

Friends of Comparative Literature

Words and the Diminution of All Things

Charles Wright

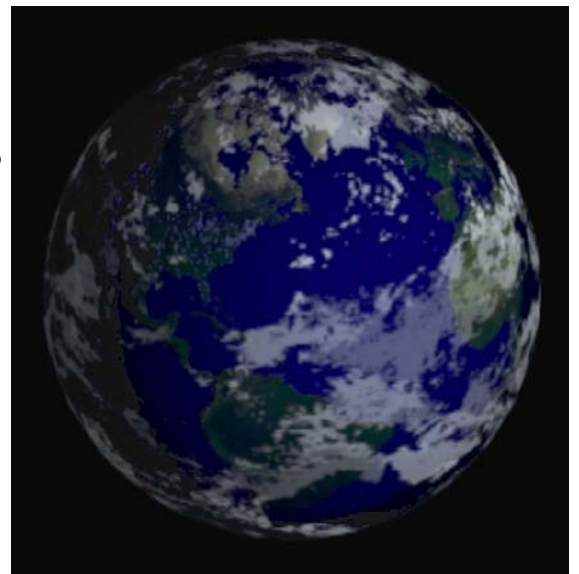
The brief secrets are still here,
and the light has
come back.
The word *remember* touches my
hand,
But I shake it off and watch the tur-
key buzzards bank and wheel
Against the occluded sky.
All of the little names sink down,
weighted with what
is invisible,
But no one will utter them, no one
will smooth their rumpled hair.

There isn't much time, in any case.
There isn't much left to talk about
as the year deflates.
There isn't a lot to add.
Road-worn, December-colored, they
cluster like unattractive angels
Wherever a thing appears,
Crisp and unspoken, unspeakable
in their mute and
glittering garb.

All afternoon the clouds have been
sliding toward us
out of the
Blue Ridge.
All afternoon the leaves have scuttled
Across the sidewalk and driveway,
clicking their clattery claws.
And now the evening is over us,
Small slices of silence
running under a dark rain,
Wrapped in a larger.

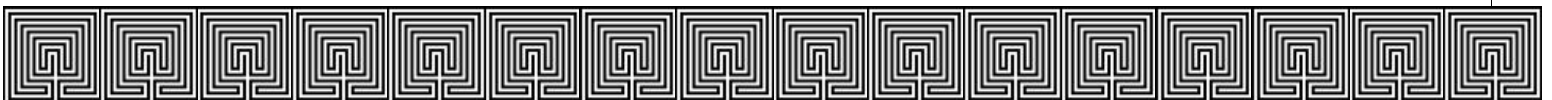
News from the Coordinator

On behalf of the faculty and students in Comparative Literature at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, I first want to thank you for your generous donations to the Roy Arthur Swanson Comparative Literature Scholarship. The funds enabled us to recognize three outstanding students, Timothy Walsh, Guy Cardamone, and Catherine Roehl, awarding them the financial support their academic records so richly deserve. I also invite you to welcome two new faculty members in Comparative Literature.



Professor Michelle Bolduc received her Ph.D. from the University of Oregon, with areas of expertise that include medieval literature and European philosophy and rhetoric. Professor Kristin Pitt, who completed her Ph.D. at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, brings expertise in the literatures and cultures of Latin America, the Caribbean, and the United States. The initiatives in course development and student mentoring that they have undertaken along with Professors Peter Paik and Jian Xu have enriched the multiple areas of study offered by Comparative Literature, expanding the program's abilities to meet our students' rich spectrum of academic interests and goals. In fact, the program is steadily growing at the undergraduate and graduate levels, currently numbering thirteen majors, six minors, and four students working on the Master's degree with a concentration in Comparative Literature.

With appreciation and warm regards,
Robin Pickering-Iazzi



The 2004 Winners of the Roy Arthur Swanson Comparative Literature Scholarship

Winner:

Tim Walsh writes that his major in Comparative Literature was a “means to explore the world of social relationships as well as a way to gain self-understanding.” He is preparing for a career in teaching.



Runners-up:

Guy Cardamone, has appreciated the interdisciplinary approach of Comparative Literature courses, calling them “intriguing” and “highly challenging,” and will graduate with a minor.

Cate Roehl points to the different worldly perspectives that she has gained from Comparative Literature courses as the inspiration for her own creative writing. She too will graduate with a minor.

“Arguments are to be avoided; they are always vulgar and often convincing.”

-Oscar Wilde

Comparative Literature Poster Competition

Comparative Literature’s First Annual Poster Competition was held in conjunction with the UWM Open House. Current students of Comparative Literature were asked to design posters that expressed what Comparative Literature meant to them, and visitors to the Comparative Literature booth were the judges. Thanks to the donation from Harry W. Schwartz Bookstores, the winner received a \$25.00 gift certificate to purchase books. The winner, Anne Bahringer, is currently a graduate student in the Masters Program in Foreign Language and Literature whose area of concentration is Comparative Literature. Congratulations, Anne! Please come and view the winning entry, as well as the runners-up, on the seventh floor of Curtin Hall.



“Jeopardy” Winner to Donate to Comparative Literature



Martha Fingleton, a Comparative Literature major, was recently a winner on the television show “Jeopardy,” and will donate \$100.00 to the Program. Thank you, Martha!

Faculty Notes

Michelle Bolduc's research focuses on Old French and Occitan literature. Her article "A Theological Defense of Courtly Love: Matfre Ermengaud's *Breviari d'Amor*," is forthcoming in *Tenso, Bulletin de la société Guilhem IX*.

Fr. Michael Fountain is currently teaching a course on the "Nazis in Western Europe" as well as literature to retirees as a community outreach endeavor at Cardinal Stritch University. He coordinates the Holocaust Resource and Information Project.



Kristin Pitt in Comp Lit 232, Literature & Politics: Contemporary Women Writers & the Ethics of Violence

Cary Henson, who is currently teaching the 20th-Century Humanities course, also teaches courses on Genocide, Critical Theory, Film, and 20th Century World Literature at UW-Oshkosh, where he received the university's distinguished teaching award in 2003.

Peter Paik is currently a fellow at the Institute for the Humanities at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Kristin Pitt is teaching courses on gender studies and on the literature of the Americas, North and South. Her current research examines territorial and corporeal metaphors of the nation in narratives of the Americas.

Rachel Skalitzky continues research for a monograph in conjunction with Professor Swanson entitled "Aeolus: The Inherence of Figures." In addition to taking care of her 94-year old mother, she still advises majors and minors.

Roy Swanson has published three poems during the past year: two in *Entelechy International 2* (2004), "The Metamorphosis of a Participle" and "le Gouffre d'Azur" and one in *Moebius* vol. 19:2, "Lucerne: Newly Sprung in June." He is currently completing an article on anagoge as relative to Heidegger's "Unterwegs zur Sprache."

Jian Xu is currently a Fellow at the Center for 21st Century Studies, working on exile and migration in contemporary Chinese literature and cinema. His most recent article "Retrieving the Working Body in Modern Chinese Fiction: The Question of the Ethical in Representation" appeared in *Modern Chinese Literature and Culture* 16.1 (Spring 2004).

"Once you hear the details of victory, it is hard to distinguish it from a defeat."

—Jean Paul Sartre

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**EXPLORE
YOUR
WORLD**

Comparative Literature

Comparative Literature is an exciting and innovative field of study dedicated to the examination of literature from a transnational, transhistorical, and interdisciplinary perspective. Students of comparative literature learn to appreciate and to analyze works of literature from around the globe. They also develop skills to analyze the relationship between literature and other arts, disciplines, and cultural phenomena. Comparative Literature is open to the literary and interdisciplinary study of such wide-ranging fields as aesthetics; political, social, religious, and philosophical movements; critical studies of gender, race, ethnicity, class, or sexuality; folklore and mythology. It is open to the study of literatures from across the globe (Asia and Europe or the Middle East and Latin America) or across borders (France and Spain or the U. S. and Mexico). Similarly, comparatists study literature that may be separated by centuries or by decades. As a major, you might study anything from novels to horror films, frescoes to comic books, mythology to manifestoes, opera to rap.

Select Spring Course Offerings

Did you know that if you are 60 years old or better, you can audit a course at UWM for free? Please join us!

Comparative Literature 135: "The Western and Other Wild Frontiers" will examine the cultural, political, and artistic implications of portrayals of the frontier in North and South American literature, film, and other art forms. (Kristin



Pitt)

Comparative Literature 321: "The Renaissance Self in Art and Literature" explores notions of the self and subjectivity in essays, lyric, and art of the Renaissance. (Michelle Bolduc)

Comparative Literature 360: "New Chinese Cinema" will examine the formal innovations of Chinese film of the last twenty years, and its relationship to cultural history. (Jian Xu)