesser.

In his German Studies colloquium paper "German as a Jewish Language," **Stephan Braese** (University of Bremen) presented a synopsis of an ambitious research project on the German *Sprachkultur* of East-Central European Jews, conducted in cooperation with the Simon Dubnov Institute for Jewish Culture and History (Universität Leipzig). The project covers an extensive time span from the beginnings of the Haskalah (1770s) to the years leading up to the National Socialist exclusion of Jews from public life. Braese, possessing broad expertise in nineteenth-century literature and well-known for his recent study of post-World War Two German-Jewish writers, *Die andere Erinnerung*, is one of the best qualified scholars in the field to undertake such a study.



Stephan Braese

Braese situates his project mainly in opposition to German *Germanistik*, which has viewed Jews more as one-way passive consumers of standard German who are pragmatically oriented toward assimilation and less as the language's active co-creators. Hence the linguistic agency of Jews becomes the crux of the argument in Braese's study. Not only did

Jews appropriate German while rethinking its idiom in various religious and secular contexts, but they eventually became some of its principal carriers and, to a large extent, propagators in East-Central Europe under the Hapsburg and the Hohenzollern empires. This view, according to Braese, suggests the need to differentiate between various Jewish diasporas and to rethink simplistic notions of assimilation in order to conceive of the latter in more hybrid and less absolutist terms.

In certain ways, Braese argues, German-speaking Jews became an early instance of cultural trans-territoriality, transcending the "ethnic, national, or political lines" that at the time still marked much of German (and European) thought. Indeed, Braese sees in this German-Jewish development a prototypical 'European idea' of sorts inaugurated not so much by some intrinsic 'European' sensibility of the German language but rather by the quintessentially 'European' experience of its Jewish bearers. To revisit the history of this experientially shaped language and of the specific consciousness of this *Sprachkultur* is all the more relevant today when culture is again on the table in discussions of an expanded Europe.

In her talk "Transmission Lessons: Mechthild von Magdeburg and the Making of Textual Authority," **Sara S. Poor**, Assistant Professor of Germanic Languages & Literature at Princeton University, reexamined the relationship between gender and textual authority by focusing on the medieval and modern reception of Mechthild's (ca. 1210-1282) set of mystical revelations known as *Das fließende Licht der Gottheit* (The Flowing Light of the Godhead). Her talk drew on her upcoming book (to be published in 2004 by the University of Pennsylvania Press) on Mechthild and the problem of female authorship, in which she takes a historical approach to the complex theoretical issues surrounding the study of medieval manuscripts, women's writing, and canon formation.

By focusing on how the concepts of authorship, tradition, and canon have changed in different historical contexts,



Sara S. Poor

Poor offered a more nuanced account of the fortunes of female authorship than is afforded by viewing gender as the foremost determinant in reception history. Poor's project is to illustrate how Mechthild's *opus magnum* has been received by differently conceived traditions for different ideological reasons over time. For example, when Mechthild's Low German text was translated into Middle High German for communities of religious women, the *auctoritas* of its author was grounded in her role as a bride and lover of God. When this same work was translated into Latin, Mechthild assumed the authority of a line of female biblical prophets. For nineteenth-century philology in Germany, she was part of a broader rediscovery of the vernacular tradition. Mechthild von Magdeburg has also served historians of German mysticism as an unknowing precursor to male masters such as Meister Eckhart and Heinrich Seuse.

Finally, for her anthologizers from the 1970s to the present, she has largely been seen as yet another female author to be re-discovered for contemporary projects of canon (re)formation.

Poor argued that a view of Mechthild's work as primarily women's writing provides too narrow a focus with which to assess her canonicity or lack thereof, since such a view ignores the widely divergent social, historical, theological, geographical, and linguistic contexts in which women writers wrote in the Middle Ages.

On April 11, **Dorian Stuber**, graduate student in Cornell's Department of Comparative Literature, presented a colloquium paper on Robert Walser. This colloquium also served as the inaugural event for a weekend-long conference on the Swiss Modernist – "Intersections with Robert Walser" – that Stuber co-organized.

The colloquium paper, entitled "Feeling for Robert Walser," is part of Stuber's dissertation project, currently titled "Modernism with Feeling," which aims to investigate the relationship of literature, specifically Modernist literary language, to affect. (Along with Walser, Stuber's larger project will also consider British Modernists D.H. Lawrence and Henry Green.) If Stuber's alignment of Modernism and affect seems inappropriate, then this perception illustrates why he considers his undertaking to be imperative: Modernism has long been held to be a reaction against its sentimental or excessively emotional precursors. Stuber rejects this critical commonplace in his assertion that it is precisely Modernist literary language, which thrives in the intersections of the linguistic and the non-linguistic (affect), that is so well suited to the representation of feeling.



Dorian Stuber

Stuber arrives at this point of intersection by juxtaposing two opposing conceptions of language: It is a successful mediator of affect, and yet it distorts the immediacy of feeling in the very act of representation. Parallel to this contradiction on the linguistic level stand opposing theoretical discourses on affect, represented, for example, by Michel Henry and Jacques Derrida. Whereas for Henry feeling is a kind of "auto-affectation," or "sentience of the subject," a continual, immediate, and pure experience that exists prior to representation, for Derrida all feeling is always already represented and therefore an illusory pure presence. Stuber wants to think in between these two positions, holding that literature itself occupies the place "between presentation and representation."

In order to demonstrate how affect seems to stymie literary representation while also serving as its essential generating force, how it negotiates presence and absence, presentation and representation, Stuber turns to Robert Walser's short prose piece "Nervös" [Nervous]. His analysis of this text focuses on style, how Walser's curiously mercurial narrator seems in his breathless, self-contradictory expression of nervousness both to generate his own subjectivity and to cast that subject into doubt. Instead of reading the text as being about *someone* who is nervous, Stuber reads it as a performance of *the nervous*. The endless malleability of the experimental narrative prose allows for Walser's text to enact what cannot be fully "represented." (This enactment is a mode of representation between presentation and representation.) The formal qualities of Walser's prose, its style and narrative peculiarities, open up the possibility of language to express affect, to "respond to and generate feeling."

During the productive discussion that followed Stuber's presentation, he responded to questions such as how one might pinpoint the *subject* of this affective performance; how specifically Modernist literary language lends itself to this performative role; what the role of sympathy or empathy is (for the reader);

and how a reader-response methodology might benefit the larger project.



Erica Doerhoff

On April 25, **Erica Doerhoff** of the Department of German Studies presented her paper “‘*Intellektuelle: wendet eure Intelligenz an!*’: Siegfried Kracauer’s Novel *Georg* and the Problem of the Literary Intellectual.” Doerhoff argued that Kracauer’s fascinating but largely neglected novel provided insights into the crisis experienced by many literary intellectuals during the years of the Weimar Republic, a period in which the intelligentsia confronted far-reaching economic, social, and political changes that tended to undermine the foundations of the bourgeois public sphere. In particular, Doerhoff discussed the ways in which the inflation of the early 1920s and simultaneous processes of economic concentration tended to compromise the economic independence that had previously served as the basis of the intelligentsia’s intellectual autonomy and critical capacity – a transformation reflected in Kracauer’s novel. Focusing on the institutions of the salon and the newspaper, which are identified as the major constituents of the bourgeois public sphere in Jürgen Habermas’s influential study *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, Doerhoff demonstrated how in Kracauer’s novel these institutions fail to function in accordance

with Habermas’s idealized model. While politics and literature fail to come together productively in Georg’s interactions with the world of the salon, his contributions to a large newspaper are subordinated to the political and economic interests of the newspaper such that his ideas are reduced to the status of commodified slogans.

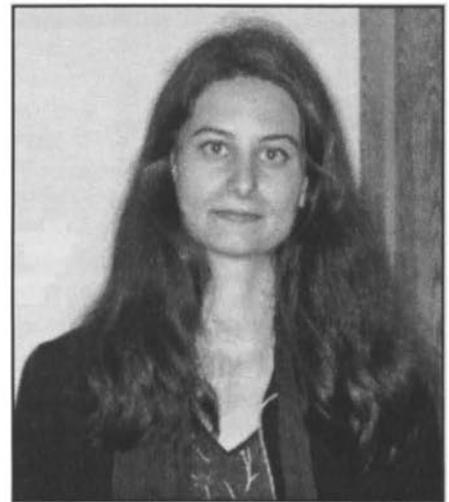
Doerhoff’s paper concluded with a discussion of two of Kracauer’s journalistic essays on the role of the intellectual as they related to his novel *Georg*. Kracauer’s interlocutor in these essays was Alfred Döblin. While Döblin advanced the position that the role of intellectuals was simply to uphold traditional humanistic ideals, Kracauer countered that intellectuals needed to concern themselves with the more concrete question of how these ideals could be realized under the specific circumstances of their own historical situation. Kracauer’s advocacy for a dialectical relationship between an applied intelligence and a recalcitrant historical reality is reflected in the quote Doerhoff chose as the title of her paper: Doerhoff argued that the novel *Georg* constituted such an instance of applied intelligence, employing a traditional literary form to depict modern reality in a manner intended to force intellectuals to reflect on the inadequacy of their own inherited practices to the radically new historical constellation of the Weimar Republic.

The discussion following Doerhoff’s presentation addressed such questions as how the anxieties reflected in Kracauer’s novel related to the concerns of contemporary intellectuals (including the members of the audience) and how the literary form of the novel related to the contrasting genre conventions of Kracauer’s journalistic and sociological writings. There was also a more detailed discussion of the historical sources of the self-understanding of modern intellectuals like Kracauer, including the importance of the Dreyfus affair in France and the flotilla debate in Germany.

On Friday, May 2, **Francesca Brittan**, a graduate student in musicology at Cornell, presented the final German Studies

colloquium session of the semester on “Musical Picture and the Eighteenth-Century Murder Ballad: Settings of Gottfried Bürger’s ‘Lenore,’” a version of which is scheduled to be published in *Eighteenth-Century Music*.

Brittan posits the origin of Bürger’s chilling and often gruesome ballads of the 1770s and 80s in the tradition of German street performers or *Bänkelsänger*, whose oral presentations of popular ballads with similarly shocking themes were accompanied by visual illustrations and sometimes by music. The interest in *Volksdichtung* in the latter decades of the eighteenth century gave legitimacy to this frequently maligned popular ballad genre. Poetic ballads published in the 1750s and 60s used *Bänkelsang* as a stylistic and thematic model.



Francesca Brittan

Ballads such as Bürger’s “Lenore” were frequently set to music by well-known contemporary composers. Brittan is interested in these musical settings because they seem to defy the conventional aesthetic assumptions according to which we listen to and appreciate much of the music of this period. The melodramatic musical renditions of the ballads are lengthy and intense. Often the music seems static; different musical sections seem to form isolated “blocks” rather than flowing seamlessly into each other via thematic development. The best way to understand

such music, Brittan proposes, is as a series of musical pictures or *Bilder* like those used by the *Bänkelsänger* in their performances. Different “blocks” of music provide different visual cues such that the music takes form in the mind of the listener as a series of distinct visual images. Thus, Brittan concludes, the musical ballads pave the way for a new dramatic genre of music that combines sound and vision, ‘high’ and ‘low’ culture, and sensationalism with an appeal to bourgeois cultural values. Perhaps this new genre, Professor Art Groos suggested during the discussion at the colloquium, is that of nineteenth-century German opera. •

Cassandra Campbell, Yuliya Komska, Samuel Frederick, Casey Servais, Jeff Turco are graduate students in the Department of German Studies. Marianne Tettlebaum is a graduate student in the Department of Music.

(Mozart - continued from page 1)

(violin), **Thomas Irvine** (viola), **Nika Zlatarac** (cello), and **Augustus Arnone, Francesca Britten, Chaoi Choi, Annette Richards,** and **David Yearsley** (fortepiano). The pieces played featured a number of unusual arrangements: Mozart opera overtures as piano quintets, Piano Sonata K.311 on strings, String Quartet K. 590 as piano four hands, and a piano four hands arrangement of the Sonata Fantasy for musical clock, K. 594. The concert was a lesson in the importance of Mozart’s orchestration and instrumentation – some arrangements, such as the ones between piano sonatas and string quartets, seemed like perfectly acceptable alternate versions. But the arrangements of the overtures to *Così fan tutte* and *Don Giovanni* revealed in their strangeness the ways in which Mozart’s music is dependent on subtleties of timbre that are lost in the reduction for a chamber group. It was amusing to hear the grand orchestral gestures reduced to a single piano or violin line – had we never heard the original, one wonders if anyone would have believed that this is how the music

was intended to sound. The four-hand piano and string quartet arrangements, on the other hand, were quite successful, for in its translation from one form of chamber music to another, the music did not suffer the same loss of instrumental color – the gestures could be transferred between piano and strings very convincingly. In the end, the concert was a rare opportunity to probe the identity of Mozart’s music.

The first session of the conference, chaired by **Jim Webster**, was devoted to an investigation of “structure and gesture” in Mozart’s sonatas and concertos. Papers by **Craig Harwood** (Yale), **Adena Portowitz** (Bar Ilan University), and **Wiebke Thormählen** (Cornell) investigated the semiotic complexities of Mozart’s musical language, underscoring the composer’s humorous and often ironic play with conventional rhetorical gestures. Harwood opened his analysis of the sonatas K. 306 and K. 311 by recalling Schenker’s observation that “music is the only language in which an ending can also be a beginning.” Isolating a set of ‘syntactically mobile’ gestures in these sonatas, he pointed out ways in which Mozart experiments with interchangeable opening and closing gestures. We are never quite sure, according to Harwood, whether a phrase is ‘beginning’ or ‘ending’ – Mozart creates suspense by constantly frustrating conventional notions of rhetorical teleology. Harwood linked local gestural observations to overall form, claiming that the semiotic ambiguity of key musical gestures in K. 306 and K. 311 allow Mozart to ‘reorder’ the recapitulations of these sonatas. Endowed with multi-valent semiotic potential, motivic material is freed from its conventional formal mold and recombined in experimental fashion.

A focus on reordering and recombination linked Harwood’s paper to Portowitz’s discussion of Mozart’s early keyboard concertos. In a rather panoramic presentation, Portowitz surveyed the recapitulation plans of the concertos, highlighting Mozart’s creative recombination of thematic material in

reprise sections. Portowitz interrogated the function and aesthetic of the recapitulation in these works, suggesting that it provides a vital place for the ‘ordering’ and ‘unification’ of musical themes, and a space for reconciliation between soloist and tutti. Her notion that the recapitulation functions partly as a space in which to break down the divide between keyboardist and orchestra was particularly provocative, although she did not pursue its social/performative implications. Portowitz reviewed each concerto meticulously, in a paper impressive in its attention to detail.

Wiebke Thormählen’s discussion of the sonata K. 526 combined Harwood’s semiotic approach with a wider consideration of musical-social conventions. Her paper opened with the guiding question: “How do socio-cultural considerations inform our understanding of Mozart’s musical language, or generate that language?” Looking closely at the relationship between violin and keyboard parts in K. 526, she noted a conscious blurring of the ‘soloist/accompanist’ roles. Mozart plays with the conventions of the accompanied sonata, introducing an intriguing new aesthetic of equality between the two players, and challenging generic and performative norms. Thormählen sees in K. 526 “an entire movement of accompaniment devoid of melody,” and suggests that here, as elsewhere, Mozart is engaged in clever (and often comical) disruption of the eighteenth-century musical vernacular.

Following the first panel, prominent fortepianist and musicologist **Robert Levin** (Harvard) delivered a keynote address on the subject of ‘Mozart’s Artistic Persona.’ He divided his talk into a number of discrete sections, opening with general observations on Mozart’s keyboard aesthetic and his reputation as an improviser. Here, Levin speculated briefly about the relationship between composed and improvised aesthetics in the keyboard works, citing eighteenth-century reports of Mozart’s cadenzas and fantasies and pointing out the improvisatory quality permeating much of the composer’s written-out music.

Himself an improviser of considerable reputation, Levin punctuated his talk with brilliant keyboard demonstrations. He touched briefly on the subject of eighteenth-century instruments and builders, reviewing some of the history of Viennese piano making, as well as speculating about Mozart's relationship to the harpsichord. Finally, Levin addressed the thorny issue of pedals and pedalling, reviewing the debate surrounding Mozart's use of knee levers and discussing the D-minor piano concerto (K. 466) as possible evidence for the composer's interest in pedal pianos. Clearly a passionate player and researcher of Mozart's keyboard music, Levin spoke with great intensity and energy.

Friday's second panel, on "Keyboards Performance, and Eighteenth-Century Culture," was chaired by **Kathryn Libin** (Vassar College) and included papers by **Ulrich Leisinger** (Bach-Archiv, Leipzig), **Sabina Klaus** (National Music Museum/University of South Dakota), and **Richard Maunder** (Cambridge). In Leisinger's paper, "Painting in Amorous Tones: Women in Mozart's Keyboard Music," we heard about Mozart's amorous attachments, lady patrons, and 'feminine' music. Leisinger addressed the important relationship between women and keyboards in the eighteenth-century, emphasizing the importance of Mozart's sonatas as a repertoire for domestic performance. Mozart had a number of important female students and a reputation as a lady's man. Several of his keyboard sonatas were written expressly for women; Leisinger suggests that the marking "con espressione," found in the slow movements of some of the composer's sonatas, may be linked to Mozart's notion of a 'feminine aesthetic.'

Taking up the theme of domestic keyboards, Sabina Klaus gave a paper detailing the construction and dissemination of square pianos in southern Germany during Mozart's lifetime ("Square Pianos in South German-speaking Areas"). Quoting passages from the composer's correspondence, she



(l. to r.) Eva Badura-Skoda, Robert Levin, Michael Lorenz

showed that Mozart was acquainted with square pianos by a number of different makers and was well versed in the details of their construction. Klaus showed a series of detailed slides demonstrating the particularities of square pianos by Christian Baumann, including original strings, hand stops, and important features of the instruments' internal mechanics. Her paper opened an intriguing window onto the world of domestic keyboard building, and reminded us that grand pianos were owned by only a fraction of those who played Mozart's music.

Our notion of the rich and varied world of eighteenth-century keyboards was still further enlarged by Richard Maunder's paper, entitled "The Myth of the Viennese Fortepiano." Maunder pointed out that modern makers of historical instruments tend to produce copies of keyboards by major builders like Walther and Stein, ignoring the wealth of lesser-known makers who populated Vienna during the same period. Our modern ears have become accustomed to what Maunder

terms "an impoverished sound experience" – a homogenized and oversimplified notion of the eighteenth-century piano aesthetic. In reality, as Maunder claimed, Mozart's Vienna was full of pianos of different shapes, sizes, and timbres; in order to understand the keyboard culture of the period, modern players should record on a vast array of instruments, experimenting with a variety of pitch levels and tunings. Clearly aiming to be provocative, Maunder suggested that our notions of 'authenticity' or fidelity to composer intention are dubious indeed given the paucity of historical pianos available to today's players of eighteenth-century keyboard music. A lively discussion followed his paper, in which instrument builders discussed the difficulties (both mechanical and economic) of reproducing unusual instruments of Mozart's day, and performers (Robert Levin and Malcolm Bilson in particular) underscored their willingness to experiment with pianos of all types.

Friday evening featured a chamber concert of accompanied keyboard sonatas by Abel, J.C. Bach, Schuster and Mozart. The accompanied keyboard sonata was a highly popular genre throughout the second half of the eighteenth century. Few works from this genre have made it into our repertoire lists and concert programs today and even these, amongst them Mozart's thirty four works for accompanied keyboard, are commonly known as violin sonatas – a historiographical fallacy that distorts their musical meaning. Under the influence of the Paris keyboard school, Mozart composed his first set of accompanied sonatas at the age of six and throughout his life he revisited the genre, inspired by its marketability. His sonata K 526 ranks amongst the finest of these works, displaying an intricate play with the conventional interaction between the instruments. The Sonata pays tribute to C.F. Abel by adopting the theme of his sonata Op. V No.5 for the last movement Presto. Both works were performed side by side in a program presented with exquisite refinement by **David Breitman**, fortepiano, accompanied by **Brian Brooks**, violin. The opening sonata by Schuster, whose sonatas inspired Mozart to take up the genre again in February 1778, clearly demonstrated the compositional style and social function of the accompanied sonata: the violin provides a sheen of color, it glosses over gaps between phrases and adorns the melody by adding the lower third or sixth (a technique still highly fashionable in any popular genre today) or by providing ornamentation. However, even these two players seemed to have occasional difficulties in rebalancing their ears and letting the piano speak as the solo instrument. Whether through the physical dominance of the standing violinist or through our modern understanding of the keyboard and violin repertoire, the idea that the piano is the violinist's accompanist seems irreducibly ingrained in our consciousness.

The first session on Saturday, March 29, dealt with the topic of "Mozart Composing for the Keyboard – Keyboard

Culture in Vienna and Paris." **Jen-Yen Chen** (Harvard University, "The Assimilation of Symphonic Style in the Revision of the 'Dürnitz' Sonata, K. 284 (205b)") presented a detailed analysis of Mozart's Dürnitz Sonata, K 284. In this sonata, composed in Munich in 1775 and published in a considerably revised version by Torricella in Wien in 1784, Chen detected a growing influence of the "symphonic style" on the piano sonatas. In its revised version the sonata shows a difference in pitch content, in articulation marks, a greater exploitation of textural resources and a harmonic reorganisation. For Chen, both the greater sense of harmonic teleology in the revised version's play with tension and expectation, as well as its heightened sense of textural awareness, are reminiscent of Mozart's symphonic style.

Gregory Butler (University of British Columbia, "Arriving at a Viable Edition of Mozart's Andante K.37/2") in his presentation revisited the manifold difficulties of editing Mozart's works, highlighting issues that exemplify the complex rethinking that has taken place within the discipline of musicology in the last twenty years. Upon its inception in the aftermath of the Second World War, the *Neue Mozart Ausgabe* followed objectives colored by a positivist idealism that expressed the need to erect and reassure cultural monuments. Mozart scholarship was permeated by the idea that our cultural hero left us his works in the form of near-perfect autographs that represent the work itself – the autograph became the authoritative text. Butler demonstrated some of the complex problems of ideology and the standardisation of a complete edition with reference to Mozart's Pasticcio Concerto K 37/2 (April 1767). The Autograph presents a version in Wolfgang Mozart's hand with extensive "corrections" in Leopold's hand. Butler disagreed with the editorial decision to prioritise Leopold's revisions over Mozart's own text. In arguing this decision, however, Butler himself marginalized the larger questions of the nature of a Pasticcio concerto, of the interaction of student

and teacher and the function of this particular piece of music, all of which demand a rethinking of the idea of a definitive text.

The panel "Keyboard Culture in Paris and Vienna" not only dealt with two important centers of keyboard culture, but examined the culture itself from two very different perspectives: from the inside out and from the outside in. **Michael Lorenz'** talk "New and Old Documents concerning Mozart's Students Barbara Ployer and Josepha Auernhammer" presented in minute detail aspects of Ployer's biography and living quarters. From tax documents to the geographical orientation of the windows in her house, Lorenz has meticulously read every available source in order to rectify numerous common misnomers and misattributions. Surely, if one is to engage with all these details, what emerges is a clear-cut silhouette of Barbara Ployer unfettered by biographical (mis)interpretation. In a mixture of "Heimatkundevortrag" and authoritative legal document reading, Lorenz certainly provided valuable information for all of us to cherish in our future research.

Maria Rose (New York University, "La Coquette: A Competition on the Eve of the French Revolution") started not from extra-musical sources, but from the music and the performer's relationship to instrumental sonority and technique. The story of "La Coquette" – an editorial competition between two pianists in Paris – investigates the interaction of the pianist with the new market for published keyboard music that reveals an increasing engagement with domestic virtuosity. It demonstrates on the one hand the influence of the English piano school of Clementi and, on the other, the French predilection for concerted music. In a presentation that was more concert than talk, Rose demonstrated her very personal interpretation of the late eighteenth century French keyboard repertoire, an interpretation determined by an insight into an instrument's sound-world as inspiration for the composer. Interestingly, she highlighted that both sonority as well as style necessarily influence the composer.

All three papers on the fourth panel, "Mozart and Keyboard Genres," explored the use of convention in Mozart's music for keyboard. **Les Black** (Ithaca College, "Are We There Yet? Formal Ambiguity and Thematic Drama in Mozart's Piano Sonatas") explored Mozart's employment of formal ambiguities between various "stations" of sonata form to lend the music "subtle shades of meaning." Black argued that the drama of the music lies in Mozart's subversion of our expectations of where his transitions are "going" within the form. In the discussion afterwards, several people questioned whether this type of play with convention is something brought out by the music, or whether it depends heavily upon the performer. The second speaker, **Thomas Irvine** (Cornell University, "Utopia Performed: Mozart's Fantasy K. 475) examined a benefit concert for two travelling bass-horn-playing brothers on December 15, 1795, in Mozart's Masonic lodge. Mozart is known to have performed a fantasy, and Irvine suggested that it could have been a free fantasy similar to K. 475 (which is only known to have had a single performance, in 1789). Seeing the Masonic lodge as a forum for cultural and critical exchange, Irvine read Mozart's fantasy as a mediation between rational and irrational approaches to music making: it blends predictable conventions of sonata writing with the wild, unpredictable fantasia. The sonata can thus be read as a controlled exploration of the limits of subjectivity, mixing reality and illusion in a way that reflected notions of feeling in the late eighteenth century. The final speaker, **W. Dean Sutcliffe** (University of Cambridge, "Change and Constancy in Mozart's Variations K. 180 and K. 455") looked at Mozart's variation technique. He especially aimed to call into question the received idea that variation form, as compared to sonata form, is regressive and "neither expressive nor interesting." Sutcliffe argued that the basis of our enjoyment in listening to variations is the "pleasure of recognition": instead of listening simply for the change throughout a variation movement (which will naturally pale in comparison to a sonata form), we can listen for Mozart's dynamic relationship between change and

constancy. Mozart, he argued, consciously plays with our expectations – provided we listen for the right things. In listening for sameness, we tune into Mozart's process of variation. Mozart's variations K. 180 on an aria by Salieri thus becomes a game of "becoming the same" and "resembling itself" while the variations K. 455 on a Gluck aria can be read as a game of "to harmonize or not to harmonize."

The pedal clavier occupies a rather mysterious place in Mozart's keyboard oeuvre; we know that he had a set of pedals made for one of his own fortepianos, but it remains unclear when and how often he employed it in performance. The conference's fifth session, "Three Pedal Claviers: Lessons & Implications," which was devoted to speculation and experimentation with various pedal keyboards, was held in the Johnson Museum and featured instruments by Richard Maunder, Joel Speerstra, and Philip Belt/James Kandik. Performance and practical demonstration on a number of 'pedalled' claviers (including a clavichord, a pull-down pedal fortepiano, and a fortepiano pedale) alternated with commentary and discussion. **David Yearsley's** brilliant performance constituted a convincing argument for the addition of pedalled parts to Mozart's keyboard music; he argued eloquently for the importance of the pedal as a special and vital register. Chaired by **David Breitman**, the session sparked lively conversation as well as excitement about the new sound aesthetic and improvisatory potential of pedalled claviers.

On Saturday an orchestral concert was held in Sage Chapel with the Toronto-based period instrument ensemble Tafelmusik, led by **Jeanne Lamon**, and joined by Cornell's own **Malcolm Bilson** on fortepiano. The concert was a chance to hear one of Mozart's more public genres for keyboard: the piano concerto. Bilson performed Concerto for fortepiano No. 17 in G major, K. 453, which was written in 1784, one of Mozart's most prolific periods of piano composition (six piano concertos date from that year). The concert opened with the *Serenata Notturna* in D major, K.

239, a rather playful work intended to show off individual instruments within the orchestra through little solos for the various players – including the double bass and timpani. The final rondo included humorous quotes of popular melodies. The second half opened with a solo performance by Bilson of one of Mozart's many rondos that he is currently in the process of recording. The concert ended on a more somber note with Mozart's Symphony No. 40 in G Minor, K. 550. Sage Chapel was packed and the concert was very well received.

Session six of the conference dealt with "The Amateur in Eighteenth Century Keyboard Culture." Throughout the eighteenth century, the piano was associated with a salon culture concerned with self-representation. The piano itself became a prime indicator of one's self-perception: for women the playing of keyboard instruments presented a setting for the display of their social rank, their proper sensibilities, and ultimately their marketability on the marriage fair. Men, in endorsing concerts in their own home and in listening attentively, highlighted their wealth, learnedness, and liberality.

Carol Clarke (University of Toronto, "The Clavier Lesson in Art, on Stage, and in Life") took a closer look at piano instruction, the social interaction between teacher and student – a central aspect being the piano as a means of sexual advance. Numerous depictions of piano instruction reference the sexual tension implicit in the sharing of a single keyboard with its demands for physical proximity otherwise deemed unsuitable. Clark focused on music written with such instruction in mind, such as Mozart's four hand sonatas K521 and K 497, and concluded that the particular social role of these pieces did indeed infiltrate their compositional language. Both performers and spectators would have been highly sensitive to the physical gestures demanded by the music at a time when appropriate physicality was highly circumscribed.

Within the late eighteenth-century salon culture piano composition continuously negotiated the boundaries between entertainment and high art. The

reinvention of man as individual in the early part of the nineteenth century found expression in the role of the keyboard within society, which corresponded to a marked change in keyboard style within the salon. **Richard Leppert** (University of Minnesota, "The Piano and the Aesthetics of the Self") traced this shift from the active to the contemplative listener in a variety of sketches and drawings through the century. With Beethoven, the auditor is certainly enveloped in concentration; each listener realises his own individual meaning in the presence of music. The music therefore becomes a vehicle for the realisation of a new self. The increasing social alienation is played out in a music that demands each individual to unify with a higher meaning; the piano becomes a medium of isolation rather than social interaction, its value lies no longer in the encoding of social conduct, but in the encoding of private contemplation.



Nicholas Mathew

Nicholas Mathew (Cornell University, "The Sound of Commerce: Mozart's Piano Sonata, K.332") in his wide-ranging paper compared the role of the amateur in keyboard culture then and now. Amateur music making has always been intimately tied to a commercialisation of art. Whereas

in the late eighteenth century the commercial value of the repertoire rested on its accessibility, in the twentieth century this accessibility has been subverted into an elimination of any critical character the works might have had. Mozart's critical interaction with his audience has been assimilated into an all-pervasive Mozart image that does not allow for rugged features, for disturbances of a classical equilibrium. Even performers of historical instruments so far have rarely managed to cast aside the common cultural hero image of Mozart to break out of the toned-down interpretations that refuse to acknowledge the music's critical language.

The conference drew to a close on Sunday afternoon, with the performance of Mozart's *Missa brevis*, K. 192, featuring a newly acquired chamber organ built by Munetaka Yotaka. Conducted by **Thomas Sokol**, and including **Annette Richards** (organist), Les petits violons (led by **Michael Sand**), and the Cayuga Vocal Ensemble (directed by **Lawrence Doebler** and **John Rowehl**), the performance program bore the title "A Salzburg Mass for Peace." Moving program notes by **Neal Zaslaw** outlined Mozart's long association with music for Catholic worship, and suggested that the composer might have approved of a performance of his *Missa brevis* as part of a celebration of brotherhood and friendship. The performance ended beautifully and quietly, with the choir and orchestra filing silently offstage. It was a sublime end to a truly engaging and fruitful three-day exploration of Mozart's music. •

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(Walser - continued from page 1)

particular) was perhaps too monochromatic, and that the film's portentous tone effaced too much of Walser's tone and style.

The first speaker at the roundtable, **Barry Maxwell** (American Studies/Comparative Literature), argued that one's judgment of Walser's work is radically impaired if one approaches it without a knowledge of his fairy tale verse play, *Snow White (Schneewittchen)*. A reading of Walser that fails to take this play into account is likely to domesticate Walser - to treat him as a lovable innocent or even as "a comedian of sorts." Maxwell argued that Giorgio Agamben produces such a reading by laying the wrong sort of stress on Benjamin's claim that Walser's characters "have all been healed." In arguing that the "demonic" has disappeared from Walser's texts and, hence, that the characters inhabit the world of the "Irreparable," Agamben attempts to reduce Walser to a fixed tableau. In opposing Agamben's reading, Maxwell championed process over fixity.

Susan Bernofsky (Bard College) spoke next about the difficulties of translating and publishing Walser's works. Bernofsky explained that while she is often able to surmount the problems presented by Walser's lengthy sentences and innumerable qualifying words in her translations, she confronts a somewhat more intractable challenge in the demands of publishers and, ultimately, the marketplace. Bernofsky even went so far as to suggest that there might be something about the English-speaking public that is not ready for Robert Walser. Bernofsky argued, further, that readings of Walser are still too wrapped up in portraying Walser as a "schizophrenic writer." She suggested that English speakers are more likely than most to stray down this path because the infamous statement "I am not here to write, but to be mad," turns out to be a fabrication that is attributed to Walser by the English-speaking community alone.

Samuel Frederick (German Studies) analyzed Walser's narrative technique, beginning by drawing attention to the fact that Walser's stories often seem to

lack the sorts of events that conventionally comprise a narrative. In fact, at times it seems as though the only event in the text is the event of narration. Frederick found a figure for this Walserian circularity in *Jakob von Gunten*: a term that he translated as “the plump zero” (*die kugelrunde Null*). Although Walser’s stories seem to merely circle endlessly around “that which is most important,” this does not mean that they are mere nullities. Somehow, argued Frederick, this continual deferral is actually productive, generative, even fulfilling—a *plump zero*. Frederick argued that Walser’s irony, a crucial aspect of his work, is best termed “equivocal irony,” as it seems balanced between worthlessness and worth, emptiness and plumpness.

Tamara Evans (CUNY) offered a unique perspective on Walser’s relation to his Swiss homeland. Arguing that there were indeed aspects of Walser’s writing that could be said to be idiosyncratically Swiss, Evans suggested the melodiousness of Walser’s prose and his (over)use of the diminutive as examples of this. Yet there are also features of Walser’s work that indicate his active resistance to Swiss culture. Evans argued that Walser’s decision to write “bad” German was a response against Swiss writers’ consensual practice of writing “good” German. Evans argued that this was clearly an act of transgression, a political gesture against reactionary elements in Swiss culture that prefigured a generation of post-World War II writers who critiqued Swiss self-satisfaction. Even Walser’s “paroxysms of modesty” could be read as an attempt to push Swiss modesty to its grotesque extreme.

The roundtable’s final speaker, **Anette Schwarz** (German Studies) chose to take the “intersections” of the conference’s title quite literally, arguing that an intersection is not a place where people stop and meet, but rather a space where people pass each other by, according to the programmed rhythm of traffic lights. Schwarz pursued this spatial metaphor by investigating the labyrinthine spatial systems that emerge in Walser’s prose. Schwarz argued that the four features of

Walser’s labyrinthine style were repetition, contradiction, interruption, and reflexivity. Yet Schwarz insisted that even if labyrinthine writing is an impasse of sorts, it is not an impasse that we want to leap beyond. The surfaces of Walser’s prose produce the illusion of depth by mourning its loss and absence, they are generative of affects, desires, and moods. Schwarz concluded by asking whether Walser’s prose indeed opened a realm of healing, or, rather, if the labyrinth was actually a symptom of still being on the way to this healing place.

Appropriately enough, this meeting of the roundtable led to a quest of sorts in the forests of Ithaca. And if it is true that cars pass each other by all too quickly at intersections, the organizers were hopeful that the more relaxed pace of the “walk through Ithaca and environs” (in tribute to Robert Walser’s love of walking) would be more conducive to meeting. To be sure, after following numerous critical paths towards Walser over the previous two days, it was refreshing for all participants to follow the material paths of the Cornell Plantations. The walk allowed the participants (and a loyal canine companion – perhaps we were still tracking Walser, hunting him) to continue the discussions of the day in a novel setting. •

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(Kafka - continued from page 5)

story as – and about – a machine which fails to work: The failure of the apparatus in the story is a thematization of the story’s failure to “work” for the reader. Stuber argued that reading this failed text draws out an intense emotional reaction in the reader, in perhaps the same way that the figure of the explorer finds himself moved and changed by the failure of the machine (and indeed the failure of his own distanced disinterest). In the wake of these failures, Stuber complicated the Deleuzian model: Just as the reader

activates the Kafka machine, so does the machine act back upon the reader in strange, unforeseeable ways. To read the Kafka-machine effectively/affectively, then, is to read with “eyes wide shut”: Not just resisting the temptation to interpret the text’s failures (i.e. to restrain the interpretive impulse to see things that aren’t there), but attending precisely to those failures as they “come through” to the reader (i.e. to seeing *and feeling* precisely those things that aren’t there).

Samuel Frederick (German Studies) had a radically different point of departure for his remarks on “In the Penal Colony” – not Gilles Deleuze, but Frank Zappa – yet in some ways he ended on a similar note. Frederick explained how Zappa got him “hooked” on Kafka when as a teenager he listened to a Mothers of Invention album that urged him to read “In the Penal Colony” as a supplement to the music. This off-the-wall anecdote soon proved to be all too relevant: The detailed instructions in the album’s liner notes prompted a comparison of Kafka’s penal colony with U.S. internment camps of Japanese-American citizens during WWII, which for Frederick now was but a short step away from “the disconcerting transformation of the post-9/11 United States into what seems more and more to be a kind of penal colony.” As he reread the story in this context, however, the text became too problematic to be a just a critique of the version of the police state in which we now find ourselves: “[S]uch a reading would have to participate in arbitrating and assigning guilt, failing to acknowledge [...] the fundamental moral uncertainty of the text [...]” For Frederick, this moral uncertainty resides in the figure of the machine (at once terrible and seductive, representing on the one hand suffering and death, on the other hand enlightenment and salvation) and in the specter of messianism that haunts the text. Frederick concluded by suggesting that this uncertainty is *not* to be explained away, but rather lingers on as a kind of irreducible “residue of belief.”

Diana Reese (German Studies and Feminist, Gender and Sexuality Studies) gave the symposium’s last word,

structuring her remarks around the question: Why explain the apparatus? She pointed out that the officer's obsessive effort to explain the operation of the machine to the traveler masks an uncertainty regarding the underlying issue of the judgment executed by the machine. The officer tries to elude this issue (and the doubt he anticipates on the traveler's part) by insisting the operation of the apparatus must be "followed" in a certain way to make it comprehensible. This attempted obfuscation is complicated by the specifically European colonial element of the narrative. By addressing the traveler in French and making reference to "European views" and "archaic forms," the officer "presents himself as the ethnographer of his own defunct regime," transforming his remarks into an anthropological report to a disinterested academy. This both frustrates his effort to explain the machine and at the same time makes that explanation necessary. At this point, Reese changed gears and tentatively suggested that there may also be a sadomasochistic aspect to this paradoxical explanation-compulsion: She linked the style of the officer's explanation with Sontag's essay "The Pornographic Imagination" as well as with Barthes' work on Sade, suggesting that the elaborate explanation might be read as the officer's way of tricking the traveler into playing the dominant role of the former *Kommandant* while the officer himself assumes the submissive role of the condemned.

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GERMAN COLLOQUIUM FALL 2003

September 12

Daniel Purdy

Pennsylvania State University
"The Building in *Bildung*:
Architectural Theory and the
Aesthetics of Autonomy, Kant,
Goethe, Moritz"

October 10

Amalia Herrmann

Cornell University
"Why Hölderlin?"

October 24

Gerhard Kurz

Universität Giessen
"Gossip as Literature -
Literature as Gossip"

November 7

Nicholas Mathew

Cornell University
"Beethoven's *Augenblicke*"

November 14

Adelheid Voskuhl

Cornell University
"*Bewegungen, die offenbar
Rührung zu verrathen scheinen:*
Music-making Automata
and Jean Paul's Early Satirical Works
in Late 18th Century Germany"

December 5

Eric Rentschler

Harvard University
"Ridges and Ruins: Generic Topo-
graphies in German Film History"

RECENT DISSERTATIONS

Christopher Clark, Department of German Studies

Sexuality and Alterity in German Literature, Film and Performance, 1968-2000

Christopher Clark's dissertation, *Sexuality and Alterity in German Literature, Film, and Performance, 1968-2000*, examines the intersections between different minority and subcultural discourses since 1968, with sexuality serving as a binding thread throughout the project. In texts ranging from Fassbinder's controversial play *Der Müll, die Stadt und der Tod* to 1990s gay fiction to the recent popular films *Aimée und Jaguar* and *Lola und Bilidikid*, Clark investigates the ways the representation of multiple alterities (e.g., ethnic, national, ideological) can displace, transform, or reinscribe the (allegedly) primary difference of sexuality. Clark's analysis not only draws attention to subcultural counternarratives occluded by the master narrative of post-1945 German cultural history, but also suggests ways in which minority discourses might cause us to rethink that national narrative itself. Clark emphasizes textual strategies of representation over identity politics; he uses these texts as an opportunity to problematize and refine a theoretical understanding of minorities and subcultures as inherently radical or progressive, stressing instead the significance of cultural and historical context.

Jill Gillespie, Department of German Studies

Fictions of the Past: The Gendering of History in Recent German Films

This dissertation addresses the ways in which cinematic constructions of postwar sexuality, gender roles, and women's experiences inform Germany's national historical imaginary. Rather than providing a history of women's film or of cinematic representations of women's lives, this dissertation offers a series of case studies about the ways history is shaped by assumptions of gender. Through analysis of four films spanning from 1978 to 1992 – *The Marriage of Maria Braun* (1978), *Germany, Pale Mother* (1979), *Liberators Take Liberties* (1992), and *I am My Own Woman* (1992), Gillespie argues that the ongoing cinematic attempts to come to terms with Germany's past must be read alongside the gender politics of the last twenty-five years. Refracting films through the lens of gender contributes to what Gillespie terms the "engendering" of history. Since gender not only illuminates women's lives, but also addresses fundamental operations of social life, Gillespie argues that the task of engendering history requires that we revise basic categories through which we apprehend historically specific gender relations and cultural productions.

Tracie Matysik, Department of History

Ethics, femininity, and citizenship in fin-de-siècle German cultures

This dissertation examines the troubled relation between ethics and femininity in German cultures at the advent of the twentieth century. Investigating the role of ethics at a specific historical conjuncture, the study pursues the primary questions of what constituted the moral subject and the sphere of morality and how conceptions of morality were related to pressing considerations of political citizenship. It explores in particular the implications of ethics reform movements for the political, legal, and social status of women. The concentration on femininity and its tenuous relation to ethics highlights the uncertainty of concepts such as the individual, the citizen, and the terms imbedded in discussions of ethics. Although many of the reform movements discussed here supported women's political emancipation, this study depicts how they nevertheless consistently produced conceptions of women as unstable subjects at odds with the predominantly masculine models of rights and duties that informed contemporary notions of citizenship.

Aoife Naughton, Department of Comparative Literature

Recollecting *Bildung* before and after the *Bildungsroman*

The term *Bildung* arguably crystallizes in a single concept the central historical and aesthetic tensions of late eighteenth century German culture. This project analyzes the emergence of competing gendered theories of *Bildung* in literary texts around 1800 before the term itself became sedimented in the retrospectively applied construct of the *Bildungsroman*. This dissertation specifically contests the supposedly radical and universal transition to a well-defined classical-idealistic model of *Bildung* around 1800 and argues instead that the theories of *Bildung* articulated in literary texts at this time continued to struggle with and return to the term's very particular history in medieval German mysticism, especially when the protagonists were female. By comparatively analyzing both 'canonical' and 'non-canonical' German novels from the period 1760 to 1820, this project argues that novels by Wieland, Goethe, Johanna Schopenhauer, and Friederike Unger self-consciously revisit earlier religious and historical articulations of aesthetic potential to delineate a frame-work in which their female protagonists can negotiate the very historical tensions of the concept *Bildung*.

Marian Elizabeth Polhill, Department of German Studies

Materia medica animalis: Untersuchungen zum "Tierbuch" (ca. 1478) des Zürcher Apothekerknichts Hans Minner

This dissertation edits, translates, and analyzes a previously unpublished late medieval pharmaceutical bestiary. While scholarship in medieval German Studies has focused on bestiaries from theological and allegorical perspectives, few studies have pursued the medico-cultural implications of the uses of animal products in medieval medicine. Polhill's research addresses this gap, editing the *Tierbuch* by Hans Minner and comparing it formally and substantively to other medieval bestiaries and bestiary chapters in encyclopedias, through which she suggests that Minner created a new genre: the late medieval German apothecary's bestiary. The comparison of the *Tierbuch* with other texts aims at an organo-therapeutic interpretation of the *Tierbuch*'s often ambiguous contents, providing a basis for considering the text's participation in and location at the intersection of medical and socio-cultural discourses as well as for engaging with the epistemological consequences of Minner's misreadings of his sources. In addition, the analysis reveals orthographic and semantic variants and lexemes missing in standard Middle High German dictionaries, which often fail to list medical terms.

Michael Richardson, Department of German Studies

Political Allegory And Its Ends – The End Of Political Allegory: Inheritance And Appropriation From Weimar To The GDR

This dissertation analyzes the work of Bertolt Brecht, Friedrich Wolf, and Gustav von Wangenheim against the backdrop of debates among Marxist intellectuals and artists concerning the proper relationship of Marxists to the bourgeois literary heritage. While individual aesthetics varied, their relationships to heritage intersected in a form of refiguration that recognized a multiplicity of predecessors and saw its task in the critical appropriation of the German literary heritage in order to transform the audience's relationship to the theatrical production from a passive-receptive to an active-critical one. Crucial to this practice was the assumption that the intended audience would recognize appropriated material. While the productions themselves presented the material critically, they nonetheless tacitly affirmed the need for knowledge of the bourgeois heritage. Knowing that audiences would recognize appropriated material allowed these plays to represent the Weimar period allegorically. Spatial and temporal displacement involved in such allegories invoked past and present in a moment of simultaneous critique that was apparent to the audience, but that did not directly confront the authorities. The work of two GDR authors – Ulrich Plenzdorf and Heiner Müller – represented the continued practice of critical appropriation, yet also revealed the limitations of this sort of allegorical representation for the GDR in the 1970s.