



Department of French and Italian

Department Newsletter

Fall 2013 / Winter 2014

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Scholarly Events

Abdourahman Wabéri Visit

In January 2014 the Department of French and Italian hosted a visit by the prominent Djiboutian writer, Abdourahman Wabéri. This was the author's first visit to Northwestern, and we hope that it is but a beginning to a long-term collaboration. During his visit, Wabéri gave two talks. "IQRA: Ecrivain comme lecteur" was the title of his first informal luncheon conversation with undergraduate and graduate students as well as faculty. This conversation was organized around discussions of those of his works that were included on the syllabus of French 365: The Magreb and the Middle East. Wabéri discussed with students his relationship with Djiboutian politics and culture, the history of his relationship with literature and the particularities of being a Francophone writer from Africa in the post-colonial era. The unusually large afternoon public lecture paid homage to the African writer. In his talk, Wabéri traced the history of the development of the institution of literature on the continent of Africa together with some of the challenges different writers confront within the economic, political and social environment of various regions.



Professor Wabéri, left, at his lunchtime conversation, with Professor Nasrin Qader, right.
Photo courtesy of Cory Aiello

Abdourahman A. Wabéri was born in 1965 in Djibouti. While most other African countries had already moved to the post-colonial age, Djibouti did not declare its independence until 1977, when the writer was 12 years old. For this reason, during his discussion at Northwestern, Wabéri drew our attention to the particularity of this history and the ways in which it has framed his writing. In 1985, he left Djibouti and settled in Caen, France, where he studied English language and literature. He wrote a Master's thesis on the poetics of space and on politics in the fictional work of the Somalian writer Nuruddin Farah. His PhD thesis, completed at Nanterre was entitled "Fragments d'un discours africain. Approches critique et historique des littératures subsahariennes, francophones et transnationales de 1980 à aujourd'hui." Wabéri is the author of numerous novels, essays, articles, and travel reports. His articles, short stories, and reviews have been published in many international newspapers, including *Le Monde diplomatique*, *Africultures*, *Le Monde*, *Libération*, *Le Nouvel Observateur*, and *Jeune Afrique Economie*. The literary magazine *Lire* named him among the 50 writers of the future.

Professor Wabéri's first volume of stories, *Le Pays sans ombre* was published in 1994. In the same year he received the Grand prix de la Nouvelle francophonie from the Académie Royale de Langue et de Littérature Française de Belgique and the Prix Albert Bernard of the Académie des Sciences d'Outre-mer de Paris. In 1996, a second volume of stories *Cahier nomade* received the reputed Grand Prix Littéraire de l'Afrique noire. Wabéri's first novel *Balbala* was published in 1997. These three works together comprise his Djibouti trilogy. In 1998, Abdourahman Wabéri was among the twelve artists from the continent of Africa who participated in the project, *Rwanda: écrire par devoir de mémoire*. This participation resulted in the book *Moisson de Crânes: textes pour le Rwanda* (2000), reflections about the Rwandan genocide. Since then, he has published several other novels. His work has been translated into multiple languages including English. Currently, Abdourahman Wabéri is Assistant Professor of literature at George Washington University.

-Nasrin Qader

Scholarly Events

'Literary Geographies' Symposium Comes to NU

Joseph Derosier, a French doctoral candidate in his fourth year, organized and hosted a one-day symposium, "Literary Geographies: Visuality and Space in the Medieval/Modern," which took place on October 11, 2013 at the John Evans Center. The symposium was co-sponsored by the Department of French and Italian, the Medieval Studies Cluster, the French Interdisciplinary Group, and the Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities. Derosier conceived of the symposium as a forum for fostering dialogue between scholars working in different disciplines and different periods but who share a common interest in questions of visibility, perception, and what Derosier terms post/colonial geographies/spaces. The symposium opened with plenary talks by Nasrin Qader, who spoke on "The Folds of In/visibility in Hakim Belabbes's *Al-Ashla* (In Pieces)," and by Suzanne Akbari of the University of Toronto, who addressed "The Form of the City: Visual and Prose Maps of Crusader Jerusalem." Like the plenary speeches, the graduate student interventions that followed in the afternoon endeavored to think across disciplinary boundaries between medieval-modern so as to bring medieval art into dialogue with structuralism and semiotics, orientalism into conversation with both medievalism and modernity, and ecocriticism into relation with modern archeology and architecture. The symposium's speakers and participants provoked and participated in lively and interesting discussion throughout the day.

-Joseph DeRosier



Guest speaker Professor Suzanne Akbari presents a plenary while Symposium organizer Joseph DeRosier looks on.

Ricciardi awarded Scaglione Prize



Alessia Ricciardi, Professor of Italian and Comparative Literary Studies, has been awarded the Modern Language Association's 2013 Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Prize for her book, *After La Dolce Vita: A Cultural History of Berlusconi's Italy*. She was honored with the other MLA Publication Prize winners at an awards ceremony on January 11, 2014 at the Sheraton Chicago.

Events

Proust sans frontieres: A faculty-student Proust salon

On November 14th, 2013, Northwestern held a special daylong commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the publication of *Du côté de chez Swann*, the first volume of Proust's *A la recherche du temps perdu*. Several dozen students and faculty members came together to eat madeleines dipped in linden flower tisane and to read aloud from their favorite passage of the novel. Organized by Fay Rosner (French) and Peter Brandes (visiting scholar in German), with support from Comparative Literary Studies and the Café francophone, the salon proustien reflected the increasingly interdisciplinary nature of Proust studies. Highlights of the day included a comic passage read by Chris Bush (French and CLS) in which the faithful servant Françoise sadistically murders a chicken that will later appear on the family dinner table.

English and CLS professor Christine Froula ended the day with a fascinating talk and slide show about the important role of Chinese porcelain in *A la recherche du temps perdu*.

-Fay Rosner



Photo courtesy of Claire Tuft



Event organizers Fay Rosner, left and Peter Brandes, right.
Photo courtesy of Cory Aiello



Christine Froula, center, discussed her recent article, "Proust's China". Photo courtesy of Cory Aiello

Faculty News

Christopher Bush was awarded the Herman and Beulah Pearce Miller Research Professorship in Literature (2013-15).

Margaret Dempster spent her Spring 2013 sabbatical in France. She lived in Paris and worked on creating various teaching materials for her French language courses. In addition, as the Study Abroad adviser for French, she traveled to Brussels, Strasbourg, Montpellier, and Aix-en-Provence to visit Study Abroad sites. During the month of July, she attended a Business French Course, *Parcours diplômant DDIFOS (Diplôme de didactique du français sur objectifs spécifiques)* at the Chambre de Commerce et Industrie in Paris Ile-de-France. She plans to apply the knowledge gained to her teaching of French 309: French in Commerce and Industry.

In addition to her professional development, she completed two marathons, one in Paris (April 2013), and one in Copenhagen (May 2013). Margaret also ran the Chicago Marathon on October 13th- her father's birthday- in his honor since he passed away in August of 2013.

Scott Durham has recently co-organized, in collaboration with Dlip Gaonkar, two major events at Northwestern: an international conference, "Cinema and Experience: Engaging Miriam Hansen", and a Rhetoric and Public Culture, "Summer Institute, Film and Media in the Tracks of Deleuze." His essay, "An Accurate Description of What Has Never Occurred: History, Virtuality, and Fiction in Godard", will be forthcoming later this year in the Wiley-Blackwell *Companion to Jean-Luc Godard*.

Bernadette Fort delivered a paper on «Diderot en libertin au théâtre et à l'écran» at the Academy of Sciences in Moscow, Russia, in April 2013. She gave a presentation at the book launch of *Slave Potraiture in the Atlantic World* (Cambridge University Press, 2014) at the University of Chicago on November 22, 2013.

Professor Fort's essay, «Libertinage 'in the Second Degree': Diderot and Therbouche on the Contemporary Stage and Screen» will appear in *Studies in New-Eighteenth-Century Literature and Film in Honour of Hans-Peter Wagner* (Wissenschaftlicher Verlag, Trier, Germany) in 2014.

An essay by Professor Fort on the 18th-century painter Elizabeth Vigée Lebrun is due to appear in the volume *Art et sociabilité au XVIIIe siècle* in Paris in 2015.

Doris Garraway has been traveling a lot lately. She gave a lecture on "Representing Violence in Eighteenth-Century Saint-Domingue" at the University of Uppsala, Sweden, on September 16. On September 27, she spoke at the inaugural symposium at the Sawyer Seminar on "Rethinking the Age of Revolution: Rights, Representation, and the Global Imaginary" at Brandeis University, with co-participants Lynn Hunt and Eliga Gould. Her presentation, entitled "Liberty and Sovereignty in the Haitian Revolutionary State," drew from her current book project on monarchy in postrevolutionary Haiti. On October 5, she gave a paper on Aimé Césaire's engagement with the regime of Henry Christophe at a conference on Césairean Negritude organized by Gregson Davis and Michaeline Crichlow at Duke University. On November 8 she presented a paper on abolitionism, sentimentality, and agency in the work of the early Haitian writer, the Baron de Vastey, at the Haitian Studies Association conference in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Prof. Garraway recently appeared in the French documentary film *Contre-histoire: La position des missionnaires* (France 2012) directed by Dorothee Lachaud.

The film, which aired on French television last spring, explores the role of missionaries in French colonial expansion and the institution of slavery in the French Caribbean. She is a fellow this year at the Kaplan Humanities Institute.

Michael Ginsberg is currently working on Hugo's novel *Les Misérables* and its adaptations. She gave a paper in October at the Nineteenth-Century French Studies Conference on the representation of Paris in the novel, and she is co-editing a volume on the novel for the MLA's Approaches to Teaching series. In the spring she will teach an Alumni course on the novel.

Her book *Portrait Stories* is forthcoming from Fordham UP. She gave two lectures on Proust at the Evanston Public Library, as part of their "Mission Impossible" program.

Dominique Licops presented the paper she co-wrote with Paul Breslin, "Teaching Aimé Césaire's *Une Tempête* with Shakespeare's *The Tempest*" at "Circulating French in the Classroom: Reading Literature in Community," a conference and series of workshops organized by Julia Douthwaite and Alison Rice at University of Notre-Dame, October 11-12, 2013. Paul and Dominique submitted their module to the forthcoming anthology *Circulating French in the Classroom: Reading Literature in Community*, edited by Oana Panaité, and are working on their chapter for the scholarly collection of essays *Reading Communities: A Dialogic Approach to Classical and Contemporary works* (Ed. Oana Painaité, Presse Universitaires de Rennes, Forthcoming). Paul and Dominique presented an early version of this chapter at an FIT Graduate Faculty Colloquium on March 12th, 2014.

Cynthia Nazarian spent the 2012-2013 academic year as a Barbara Thom Postdoctoral Fellow at the Huntington Library in Pasadena, CA. Her research leave was spent working on her book manuscript and articles. One essay appeared in the March 2013 issue of *Modern Language Quarterly* and another is forthcoming in *Modern Philology*. She also gave a talk on Agrippa d'Aubigné and the spectacle of violence at the Huntington Library, and a talk on Bonnie Honig's *Antigone, Interrupted* at its book launch at Northwestern last May.

Faculty News (cont.)

Marie-Thérèse Pent was named to the 2012-2013 ASG Faculty Honor Roll.

Nasrin Qader presented her paper “Entre Kaboul et l’Algérie: Un cas de don littéraire?” in Paris at the Littérature en Langue Française: Histoire, Mythes et Création Conference in November, 2013. This paper has also been accepted for publication in French and will be forthcoming from Presses Universitaires de Rennes. Another paper, “The Ghosts of Atiq Rahimi’s Earth and Ashes: a Photographic Narrative.” was accepted by *Modern Philology*.

“A Narrative of Catastrophe: Le Cavalier et son ombre,” will appear in a forthcoming special volume on the work of Boubacar Boris Diop (Dakar: GELL)

Aude Raymond received the first Council of Language Instruction Excellence in Teaching Award in June.

Sylvie Romanowski attended the 2013 summer theater festival in Avignon, where she saw 17 plays in 6 days. She says, “Two shows stand out in my memory. One was an extraordinary spectacle by a Congolese theatre troupe combining music, percussion and singing, poetry by Dieudonné Niangouna, dance of a most physical kind choreographed by DeLaVallet Bidiefono, *Au Delà*, which reneacted the horrors of torture and death during the recent civil wars in Congo. The other play, *La loi de Tibi*, was about Tibi, a master of ceremonies for funerals and a storyteller in an unspecified African country, written by Jean Verduin; I wrote a short review of it (capitalcriticscircle.com) and am currently writing a longer analysis.”

Fay Rosner presented her paper, “Art, Morals, and Manners: Lessons from Proust’s *Combray*” at the University of Chicago Philosophy and Literature Workshop in October 2013.

Domietta Torlasco gave a talk and presentation from her recently released book *The Heretical Archive: Digital Memory at the End of Film* (University of Minnesota Press, 2013) on Friday, December 6 at COUNTERPATH, a publisher, gallery, event space, and bookstore in Denver, CO. Prof. Torlasco presented her work—“part philosophical reflection, part manifesto”—and also screened her short film *Antigone’s Noir*.

Jane Winston traveled to Paris in May 2013 to conduct research in the just available Guy Debord archives at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France and to attend the exhibition, «Guy Debord: Un art de la guerre» and the colloquium, «Lire Debord,» both organized by the BNF. In November, she led a post-performance panel discussion at the Lookingglass Theatre on director Heidi Stillman’s stage adaptation of Marguerite Duras’s 1991 novel, *L’Amant de la Chine du nord*.

New Lecturer Faculty



Photo courtesy of Katia Viot-Southard

Katia Viot-Southard

As a doctoral candidate at Washington University in St. Louis, I specialized in 19th century French Literature and Culture and wrote a dissertation analyzing the links between French theater and the feminist movement at the end of the 19th century. Although I am still interested in such connections and in women’s history itself, I am currently focused, as a member of the continuing lecturer faculty at Northwestern, on teaching methodologies and on developing more specialized topics in the area of second language acquisition. There are currently two topics that I would love to explore in my classroom. One is related to theater and teaching language through plays. I would like to develop a French theater workshop where students would analyze a play and work on understanding its social and historical context and also perform it to improve their aural and pronunciation skills. I would also like to explore teaching French culture through its media by creating a language course with a distinctly professional purpose and a focus on, for instance, French online press.

My broadly defined current teaching interests reflect the fact that I enjoy teaching on all levels and topics related to French. As a teaching assistant and lecturer at Washington University and a visiting assistant professor at SUNY Oswego, I successfully taught all levels of French language and developed and instructed more advanced seminars and courses. This wide teaching experience and solid foundation in foreign language methodology have taught me how to efficiently manage the learning process. I trust a few important rules in the classroom --rigor, clear content, variety, fairness, and enthusiasm-- because I want students to have a compelling and purposeful learning experience. When I coordinated the French Program at SUNY Oswego, I also served as the adviser for French minors and majors. Meeting with students, listening, counseling, informing, or simply discussing with them provided me with opportunities to learn about their experiences and interact with them on a more informal and personalized level.

At Northwestern, I look forward to learning more about our students and further developing my pedagogical skills, including by contributing new ideas and working with my colleagues to further enrich the course offerings in the French language program.

—Katia Viot-Southard

Graduate Student Events

Politics/Aesthetics: A Transnational Turn?

The Department of French and Italian will host its second graduate student symposium, “Politics/Aesthetics: a transnational turn?”, on May 1-2 this spring. The symposium will feature keynote speaker Françoise Lionnet, Professor of French and Comparative Literature at the University of California, Los Angeles. Professor Lionnet’s work in the last ten years has been at the forefront of announcing and interrogating the “transnational turn” that this symposium engages. Her research spans comparative and francophone literatures from the Indian Ocean to the Caribbean and issues of postcoloniality, race, gender, and autobiography. Most recently, her two volumes co-edited with Shu-mei Shih, *Minor Transnationalism* (2005) and *The Creolization of Theory* (2011), have provided theoretical definition and critical weight to the transnational as an analytic focused on movements and relations that cross national boundaries, inhabit the liminal spaces of their borders, and trouble the frame of the nation-state. Professor Lionnet’s talk on May 2, entitled “Worlding Baudelaire,” will deal in particular with the transnational circulation of literature, language, and author-figures.

The organizing committee for the symposium is composed of three FIT PhD students: fourth-year students Emilie Cappella and Maya Sidhu and second-year student Matthew Brauer. The committee has received and evaluated paper proposals from the U.S. and beyond. The selected papers are united by a shared interest in the problematics of transnationalism but nonetheless represent a range of disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. Participants will address the literary and visual arts, philosophy, politics, and more. Their papers will cover topics spanning Africa, the Americas, and Europe, from the 13th century to the present day. Taken together, these papers ask a series of questions of transnationalism. What makes the transnational? Is this transnationalism an artistic practice, an academic methodology, or a political strategy? Is it an ideal model or a mode of resistance? Is it a “third way” between diversity and difference, between identity and essentialism? What is its relationship to other categories, such as the national, international, multinational, or supranational? And how do transnational theories rethink the intersections of aesthetics and politics?

Participants will present their papers in a series of panels, moderated by Northwestern faculty and graduate students, on both days of the conference. In the spirit of collaboration, opportunities for exchange will extend beyond the panels themselves. In the weeks prior to the conference, interested presenters will be paired with an NU graduate student who will read and comment on a paper draft. Moderators will also read over the papers on their panels and have the opportunity to offer synthesizing comments to open discussion at the end of each session. The aim is to provide participants and attendees with as many chances as possible to develop their work in cross-disciplinary dialogues with their colleagues. This event is co-sponsored by the Department of French & Italian, the Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities, and the French Interdisciplinary Group.

-Matthew Brauer

Graduate Student News

Matthew Brauer presented a paper entitled “Denis Diderot, animator: early art criticism and the temporality of the still image” at the second annual Illustration Comics Animation Conference at Dartmouth College on February 28-March 2.

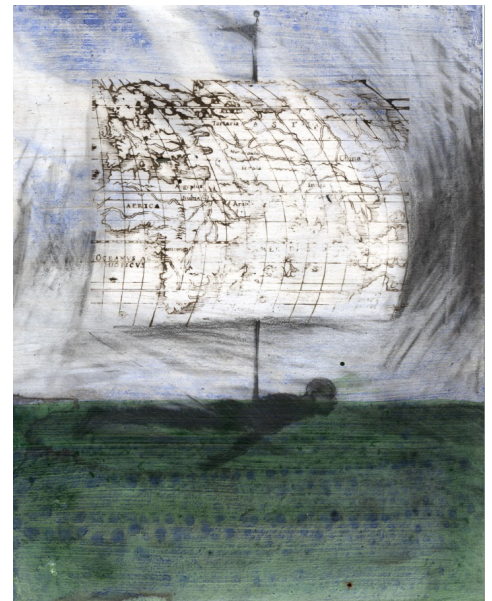
Emilie Cappella successfully defended her dissertation prospectus, “The Other’s Speech: (re)constitution” on December 6, 2013.

Mihaela Costea successfully defended her dissertation prospectus, “The Sensorial and its Contemporary Mise-en-

scène” on March 17, 2014.

Ashlee Cummings successfully defended her dissertation prospectus, “Dialogue, Dissemination, and Discourse: Reimagining Trauma Literature through Intertextual Trauma Writing” on March 10, 2014

Joseph DeRosier successfully defended his dissertation prospectus, “Imagining a New Britain: Perlesvaus and the Biopolitics of Romance” on October 8th, 2013.



The Castaway, *Tropical Nights* 2006-
Courtesy of Christopher Cozier

Katia Gottin successfully defended her dissertation, “Bearing Witness to Haitian History: Trauma, Testimonial Narrative, and Madness” on March 14, 2014.

Brian McLoughlin contributed a chapter entitled “America Seen Through the Eyes of the North, With the Soul of the South” on Lauren Cantet’s film *Vers Le Sud (Heading South)* (2005) to the just published volume *Metropolitan Mosaics and Melting Pots: Paris and Montreal in Francophone Literatures* (2013), co-edited by Pascale de Souza and H. Adlai Murdoch.

Graduate Student News (cont.)

Elizabeth McManus was named to the 2012-2013 ASG Faculty Honor Roll.

Maya Sidhu successfully defended her dissertation prospectus, ““Emphasis on

Action: Women, Film Authorship, and the Popular Front” on November 13, 2013.

Abigail Stahl presented a paper en-

titled “Love Me Do: Germaine de Staël’s Corinne and the Dangers of Filial Love” at the Western Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies annual meeting on February 15 and 16 at UC-Davis.

New Graduate Student



Photo courtesy of Rachel Grimm

Rachel Grimm

“I grew up in a tiny village in Amish country in Northeastern Ohio, where my parents still live. I moved from Amish country to Appalachia and graduated from Ohio University (Athens) in 2012 with a double major in French and English. After graduation, I moved to Pau, France, the capital of the Pyrénées-Atlantiques region in southwest France, where I taught high school English for a year. While teaching in Pau, I was also working remotely as the associate producer of a documentary project entitled “Hackers in Uganda.” The director and I were able to finance the film through grants and a crowdfunding campaign, and in July, we traveled with a location sound engineer to Jinja, Uganda, to spend a month shooting the principal photography.

My adjustment to life at Northwestern has really been quite smooth, and I have my peers in the department to thank for that. They have shown me such a warm welcome. Although I don’t spend much time in Evanston outside of class, I have

enjoyed getting to know the nooks and nuances of my neighborhood in Chicago. I have been surprised at just how vibrant and diverse—and amiable!—the Andersonville/Edgewater community is. Having grown up in a relatively remote rural area, I love that in Chicago I can walk or take public transportation just about everywhere. Thai food, bookstores, Bloody Marys, and coffee shops (the staples of a good weekend)—not to mention the lake—are all only a few minutes away. I love to go for long runs along the lake at sunset. The view of downtown Chicago at dusk from the pier at Hollywood Beach is just stunning.”

When asked what most excited her about her first year at Northwestern, Rachel replied, “Other than coursework, of course, I am hoping to get involved with the Queertopia! conference this spring.”

New ENS Student



Photo courtesy of Elodie Coutier

Elodie Coutier

I am here at Northwestern only for a year, as an exchange student from the École Normale Supérieure (ENS) in Paris. Back in France, I was studying Classics and Comparative Literature both at the ENS and in the Sorbonne University; I am currently working on a PhD project in Classical Reception. I have been here in Evanston for almost three months now, and I would say I am getting rather pleased with my American life! I particularly enjoy having a direct relationship with my students and my colleagues, something rather difficult in France, and especially at a university. Of course, Northwestern’s campus is simply extraordinary. I could never get quite accustomed to having such a beautiful view on the lake, including from the sports complex!

I think it is very interesting for me to be confronted everyday with American students. While teaching the French way of life, I am myself discovering the American one, and that is something I really enjoy! I am particularly excited to be co-responsible for the French Ciné-club, which allows me to present and discuss different aspects of my culture.

-Elodie Coutier

Undergraduate Events

French 302 class attends *Le Petit Prince* at the Lookingglass Theatre

Le 1 février 2014, les étudiants du cours de Composition Avancée (302) sont allés voir *Le Petit Prince* au Lookingglass Theatre avec leur professeur Madame Rey, grâce à un Course Enhancement Grant. Ci-dessous, une critique composite du spectacle (contributions d'Alexandra Wright, Ary Hansen et Madhuri Sathish).

“Dessine-moi un mouton” crie le petit prince, joué par Amelia Hefferon. Avec ces premiers mots, le public est transporté au monde du Petit Prince, le roman classique écrit par Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. La distribution polyvalente du Lookingglass Theatre à Chicago donne vie à cette fantastique histoire d'aventures avec sa représentation amusante et émouvante du voyage de ce petit prince parmi le cosmos.



French 302 students with instructor Christiane Rey. Photo courtesy of Madhuri Sathish

Dès le début, les effets spéciaux lancent l'audience dans l'action. Les spectateurs sont tirés de leurs sièges, piégés dans le chasseur qui tombe en panne, l'agonie du moteur perçant, le flottement de la carrosserie qui se berce. Comme par magie, les baobabs perforent la surface de la scène du désert et en sortent sans trace de rupture. Le buveur qui trébuche sur sa planète tournoyante est constamment déséquilibré, se démenant comme un beau diable, mais il ne tombe jamais. Les thèmes, qui constituent le cœur du roman, passent au second plan dans la réalisation de David Catlin....

Amelia Hefferon, diplômée récente de Northwestern University, et Ian Bardford, un nouveau venu à Lookingglass, interprètent leurs rôles respectifs comme petit prince et narrateur de manière fantastique, mais c'est Kasey Foster, qui joue le rôle du renard, qui fait un carton. Dans une performance qui met tout le public au bord des larmes, Foster réussit à dépeindre un renard déviant et drôle tout en étant un messager de la bonne volonté et l'amitié.

-Christiane Rey

French 210 attends *L'Amant de la Chine du Nord* at the Lookingglass Theatre

On Thursday November 7th, 2013, students from French 210: Reading Literatures in French and faculty members from French and Italian and from the Program in African and Asian Languages attended a performance of *The North China Lover*, directed by Heidi Stillman at the Lookingglass Theatre. We had prepared by watching the documentary *Marguerite Duras: Worn out by the Desire to Write* and by reading the opening chapters of *L'Amant* (1984) and *L'Amant de la Chine du Nord* (1991).

After the performance, we were joined for an enriching conversation by members of the cast, including Deanna Dunagan, Rae Gray, Northwestern Alumni Tracy Walsh, Allison Torem, and JJ Phillips. Gray offered fascinating insights into the process of becoming her character, and Torem shared her experience of transforming herself into the much younger Hélène. Dunagan explained how certain performance decisions developed during the rehearsals, and Walsh spoke about the Northwestern roots of the Lookingglass Theatre Company and its mission to bring to stage literary works not originally written for the stage. We were delighted by the appearance of musician Betti Xiang who accompanied the play with the Ehru, a two-stringed bowed instrument, and who spoke to us about the instrument and performed another piece for us.

Students further reflected on this wonderful experience in class, when comparing three very different reviews of the play, and reading our way through *L'Amant* and selected passages from *L'Amant de la Chine du Nord*.

- Dominique Licops

Undergraduate Events

Italian undergraduate Joseph Semkiu curates for the Block Museum

Joseph Semkiu (WCAS '14), who is curating an exhibition for Northwestern's Block Museum, shares his thoughts about the exhibition, how he came to curate it, and how the project links to his background in Italian:

"Revenge and Repose: Classical Mythology from the Collection" is the spring 2014 exhibition in the Block Museum's Katz Gallery, which I have student curated since July 2013. The exhibit reflects an intersection of a number of interests: Greco-Roman mythology and history as well as my two majors, Italian and art history. Though a smaller show, "Revenge and Repose" examines figural representation in the 16th and 17th centuries, specifically the contrast between masculine and feminine bodies as well as the dichotomy between violent and relaxed bodies.

I was offered this tremendous opportunity to student-curate the exhibit after curating a smaller show in January 2013. I became involved with the Block as a student docent and approached their faculty to organize some of their objects into a show entitled, "New Iconographies: Italian Prints and Drawings from 1500 to 1700." "New Iconographies" was planned as a small, on-campus cultural event for students and faculty of Italian. As a Student Advisory Board representative for Italian, I had been able to coordinate different student events and felt that it would be worthwhile to showcase what we have on campus in order to better engage with students learning Italian.

This show then expanded into an exhibit incorporating a few non-Italian works along with many Italian works with similar themes of violence and relaxation in Greco-Roman mythology. In summer and fall 2013, I worked one-on-one with curator Corinne Granof, learning the role of a curator while simultaneously creating this exhibit. The exhibit has provided me with the opportunity to see how storytelling is represented in these different art objects. My experience



Circe Changing Odysseus' Men Into Beasts, Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione, ca. 1651.

Etching, 8 1/2 x 12 1/8 (image) 2005.9

Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, auctionBLOCK Fund purchase

Photo courtesy of Joseph Semkiu

reading Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and Dante's *Inferno* in my Italian courses enabled me to closely read these myths and then see how an artist chose to include particular details and omit others. It is fascinating to see how the same story can be drastically different in two works of art.

This exhibit would not have happened if I had not become an SAB representative last year and begun to consider how to create meaningful events for my fellow students. I am honored to have been chosen by the Block to student-curate "Revenge and Repose," which represents for me a dream finally being realized. More generally, I am truly grateful for all the opportunities the Department of French and Italian has provided for me during the past three years. "Revenge and Repose: Classical Mythology from the Collection" will open in the middle of Spring Quarter 2014.

-Joseph Semkiu



Joseph Semkiu, left, attends the "New Iconographies" show with his grandmother Frances, right
Photo courtesy of Joseph Semkiu

Undergraduate News

Reflections on Study Abroad

I never thought morning runs around the Eiffel Tower would become part of my daily routine. Living with a host family in Paris for four months and studying at La Sorbonne, I gained a profound appreciation for French culture, history, and language that one cannot experience on a two-week vacation. The Sweet Briar Junior Year in France program held our orientation in Tours, a town three hours southwest of Paris. Eating nutella crêpes in Vielle-ville, spending nights at the riverside bar, going to wine and cheese tastings, and visiting eight different châteaux in the Loire Valley (some of which we biked to), it was nice to have a small-town orientation to French life and language. At the end of two weeks, we were ready to move to the city life of Paris.

I had an incredibly kind and generous host family with two loving children, six-year-old Olivia and four-year-old Aymar. As the first student they ever hosted, the family eagerly immersed me in their life, taking me on long walks across the Inception bridge and around the Eiffel Tower, to school events with the children, to cousins' birthdays, and even to their beautiful home in the Burgundy countryside for *la chasse*. Those kids meant so much to me, and I learned a lot from them. We watched the French version of *Aristocats* together, danced to "Jingle Bells" and baked Christmas cookies, played board games, and read bedtime stories each night. On some weekends, I still get to see Olivia and Aymar's smiling faces over Skype as they bounce up and down, telling me all about their latest adventures.

One of the benefits to living in a central, major European city is how easily one can travel out of it. Taking advantage of my flexible schedule, I spent nearly every weekend in a different country. Studying in England the summer before on a Fulbright Fellowship, I made friends from all over the world who I then had the opportunity to visit—whether it was in Copenhagen, Geneva, London, or just a walk across the Seine in Motte-Picquet. I was even able to take



L to R: Heather Evans, Veronica Benduski, Maggie Khadifa, Gregory Rittiner, Jessica Shapiro, Sarah Park, Lindsey Charles. Photo courtesy of Veronica Benduski.

one of my closest friends from Northwestern (studying in Strasbourg) to Krakow, Poland for All-Saints Day, where we stayed with my grandmother, aunt, and cousins. I certainly recommend planning trips based on where one has family and friends, as it proves the most rewarding way to learn about a culture and explore a city. My most memorable trip was to visit friends in Nice, where we swam in the sparkling waters of the Côte d'Azur, ate authentic Italian gelato, and hiked in the French Alps.

When in Paris, I made the most of my time by going to every museum, café, concert, monument, and cathedral I could. I also immersed myself in the culture and history of the city through Sweet Briar classes. One course took us on historical walking tours of the city, where we visited and studied a different monument each week. I also took an Art History course taught in the Louvre every Wednesday and at the Musée d'Orsay on Thursdays. Sitting in a circle on the marble floors of the Louvre in front of masterpieces by artists from David and Ingres to Degas and Monet, our professor passed around a bag of Haribo jellybeans, and we talked about

French history through art—surreal. One of my closest friends was French, and visiting quaint, little-known Parisian cafés, spending relaxing evenings with her friends, and cooking ratatouille or baking scones in her apartment remain amongst my fondest memories. In the post study-abroad glow, all the stories seem perfect and the adventures unparalleled. It is important to recognize that study abroad is full of both ups and downs, but that those moments of doubt or insecurity make times of confidence and growth even brighter. In France, I improved my language skills and learned how to navigate the Paris metro, but I mostly learned the importance of living. I did not learn for the sake of grades or tests, but rather carried Hugo and Balzac with me everywhere for the pleasure of reading. I felt alive at the prospect of visiting a new museum, trying a new type of cheese, or buying a train ticket to another country. Being abroad taught me to truly live in the moment by immersing myself in the joy of experience.

- Veronica Benduski

Undergraduate News

Réflexion sur mon expérience à l'étranger

J'ai passé le trimestre dernier à Paris avec le Program d'IFE (Internships in Francophone Europe). Je me souviens de notre premier jour à l'école, nous avons eu un cours sur la révolution française. Ironiquement, l'école se situe juste à côté de la Bastille où cette révolution s'est passée. À ce moment-là, je me suis sentie tellement privilégiée et reconnaissante d'avoir l'occasion d'être à Paris pour concrétiser mes études. Grâce au program d'IFE, j'ai eu aussi l'occasion de travailler comme stagiaire dans un laboratoire d'épidémiologie. Pendant mon stage, j'ai découvert les différentes étapes d'une étude épidémiologique. Un des moments les plus forts de mon stage était ma participation à une fête de science annuelle où j'ai dû représenter un des projets de mon organisation- Grippenet.fr. J'ai dû présenter le sujet de la grippe à des enfants de maternelle de façon la plus ludique possible. Après ma présentation, une des enfants a levé son main et m'a demandé innocemment, « Madame Grippenet, est-ce vous qui tuez tous les virus de la grippe? » C'était un moment très drôle, mais je me suis sentie très accomplie et fière parce que j'ai réussi à transmettre mon message aux enfants malgré la barrière de la langue.

Parmi d'autres choses, j'ai particulièrement apprécié mes conversations avec mes parents d'accueil parce qu'ils m'ont donné beaucoup d'aperçu sur la culture française et comment Paris a changé depuis leur enfance. De plus, j'ai bien aimé me perdre à Paris ; je n'ai jamais cessé d'être surprise par les structures standardisées des appartements Haussmanniens et des petits cafés dans les endroits les plus obscurs.

Dans sa description de son expérience à l'étranger, Xavier, le personnage principale du film Casse Tête Chinois de Cédric Klapisch, dit qu'on commence à avoir l'impression d'être retardé. Cela explique bien mes sentiments pendant les premières semaines de mon séjour à Paris. Les gens m'ont parlé lentement, parfois avec leurs jambes et bras pour que je puisse comprendre ; ma personnalité et surtout mon sarcasme ont disparu ; et je n'arrivais plus à raconter des blagues. Cela a été pour moi une très belle leçon d'humilité. Après m'être mise dans la peau des Français, je peux dire que mon expérience à l'étranger m'a rendue plus confiante en mes capacités, plus attentive à ce qui se passe autour de moi, et plus adaptable aux demandes hors de meshabitudes.

-Didi Odinkemelu

Réflexion sur l'étude à l'étranger

J'ai passé le semestre d'automne à Sciences Po Paris. À Sciences Po, j'ai eu la possibilité de prendre des cours auxquels je m'intéresse mais que, comme étudiante d'économie, je ne peux pas suivre à Northwestern. Un de mes cours préférés était un cours d'histoire de l'art. J'ai adoré ce cours parce qu'on nous a présenté des peintures qui se trouvent dans les musées parisiens. Donc quand ma mère et ma sœur sont venues me rendre visite, j'étais totalement prête à leur servir de guide ! En général mon expérience à Sciences Po a été géniale. J'ai eu de la chance parce que j'ai rencontré beaucoup de camarades français dans mes cours; en fait j'étais la seule étudiante d'échange dans mon cours de photographie ! Interagir en français était difficile au début, mais m'entraîner avec mes camarades m'a beaucoup aidée. Visiter l'Institut Français de la Mode et parler avec le Responsable de Formation Internationale, Mr. Cacouris, était une de mes expériences préférées au delà de l'université. J'ai connu Mr. Cacouris ma première année d'université quand il a donné une présentation à Northwestern sur les masters offerts par l'IFM. À Paris, il m'a parlé plus en détail du processus de demande et des nombreuses professions dans l'industrie de la mode. C'est grâce au programme d'échange et au département de Français de Northwestern que j'ai décidé de poursuivre des études de master à Paris!

Mon expérience à Paris a été très spéciale. Je n'oublierai jamais mes nouveaux amis, mon petit appartement à Montparnasse et le pain au chocolat de ma boulangerie préférée (comme la madeleine de Proust!), les promenades dans les quartiers parisiens, les lectures dans les cafés au coin de la rue... je sais que cela semble cliché mais la Ville des Lumières est vraiment inoubliable et je recommande vivement un programme d'échange en France!

-Delia Privitera

Lessons Learned. Lessons Taught.

You know, when I was at NU, I never much cared for pulling all-nighters. Preparing for classes late into the night. Then slaving over 15-page papers. Tediously reading through textbook pages, mindlessly skipping over the seemingly unimportant ones ...Lost in the world of academia, striving to see another daunting draft transform into the “A+” essay of a hard-working student.

These days, two years out of college, I admit that I once again find myself pulling all-nighters. Preparing for classes late into the night. Then serving hundreds of young people. Tactfully reaching diverse groups of students, meaningfully engaging even the seemingly uninterested ones... Finding myself in the world of academia, striving to see another blank-faced stare transform into the eager eyes of a passionate language learner.

Ironically, it's as a teacher that I've learned the most. I've realized and discovered so much, now that I'm the one in front of the classroom animating, explaining, listening, and, yes of course, giving and grading homework. For me, teaching is about conveying and, more importantly, conceiving a certain passion in the hearts and minds of my students--that same “*joie de vivre*” that took me from being a timid 7th-grade beginning French student who loved all-things-French and dreamed of one day traveling to France, to becoming a confident, near bi-lingual English teacher who loves living in France and dreams of one day traveling the world.



Photo courtesy of Kristin Lawson

Kristin Lawson (WCAS '12, French and International Studies) is currently in her second year of teaching English at an IUT (University Institute of Technology) in Alsace, France.

Plus Nouvelles des anciens

Après avoir passé ces deux dernières années à poursuivre mon masters (of Science in Foreign Service), je vais bientôt terminer mes études ici à Georgetown. Avant d'être admis à ce programme, j'étais en Turquie et j'enseignais l'anglais. Au début de mon séjour là-bas, je ne savais pas si j'avais envie de retourner à l'université. Cependant, petit à petit, je me suis rendu compte de mon désir de travailler dans ma spécialité à Northwestern - les Relations Internationales. C'est pour cela que je suis venu à Georgetown. Dans mon programme, on met l'emphasis sur l'établissement des liens entre ce que l'on étudie en classe et ce que l'on va faire dans son domaine. Pour moi, cet aspect « enseigneur-professionnel » est très important. Je consacre mon temps dans le programme à étudier comment établir et propager la sécurité humaine - oui, parfois à travers des moyens militaires, mais surtout à travers le développement économique, l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes, des institutions gouvernementales fortes et impartiales, et le respect des droits de l'homme. Un jour, j'aimerais bien appliquer ce que j'ai appris par rapport à la diplomatie et au commerce dans une carrière dans le service public, surtout un poste où je peux travailler à l'étranger. Mon séjour en Turquie a suscité en moi un intérêt très fort pour ce pays-là et la langue turque. C'est un pays qui est énormément complexe et beau et sa langue est bien compliquée mais je me trouve attiré par le défi de comprendre la Turquie, ses habitants, et sa région. Je profite de mon temps à Georgetown pour poursuivre mes études en turc, mais j'essaie toujours de garder mon français. En ce moment je commence à chercher du travail en relations internationales et le français sert toujours comme atout. En attendant le prochain chapitre de ma vie, je suis énormément reconnaissant pour tout ce que j'ai appris à Northwestern et surtout pour le soutien du département de français sans lequel je ne serais jamais allé aussi loin.

-Robert Sotolar
WCAS '11

International Relations and French

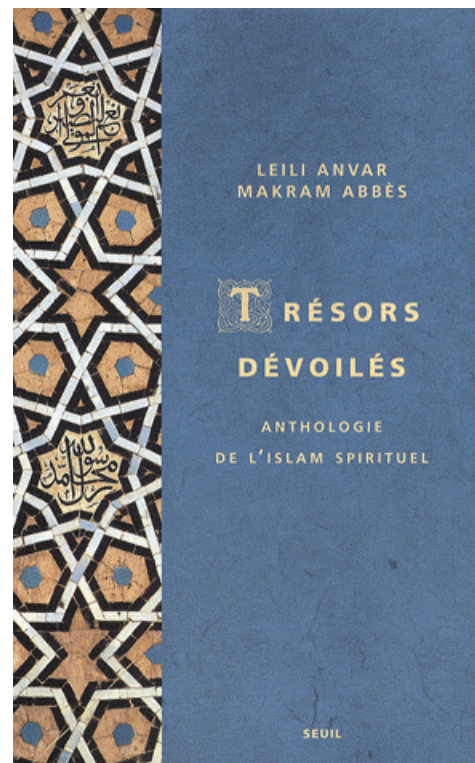
Upcoming Events

Makram Abbès Visit

On Friday, April 11, 2014 from 3:30 to 5pm, The Department of French and Italian and the French Interdisciplinary Group will present a talk in French by Makram Abbès of Ecole Normales Supérieure Lettres & Sciences Humaines-Lyon entitled “Parrèsia et art de gouverner dans *Kalila et Dimna*.” This talk will take place in the Kaplan Seminar Room (Kresge 2-370) and light refreshments will follow.

Makram Abbès is an Assistant Professor (Maître de conférence) at Ecole Normale Supérieure-Lettres & Sciences Humaines-Lyon and is a member of the Triangle Laboratoire, a research group comprised of specialists in political philosophy. He is also the co-director of the journal *Astérion: philosophie, histoire des idées, pensée politique*. A specialist of Arab and Islamic philosophy, he has written on medieval, political, and legal thought and on the philosophies of such luminaries as al Farabi, Avempace (Ibn Bajjah) and Averroès (Ibn Rushd). His most recent research addresses the theories of war in Islam on which he has published a number of essays and articles, the most notable among them being *Islam et politique à l'âge classique (Islam and Politics in the Classical Age)* (PUF, 2009) and *Trésors dévoilés: Anthologie de l'Islam spirituel (Unveiled Treasures: An Anthology of Spritual Islam)* (with Leili Anvar), (Paris, Seuil, September 2009). Professor Abbès received his doctorate from Ecole Normale Supérieure-Lyon where he wrote his dissertation on Andalusian political philosophy in the 12th century.

-Nasrin Qader



Student Underground Committee

The student underground committee is looking for new members to help organize the French cafes as well as cultural events. If interested, please contact Pablo Garcia Romero (PabloGarciaRomero2015@u.northwestern.edu) or Professor Christiane Rey (c-rey@northwestern.edu).



Students and faculty gather for Café Francophone. Photo courtesy of Claire Tuft.

Qui fait quoi? Chi fa cosa?

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Director of French Language Program: Dominique Licops
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For complete contact information, visit our website:
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