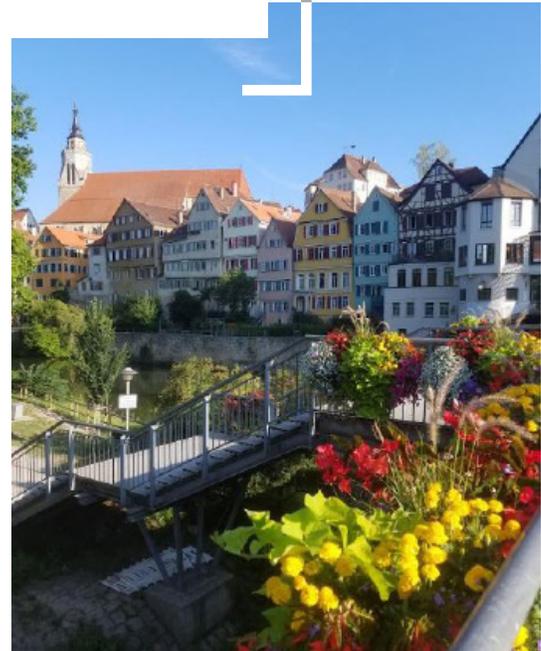




DEPARTMENT OF
GERMANIC LANGUAGES
AND LITERATURES

NEWSLETTER
SUMMER 2022



LETTER FROM THE CHAIR



Dear friends,

A few weeks ago we celebrated our first in-person graduation ceremony since 2019. Attended by 150 students, and parents from across the country, this was a deeply joyous event. After years of remote teaching and mask wearing, we were thrilled to mark this important moment in the lives of our students in the way it ought to be celebrated: surrounded by old-fashioned dark wood, under high ceilings, and in the presence of peers and parents, teachers and advisers. Our goal as a department has always been to be “a small college within a large university,” and we are eager to provide our students once again with the full personal attention and rich community spirit for which our department has become known.

Slowly but surely, university life is returning to campus. The dorms were full, instruction took place in-person, and our study abroad programs in Freiburg and Tübingen, which were suspended, resumed their operation. This summer, a large number of our majors and minors will once again attend language courses in Germany or intern with German firms. With a bit of luck, we will be able to shed our masks in the Fall. Having struggled to learn the names of 45 masked students in my recent class on German Intellectual History, I can’t wait for a time when I can once again see my students’ faces. Fingers crossed!

Public lectures are a vital part of university life, and we returned to them in February with our annual Grilk lecture, delivered this year by Professor Venkat

Mani from the University of Wisconsin at Madison. But the academic event of the year was without a doubt the symposium celebrating 50 years of Dutch at the University of Michigan organized by Annemarie Toebosch, the Director of our Dutch and Flemish Studies program. Under the heading of “Dutch Studies: A Decolonial Revision,” the symposium brought together scholars, writers, artists, and grassroots activists from South Africa, Belgium, the Netherlands, and the U.S. [see page 3], who highlighted the often suppressed history of Dutch colonial violence and the many contributions of Dutch citizens from former colonies. This provocative and well-attended conference was accompanied by a beautiful exhibition at Hatcher Graduate Library curated by Annemarie Toebosch.

Research continues to flourish as well. Kristin Dickinson’s and Kira Thurman’s recently published monographs met with enthusiasm and honors. Dickinson’s *Disorientations: German-Turkish Cultural Contact in Translation, 1811-1946* won this year’s Harry Levin Prize from the ACLA, the most important award for first-time authors in the field of Comparative Literature, while Thurman’s *Singing Like Germans: Black Musicians in the Land of Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms* was named by NPR as one of the best books of 2021, with The New Yorker music critic Alex Ross praising the work as “one of the most important and revelatory books to have been written about classical-music history in many years...An instant classic that deserves the widest possible audience.” Not bad for a first monograph. At a time when German departments across the country are shrinking, we are thrilled to announce

the hire of two exciting new junior colleagues, Megan Ewing and Jon Cho-Polizzi. You can find short profiles of their work in this and the next issue.

There is much more to report, of course, and this issue of our Newsletter, the thickest in quite some time, will give you at least an inkling of the many events, activities, and innovations that have kept us busy over the last year. It’s been a long one, and we are ready for a little break and some beach reading. My colleagues and I wish you a relaxing and COVID-free summer. Stay healthy and stay tuned!

Andrew Jankins

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter from the Chair	2
Highlights	3
Faculty Focus	4 - 7
Staying Connected	8
Graduate Student Focus	9 - 11
Scandinavian Studies	12
Dutch Studies	13
Undergraduate Student Focus	14
In the Classroom	15

HIGHLIGHTS

50 years of Dutch: A Decolonial Revision

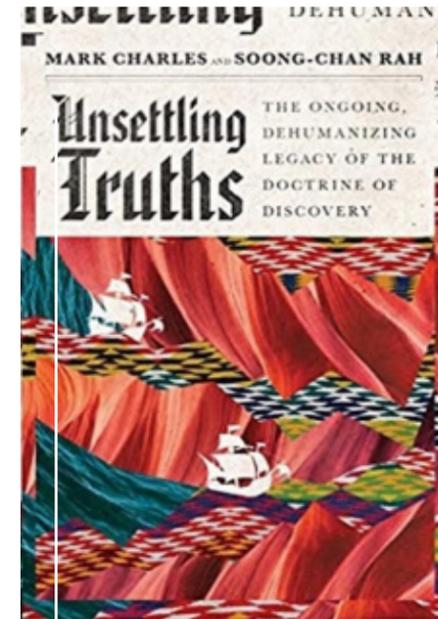
Annemarie Toebosch, Director of Dutch and Flemish Studies

After two years of pandemic delays, we celebrated 50-years of Dutch at the University of Michigan! Over 400 students, faculty, and community members visited an exhibit at the Hatcher Graduate Library and a series of symposium events that traced our paths toward a new frame for Dutch Studies: one that emphasizes colonial repair. Showcasing the program’s academic activism integrated in our curriculum, the exhibit showed examples of our disruptions of white-dominance in literature, music, and language studies as we cede our canons to voices traditionally silenced by colonial oppression.

The materials exhibited showed our comparative approach to Dutch Studies and Holocaust Studies, one that connects histories and cultures and creates understanding through familiar frames of reference. Connecting the five cases of the exhibit was a photo tribute to 19 leaders, thinkers, writers, scholars, activists, survivors, artists, and practitioners who have rearranged our thinking to break down traditional ways of doing Dutch Studies. *Pottery of Protest: Whitewashed*, an art collection by ceramic artist Mieke Zuiderweg, was mounted throughout the exhibit and inspired by the Dutch anticolonial movement. A collection of event posters, such as the 20th De Vries – Van der Kooy Memorial lecture poster of Irene Butter and other program materials, closed the exhibit (curated by: Annemarie Toebosch, Mars De Ritis, Tiffany Ng, Mieke Zuiderweg, Karla Vandersypen, and Ton Broos).



Our anniversary semester continued in a symposium of four events highlighting both a topical concern (through a focus on language, the arts, grassroots activism, religion, and the courts), as well as a geographic anchoring (in South Africa, Indonesia, Suriname, Indian Country, Belgium, the Netherlands, and the U.S.). Part of the symposium, our De Vries - Van der Kooy lecture series, resumed after a two-year hiatus with the lecture “God Created the World but the Dutch Made Holland: What happens when your Creation story excludes Creator” by Navajo and Dutch writer, speaker and activist, and 2020 candidate for U.S. president, Mark Charles. His lecture challenged the Netherlands’ self-image of a proud land-reclaiming nation and confronted his engrossed audience with the continuation of colonialism in Turtle Island (North America).



In a series of connected events, South African activist and writer of Afrikaans, Bettina Wyngaard, and university carillonist

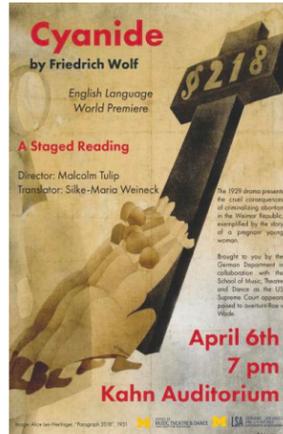
Tiffany Ng met with South African composer, researcher and musician Chanta Willie-Petersen to discuss “Tools of Decolonial Art: Language and Bells”, before the world premiere of the first compositions by South African composers of color were performed on the university carillon. In our closing event, “On Colonial Repair”, Bambi Ceuppens (anthropologist, Royal Museum for Central Africa, Belgium) and Christa Soeters (secretary, reparations committee for Indonesians, K.U.K.B.), reflected on how they, in their practice, have grappled with questions of repair, restitution, and repatriation, both internally and in various public spaces: in museums, in the courts, and in grassroots organizations.

We thank our co-organizers at the University of Michigan Museum of Art, Carillon Studio, and African Studies Center, and our sponsors at the university, in the community, and in the Dutch and Belgium diplomatic service.

FACULTY FOCUS

CYANIDE

Silke-Maria Weineck, Professor



On April 7th, four weeks before parties unknown leaked the draft of a Supreme Court majority opinion that rescinded Americans' constitutional right to terminate unwanted or dangerous pregnancies, the Department of Germanic Languages & Literatures, in collaboration with the School of Theater, Music, and Dance, staged the English language world premiere of a 1929 play, *Zyankali* ("Cyanide"), written by German physician and dramatist Friedrich Wolf.

Kerstin Barndt had the idea and remained at the logistical helm; Silke-Maria Weineck produced the first English language translation; Helmut Puff and Johannes von Moltke proofread and helped organize; Sarah Lime produced the

brochure and provided additional support. Malcolm Tulip, Theater Professor at SMTD, directed his brilliant students in bringing to life an abridged version of the drama that centers on the plight of Hete, a young working-class woman who finds herself pregnant without recourse in Weimar Germany as the economy begins to descend into a severe depression as manufacturing plants close, unemployment rises, food and housing become unaffordable. As Hete takes increasingly desperate steps to find a way to end her pregnancy, she finally turns to a bottle of Cyanide.

Cyanide, a passionate assault on the same criminalization of abortion that is about to sweep much of the U.S., made large waves when it was first published. It was performed more than 100 times in Berlin before the production traveled through numerous cities in Germany, Switzerland, and Austria. Performances in New York, Tokio, Moscow, and Paris followed. A film based on the play was released in 1930. Praised for its unflinching advocacy of economic justice and reproductive freedom, *Cyanide* generated controversy wherever it was performed. Friedrich Wolf himself was arrested in 1931, but was released after broad public outrage and interventions by well-known artists such as Bertolt Brecht.

The play, set in the Berlin working class milieu of the late 1920s, is firmly anchored in its historical moment during the growing economic, political, and ethical crises that would soon see the National Socialists rise to power. Yet, the faculty and students involved in this production saw ample parallels to our own moment where once again, democratic structures are under assault, basic civil rights, including the right not to be forced to carry a pregnancy to term, appear increasingly imperiled, and the authoritarian right is on the ascent in many countries across the globe.

Staging *Cyanide* in U-M's Kahn Auditorium was an opportunity to contribute the department's specific linguistic, literary, and historical expertise to the analysis of these dangerous developments, in a collaboration that felt as timely as exemplary. The chance for faculty and students to collaborate across schools was an additional bonus.



Faculty Promotions



Kira Thurman

In May 2022, the Board of Regents approved recommendations for promotion to the rank of associate professor to Kristin Dickinson and Kira Thurman. Congratulations to our faculty!



Kristin Dickinson

DisOrientations: German-Turkish Cultural Contact in Translation, 1811-1946

Penn State University Press



In May 2021, we saw the release of **Kristin Dickinson's** book *DisOrientations: German-Turkish Cultural Contact in Translation, 1811-1946* from Penn State University Press. The field of comparative and world literature tend to have a unidirectional, Eurocentric focus, with attention to concepts of "origin" and "arrival." *DisOrientations* challenges this viewpoint. Kristin Dickinson employs a unique multilingual archive of German and Turkish translated texts from the early nineteenth through the mid-twentieth century. In this analysis, she reveals the omnidirectional and transtemporal movements of translations, which, she argues, harbor the disorienting potential to reconfigure the relationships of original to translation, past to present, and West to East.

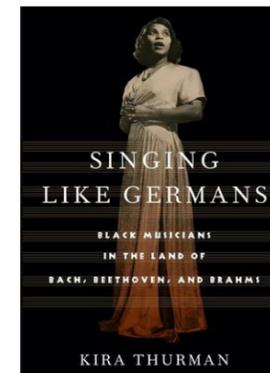
Through the work of three key figures—Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Friedrich Schradler, and Sabahattin Ali—Dickinson develops a concept of translational orientation as a mode of omnidirectional encounter. She sheds light on translations that are not bound by the terms of economic imperialism, Orientalism, or Westernization, focusing on case studies that work against the basic premises of containment and originality that undergird Orientalism's system of discursive knowledge production. By linking literary traditions across retroactively applied periodizations, the translations examined in this book act as points of connection that produce new directionalities and open new configurations of a future German-Turkish relationship.

Groundbreaking and erudite, *DisOrientations* examines literary translation as a complex mode of cultural, political, and linguistic orientation. This book will appeal to scholars and students of translation theory, comparative literature, Orientalism, and the history of German-Turkish cultural relations.

We are thrilled to announce that **Kristin Dickinson** won this year's **Harry Levin Prize from the American Comparative Literature Association (ACLA) for *DisOrientations***. The Harry Levin Prize recognizes an outstanding first book in the discipline of comparative literature. Congratulations!

Singing Like Germans

Cornell University Press



In *Singing Like Germans*, released in October 2021, **Kira Thurman** tells the sweeping story of Black musicians in German-speaking Europe over more than a century. Thurman brings to life the incredible musical interactions and transnational collaborations among people of African descent and white Germans and Austrians. Through this compelling history, she explores how people reinforced or challenged racial identities in the concert hall.

Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, audiences assumed the categories of Blackness and Germanness were mutually exclusive. Yet on attending a performance of German music by a Black musician, many listeners were surprised to discover that German identity is not a biological marker but something that could be learned, performed, and mastered. While Germans and Austrians located their national identity in music, championing composers such as Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms as national heroes, the performance of their works by Black musicians complicated the public's understanding of who had the right to play them. Audiences wavered between seeing these musicians as the rightful heirs of Austro-German musical culture and dangerous outsiders to it.

Thurman explores the tension between the supposedly transcendental powers of classical music and the global conversations that developed about who could perform it. An interdisciplinary and transatlantic history, *Singing Like Germans* suggests that listening to music is not a passive experience, but an active process where racial and gendered categories are constantly made and unmade.

Congratulations go out to **Professor Thurman** whose book, *Singing Like Germans*, won the **2021 Marfield Prize or the National Award for Arts Writing**. This prize is given annually to the author of a nonfiction book about the visual, literary, media, or performing arts.

The Fall 2021 issue of LSA Magazine featured a story about Professor Kira Thurman and her book, *Singing Like Germans*. You can read more on this story on LSA's website at: [Symphony of Forgotten Geniuses | U-M LSA U-M College of LSA \(umich.edu\)](https://www.lsa.umich.edu/symphony-of-forgotten-geniuses/)

Introducing Assistant Professor Megan Ewing

Julia Hell, Professor



We are delighted to announce that Dr. Megan Ewing will join our department this Fall. Dr. Ewing received her Ph.D. from the German Department at Princeton University in 2017 with a dissertation entitled *Rough Surfaces: The Collage Works of Rolf-Dieter Brinkman*, a contribution to scholarship on twentieth century avant-garde movements, ecological thought, and the history of science. Dr. Ewing's thesis examines the collage works of the West German author and artist, Rolf Dieter Brinkman. Ewing argues that Brinkman's intermedial experiments attempt to shock the audience into a heightened sensory-affective experience that is intended to open new pathways for political action.

Dr. Ewing is already at work on her first book project, *Psycho geography as Cultural Ecology: Ecological Thought in Neoavantgarde Practice*. Expanding the scope of her Ph.D. dissertation, Dr. Ewing explores here a wide swath of avant-garde artists ranging from the New York School to Situationists Guy DeBord and Asgar Jorn, from Rolf-Dieter Brinkman's collage works to the writings of contemporary Swiss author Dorothee Elmiger. Dr. Ewing then connects these aesthetic experiments to contemporary ecological

debates, making a strong case for an ecocritical reading of the neo avant-garde.

In her forthcoming article, "In the Present Climate: The Global Ecology of Ferdinand Khittl's *Parallelstraße*," Dr. Ewing focuses on a little-known 1962 docufiction essay film, thereby extending the analysis of neo avant-garde *collage* in her doctoral dissertation to the analysis of experimental film *montage*. In addition, Dr. Ewing is also an accomplished translator. Her translations of two novels by Dorothee Elmiger—*Shift Sleepers* (2019) and *Out of the Sugar Factory*—are forthcoming with University of Chicago Press.

In addition to being a thoughtful and precise scholar, Dr. Ewing is also an outstanding pedagogue. As a lecturer in our department, Dr. Ewing has, since 2017, offered courses on topics ranging from ecocriticism and the history of medicine to the literature of the avant-garde, fairy tales, and New German Cinema. Her classes cross historical, literary, and cultural periods ranging from the 18th century to the present, and they engage complex issues. In this short period of time, Dr. Ewing has proven that she is indispensable when it comes to the creative reimagining of the department's undergraduate curriculum.

A Farewell to Cherished Colleagues

Kerstin Barndt, Associate Professor and Associate Chair

At the GLL graduation ceremony this year, we not only sent off our majors and minors but also said farewell to two cherished colleagues: Peter Mclsaac and Ramona Uritescu-Lombard who have both been part of our department for the last decade, and we are sad to see them go, even as we wish them all the best. We wish both colleagues all the best on their next chapters and thank them deeply for everything they have contributed to our flourishing department. We will miss you both!



A comparatist by training, **Ramona Uritescu-Lombard, M.A.**, has touched the life of hundreds of undergraduate students in our department (as well as in Romance Languages one floor up in the MLB, where she offered seminars in French). Known for her inspiring and engaging teaching style, she has been loved by her students and admired by her colleagues. The incredible array of courses Mrs. Uritescu-Lombard has offered in our department as a lecturer ranged from various aspects of German film history, to multiculturalism in Germany and Austria, to an introduction to German literature, and food and drink in German-speaking culture. Her work in the department has been informed by her comparative approach, linguistic skills, and deep knowledge of central European culture and history. A fluent speaker of Romanian, English, German, and French, Ms. Uritescu-Lombard has focused her research on contemporary Romanian cinema, the German-Romanian author Herta Müller, and W.G. Sebald. Recruited by the University of Florida as Assistant Professor of German, Ms. Uritescu-Lombard will move with her family to sunnier climes.

His Legacy Will Continue — Geoff Eley Retires

Scott Spector, Rudolf Mrázek Collegiate Professor of History and German Studies

With mixed emotions, we announce the retirement of an eminent and highly esteemed colleague: Geoff Eley. Professor Eley is internationally known as among the most prominent scholars in the fields of Modern German and European history of his generation. He was trained in History in his native United Kingdom, at Oxford and then Sussex University, and joined the University of Michigan as an assistant professor of History in 1979. He remained here to be promoted through the ranks of associate professor, professor, collegiate professor, and finally the Karl Pohrt Distinguished University Professor of Contemporary History.

His pathbreaking works included *Reshaping the German Right: Radical Nationalism and Political Change After Bismarck* and *The Peculiarities of German History: Bourgeois Society and Politics in Nineteenth-Century Germany*, which challenged the foundations of historical understandings of modern Germany. In 2002, he published a highly significant work on the European left, *Forging Democracy: The History of the Left in Europe, 1850-2000*. All these and other studies of nationalism, fascism, and the left were translated into many languages and became standard works in the field. In 2005 he authored *A Crooked Line: From Cultural History to the History of Society*, an intellectual memoir that outlined the evolution of his ways of seeing history through the lens of political commitment and experience. This focus informs his current work, soon in press, *History Made Conscious: Politics of Knowledge, Politics of the Past*.

Geoff's impact on our Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures has been profound and long-lasting. It is no exaggeration to say that we would not be the innovative and

unique department of German, Dutch, and Scandinavian languages and cultures that we are today without his contributions. These began in the mid-1990s, when a group of young professors in the department sought to move in the direction of more interdisciplinary humanistic scholarship, enlisting his vision and energy. He and his colleague in History, Kathleen Canning, joined GLL as voting members of the faculty. He taught classes that became core offerings for our students, including "Coming to Terms with Germany," co-taught by Fred



Amrine, and "Origins of Nazism," the popular lecture class begun by Kathleen Canning and myself. I had the pleasure of co-teaching the latter class with him to a large audience of undergraduates, and he went on to teach it on his own one year. A decade after joining the department with a courtesy appointment he was asked to lead it as chair at a time that turned out to be transformative for the culture of the department. He employed his time in office to oversee the creation of a new long-range plan, the effects of which are still felt today. He brought in exciting visiting

professors from Europe. He oversaw key promotions and hires. He cultivated the Dutch and Scandinavian programs. Overall, he saw it as his mission to usher in the richly participatory community feeling that our faculty and students continue to enjoy today, continuing the work of his predecessor and paving the way for those who followed.

It is sad to think of a University of Michigan without this figure on the faculty, an important colleague and dear friend to so many of us—certainly to me. His presence, like his legacy, will continue, even as he formally retires from teaching and service here. We count on it, "comrade"!



A scholar of modern German literature and culture and Museum Studies, **Dr. Peter Mclsaac** has served the department and its students for the last ten years. As associate professor he offered a wide array of classes to undergraduate and Ph.D. students, about Berlin's and Vienna's urban modernity, 20th century science and technology, current events through German media, and museums and literature. While all these courses drew from Dr. Mclsaac's extensive research and publications on related topics, the seminar on the intersection of museums and literature resonated most strongly with his monograph *Museums of the Mind: German Modernism and the Dynamics of Collecting* and the co-edited volume *Exhibiting the German Past: Museums, Film, and Musealization*. Working across media and disciplines, Dr. Mclsaac has shaped the way we understand German Studies in our department and beyond. During his time at U-M, he helped to create a critical space to reflect on museum culture and the culture of collecting in relation to other visual, spatial, and textual arts.

A cherished colleague, Dr. Mclsaac has served the department in numerous important administrative roles, including as associate chair, graduate chair, and director of our honors program. Beyond the department, Dr. Mclsaac has also regularly taught for the Museum Studies Program and mentored a great number of doctoral students. In 2019, he led our study abroad program, the Academic Year in Freiburg -- a step that eventually led him to consider relocating permanently to Southern Germany, where we trust he will find every success and happiness.

STAYING CONNECTED

Daniel5: Making A Difference In The World, One Sister At A Time

Daniel5



We want to start by saying that it is such a privilege to be featured in this edition of the annual Germanic Newsletter.

We are five sisters that are close in age, look a lot alike, and are all proud Wolverines! Our names are Deborah, Andrea, Bethany, Christina, and Victoria, together known as the Daniel5. On multiple occasions, a few of us overlapped in our time studying at the University of Michigan, which caused for some funny moments of mistaken identities!

We all have unique and shared memories of the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures at the University of Michigan! The department has allowed us to maintain our German roots and build our German relationships and experiences. Kalli Federhofer, Undergraduate Advisor, had each of us come through his office at different points in time for advising! The department faculty made each of us feel valuable as an individual in such a large university and catalyzed tremendous growth in our capabilities to understand and communicate in the German language.



So, what is our story? Our mom is from Aachen, Germany, and her family is currently living around the Bonn area. As a teacher, she homeschooled us and included in that curriculum the German language so that we would be able to preserve those family ties. After graduating high school, Deborah came to the University of Michigan to study Biomedical Engineering. She decided to continue her growth in German with a minor, graduating in 2014. Andrea graduated in 2016 with a dual major in Cell and Molecular

Biology and German. Bethany graduated in 2017 with a major in Mechanical Engineering and International Minor for Engineers, taking German class through the department. She continued to do a master's in Industrial and Operations Engineering, graduating in 2018. She was able to put her German language to practice through a summer internship with Mercedes Benz in Stuttgart, Germany. Christina graduated in 2021 with a dual major in Biology, Health, and Society and German. Victoria graduated this past May of 2022, with a dual major in Biology and German.

What are we all up to now? Deborah is a practicing pediatrician. Andrea is starting her second year of residency in family medicine. Bethany works for a software startup called VIJR. Christina is now in the Occupational Therapy Doctorate program at the University of Michigan in Flint. Victoria is applying to dentistry programs, hoping to specialize in orthodontics.

And where does the name Daniel5 come from? We sing Christian music together! We started singing together at a young age during long car trips. Today, we sing at events across the United States and internationally and have produced 7 albums. We just finished recording our eighth album in Nashville, Tennessee, which is expected to be released soon! We have used our individual skill sets achieved at the University of Michigan to grow our group with the goal to make a difference in this world with our lives. Go Blue!

For More Information

Website: www.daniel5.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/daniel5sisters/>

Youtube: <https://youtube.com/c/Daniel5MusicGroup>

GRADUATE STUDENT FOCUS

Successful Ph.D. Completions Despite World Challenges

Tyler Whitney, Associate Professor and Director of Graduate Studies

As if completing an advanced degree and conducting research in another language was not enough, this past year our graduate students additionally faced archive closures, travel restrictions, and, possibly worst of all, reading the news. Despite these challenges, in the last year, four of our students rose to the occasion and successfully completed their Ph.D. in German. Comparing these four dissertations, one is struck by both their uniqueness and the clear resonance they bear with our own political concerns in the present, most notably attempts to 'decenter' and rewrite dominant historical narratives by turning to authors, artists, and thinkers from traditionally marginalized and underrepresented groups.



First, we had **Domenic DeSocio**, who wrote a dissertation entitled *The Time of Their Lives: Queer and Female Modernism, 1910-1934*, which examined how experiences of modern and modernist time varied across gender and sexual identity in literary works by Siegfried Kracauer, Robert Musil, Marieluise Fleißer and Annemarie Schwarzenbach. On the one hand, the dissertation offers productive insights into modernism's formal and thematic engagement with time and, more specifically, the ways

in which gender identities condition subjective experiences of time. On the other, it helps us to reconceptualize German-language responses to modernity in terms of possibility and self-discovery rather than the traditional categories of crisis, disorientation, and loss.



Next, we had **Mary Hennessy**, who wrote a dissertation entitled *Handmaidens of Modernity: Gender, Labor, and Media in Wilhelmine and Weimar Germany* which, similar to that of her colleague above, helped to revise male-centered accounts of German media culture during the Weimar Republic. Existing media-historical accounts of the period have tended to focus on male film directors and literary authors. Hennessy excavates a competing media and labor history

with women at its core – from switchboard operators to typists and film editors. Complicating narratives of female media use as a kind of automatism in the office, Hennessy productively shifts our understanding of women at the time as primarily *consumers* of media to their role as *workers* and *media producers*, exposing complex figurations of female agency and subversion within highly rationalized systems of

media production and bureaucratic data processing.



With powerful resonances with her previous two colleagues, **Emily Gauld** completed a dissertation entitled *Composing the Musicking Woman: Gender and Nation in the Works of Johanna Kinkel*, which looked at the role of music in German nation-building through the works of nineteenth-century female writer and composer Johanna Kinkel who, in addition to her many artistic contributions, helped to orchestrate

a spectacular jailbreak to free her revolutionary husband from a Berlin prison. As Gauld shows, Kinkel negotiated expectations of femininity and challenged women's role in nineteenth-century German society through her writing, musical compositions, and pedagogy. Her extensive and diverse body of work highlights the close cultural relationship between music and literature in the aestheticization of Germanness as well as women's contributions to musical culture and scholarly discourses on the topic of German national identity in the nineteenth century.



Finally, **Elizabeth McNeill's** dissertation, *Speaking of Animals: Animal Psychology between Experimental Science and Imagination (1840-1920)*, challenges the foundational category of the human, its alleged uniqueness and superiority, by examining the figure of the speaking animal during the nineteenth and early twentieth century, as it migrated from theology to literary modernism, experimental and para-psychology. Analyzing literary and scientific works

by Franz Kafka, Wilhelm Wundt, and Maurice Maeterlinck, among others, she demonstrates that it was the animal, and not the human, that served as the original psychological subject, only to be obsessively repressed in psychology's subsequent struggle for scientific legitimacy. Basically, McNeill shows us that that octopus who predicted the World Cup has a wonderfully complex history – and it involves horses using typewriters.

Under remarkable adverse conditions, our students continue to conduct innovative research that pushes and so helps to redefine the boundaries of our field, the study of German literature and culture, all while bearing clear traces of what's closest historically and geographically – our present.

Congratulations!

Graduate Student Awards



Elizabeth McNeill

Rackham's Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor Award



Lauren Beck

Rackham PreDoc Fellowship 2022-23



Veronica Williamson

DAAD Award Winner 2022-23 and Frank X Braun Graduate Student Instructor Award



Tina Tahir

Freie Universität Berlin Exchange Student 2022-23

Welcome to our Graduate Students, Fall 2021!



Sarah Lime Sarah received her B.A. in German from the University of Michigan in 2019. After earning an M.A. in Transatlantic Studies from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Sarah returned to U-M in 2021. Her primary research interest revolves around sexuality in twentieth-century Germany, specifically visual representations of gender and sex in avant-garde art forms, specifically painting, sculpture, and film.



Laura Stahl Laura's research interests include Turkish-German studies, translation studies, and the politics of migration in contemporary Europe. Laura earned her B.A. at the University of Michigan in the spring of 2021, with majors in German, History, and International Studies. She graduated with high honors in the German department with a thesis entitled *Writing Identity: The Turkish German Female Protagonist from Özdamar to Aydemir*. Prior to beginning graduate study, Laura interned with the U.S. Embassy in the Hague researching Sino-European relations across various arenas. In her graduate study, Laura seeks to direct her interdisciplinary background and interests towards research on social and political questions of migration and identity in today's Germany.



Luci Cook Luci is an activist scholar whose personal politics and community engagement drives much of their research interests. Their current research focuses on antifascism, nationalism, transnational resistance to state oppression, and their respective aesthetics. Other interests include the works of Peter Weiss, poetry, biopolitics, anti-historicism, and the use of Terror Management Theory to approach questions in historiography and literary studies.

Before attending the University of Michigan, Luci earned their B.A. with high honors in German and International Studies (focus European Studies) with a minor in Political Science from the University of

Missouri--Columbia. Luci has studied abroad in Prague and received the Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship for study in Berlin and Leipzig, Germany. Academic-based travel to Vietnam in 2020 has also influenced their language and studies focus areas. Their undergraduate thesis, *A Genealogy of Resistance: Examining the Historical Representation of the Schulze-Boysen/Harnack Group in German Memory Cultures*, focuses on historical representations of antifascist resistance to state oppression based on ideological and nationalist frameworks from 1945-present, and interrogates the construction of memory cultures and mythologies by Nation-States.

German Literature Now

Silke-Maria Weineck, Professor



Translation is nothing less than the condition of possibility of a better world. There can be no peace and no progress as long as we do not know what and how others think, write, feel, and imagine, how they see and describe the world around them.

In Winter 2020, a group of graduate students in German, Comparative Literature, and English gathered to strategize about their contribution to making a slice of contemporary German-language literature available to the English-speaking world. The Department of Comparative Literature houses *Absinthe: A Journal of World Literature in Translation*, run exclusively by graduate students. The German edition would be the first to be not only curated, managed, and edited by students: they would also provide all translations themselves, under the supervision of German and CompLit Prof Silke-Maria Weineck, the journal's editor-in-chief. The plan was to work together through the semester, gathering for long translating and editing sessions over pizza, quibbling about the right adjective or the exact shade of a German word that could mean twenty things. And then COVID-19 arrived, and it would take us more than a year to choose texts and authors, gather permissions, produce drafts, pass them around, finesse the word order here, the punctuation there. But in Fall 2021, ["Through German: Contemporary Literature in Translation"](#) went to press.

Absinthe: Through German was created by Lauren Beck, Özlem Karuç, Elizabeth Sokol, and Veronica Cook Williamson in GLL, by Elisabeth Fertig, Ivan Parra Garcia, and Lena Grimm in CompLit, and Michaela Kotziers in English. The Managing Team: Amanda Kubic, Júlia Irion Martins, Karl Gaudyn, and Ali Bolçakan in CompLit.

Why "Through German"? This issue is dedicated to literature written in German by authors with roots not just in the German-speaking countries but in Turkey, Moldova, England, Syria, Romania, Ukraine, Ghana, and Israel. One of the texts was originally written in Arabic, however, another one in Ukrainian, translated into German, then translated into English. "German," then, stands for a passage, a barrier, a medium, a portal, a sieve. As the introduction says, "translation itself is a common theme: translating your name or your identity, translating your cat, translating yourself into an older or a younger version of yourself, translating your identity, your childhood, your history, or seeing language merge with the natural world where meaning dissolves into materiality."

Some of the authors are world-famous, such as the Austrian Elfriede Jelinek, a Nobel laureate. Others are well-known at least in Germany, such as Sharon Dodua Otoo, recipient of the prestigious Ingeborg Bachmann prize, or Zafer Senocak, easily the best known Turkish German writer. Others are relatively new to the literary scene, but all of them are part of the literary fabric of the Germanosphere that has long ceased to resemble the Disneyfied fantasy of a country of beer, castles, Lederhosen inhabited by the pale, but is now a vibrant multi-lingual, multi-cultural place at the cross-roads of many migrations. While this issue of *Absinthe* has a distinct international flair, it is not, however, a selection of what was once called *Ausländerliteratur*, a category that fences in writers as foreign rather than German or Austrian or Swiss, that pretends that some are always at home and some belong only with an asterisk. Rather, the voices we have translated into English here are all integral to the German-speaking world and its representation, whether the authors were born there, arrived decades ago, or came recently perhaps to find another home, perhaps to just pass through.

Congratulations to our M.A. Graduates!



Giovanni Doveri



Özlem Karuc



Laura Kiefer

SCANDINAVIAN STUDIES

Scandinavian Program Updates

Johanna Eriksson, Director of Scandinavian Program

Maria and I were grateful to be 100% back in the classroom in the winter of 2022 for our Scandinavian courses. However, with the high number of COVID-19 cases in January, the difficult decision was made to cancel the exchange with our Swedish partner school for a second year. In place of the study trip, we introduced a **collaborative documentary film project**. Cross cultural groups from the University of Michigan second-year Swedish class and students from ProCivitas Privata Gymnasium worked together on topics of their choice, comparing Sweden and America through surveys, interviews, and their own filming in Ann Arbor and Helsingborg. Finally, the students produced four movies that were shown in a red carpet "Oscars ceremony" at ProCivitas, with additional entries made from ProCivitas' other international partner schools in Spain and Tanzania. We hope to return to Sweden for Spring Break next winter semester, and we will then expand the film project when visiting each other at that time.



Karena Holmstrom and Ella Hook presenting art at UMMA

Asa Huffaker graduated with a Major in Biology and Minor in Scandinavian Studies in the spring of 2022. His goal is to find an opportunity to work in Sweden before continuing his studies in the U.S. or Sweden. **Malin Andersson** took many Scandinavian courses, and she had been looking forward to studying at Uppsala for several years, but COVID-19 interrupted these plans. Malin graduated with honors in Creative writing in 2022 and she is moving to Sweden this fall to pursue a career in writing or publishing. Congratulations to Asa and Malin!

Our next **Signe Karlström Event** will be a Scandinavian and American concert on October 4, 2022 at 8:00 PM at the Keene Theater, 701 E. University in Ann Arbor, featuring the Swedish jazz inspired folk music group **Jaerv** and the American duo **The OK Factor**. Anyone playing acoustic instruments are welcome to join Jaerv for a public jam session in the evening of **October 4**. More information to come! The visit by Jaerv and the OK Factor is funded by the Signe Karlström Fund, CWPS (Center for World Performance Studies), AACTMAD, (Ann Arbor Community for Traditional Music and Dance) and SWEA Michigan. The concert is free of charge and open to the public.

On **June 25th**, the Scandinavian Clubs in the Metro Detroit area hosted a traditional **Midsummer Celebration** at the **Swedish Club in Farmington Hills**, at 22398 Ruth Street in Farmington Hills. The festivities started with the decoration of the maypole at 11:00 AM. Guests enjoyed food, dances around the maypole and at noon, live Swedish folk music from the Ann Arbor based Scandinavian folk music group **En gång till**, led by the talented fiddler, nyckelharpa player and math professor **Bruce Sagan**.



Malin Andersson, Asa Huffaker

DUTCH STUDIES

Dutch, Flemish and Surinamese Studies

Annemarie Toebosch, Director of Dutch and Flemish Studies

Some years ago, first semester Dutch, first day of class, I am teaching "Mijn naam is _____". As I walk around the room, I hear a Flemish-Dutch accent. The student stays after class and I ask: "Why are you in this class? You are a native speaker, and we are having this conversation entirely in Dutch. You don't need to take Dutch any more than I do." He insists: "My parents only taught me dialect. Now I need to learn the real language." He cannot be dissuaded, and I realize the importance of instructor representation: a Flemish instructor could have made this student feel that his identity is institutionally valued. In 2019, Fulbright Belgium's Foreign Language Teaching Assistant (FLTA) program comes to the rescue, and with the support of the Flemish Government and the Nederlandse Taalunie, Flemish instructors Liesbeth Vicca (2019-2021) and Maren Vanhouche (2021-2022) have been teaching half our language program. Dutch and Flemish Studies now lives up to its name. This fall, we welcome a new, continuous instructor: Welcome, Trui Moerkerke!

However, we cannot sit back. In addition to Belgium and the Netherlands, Dutch is the official language of Suriname, but without an FLTA-Suriname program, or pool of potential Surinamese lecturers living in the Ann Arbor area, we will need support to make this an equitable Dutch, Flemish and Surinamese Studies program.



Maren Vanhouche

This year, I went from teaching Dutch and English in a secondary school in Belgium to teaching my mother tongue, Dutch, to non-native speakers in the U.S. To Belgians, a multilingual society of different cultures is the default, and I loved teaching about the linguistic and the cultural differences that exist in my tiny country. Belgian culture and its languages have grown into a quirky mix of cycling, soccer, eating fries with mayonnaise, and a lack of national pride, and classes became linguistic exchanges of Belgian and American customs. My time at U-M was a tremendously enriching experience that made me rethink my native language and my teaching. I hope my students learned as much from me as I did from them.



Trui Moerkerke

This winter semester, I had the opportunity to start as a lecturer in Dutch and Flemish Studies, teaching Annemarie Toebosch's seminar on Amsterdam. It was a challenge, but I could rely on Annemarie's well-balanced and organized syllabus. I loved working and discussing with my students, and am looking forward to the Fall term when I'll start teaching one language and one culture course, both with a focus on Flemish and Belgian culture. The culture course will paint a picture of modern-day life in Belgium, examining architecture, literature, photography, art, fashion, design, city planning, and culinary heritage. My background and curiosity as a journalist are second nature and will inform my teaching. Before moving to Ann Arbor six years ago, I worked for 25 years as a journalist and later as editor-in-chief at Knack Weekend, Belgium's leading news-weekly. My job has always involved language too, as copy editor and translator, from the newsroom to the higher ed classroom. I am excited to start teaching students how Flemish language and Belgian culture connect with the rest of the world.

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT FOCUS

Congratulations Class of 2022!

Majors

Justin Ballard
Alexis Barker
Alice Becker
Danielle Behnke
Mikayla BergWood
Molly Cavanaugh
Victoria Daniel
Evan Dempsey
Emma Doettling
Zackariah Farah
Gustave Fioravanti II
Caroline Grueneis
Rebecca Haines
Lorenz Hoernel
James Kim
Natalie Krammer
Katharina Kretzler
Tiernan Mackela
Jacob McMurtry

Chiren Moore

Noah Nichols
Terry Noblin
Caitlin O'Boyle
Paige Prizlow
Julianna Reale
Michael Satchell
Caroline Scheuing
Henry Schwartz
Alexandria Senko-Vette
Michael Smith
Caroline Theuerkauf
Lena von Moltke
Erik Williams
Alexander Wozny

Honors

Margaret Dougherty
Allison Libbe
Aidan Woutas

Minors

Athena Apfel
Paige Carpenter
Olivia Cho
Braydan Collins
Enakshi Deb
Parth Dhyani
Mia Doerr
Nicholas Gessler
Rebecca Goodman
Andrew Goodrich
Lauren Hale
Brandon Hestand
Olivia Hintz
Lena Hoppe
Julian Jacobs
Vanessa Jodlowski
Nicholas Joo
Luke Jorgensen
Alexa Kaas

Luisa Kaas

Michelle Karls
Navdeep Kaur
Ian Kim
Anastasia Koorn
Sua Lee
Olivia Lesh
Kevin Li
Joseph Lobodzinski
Molly Macleod
Ryan Magyar
Dalia Marakby
Natalie McGuire
Evan Meek
Yuki Mori
Daniel Nawrocki
Emily Ohl
Ellen Preston
Deborah Reisner
Uma Singh

Emma Springsteen

Henry Stater
Lukas Stauffer
Siwei Sun
Osa Svensson
Natalia Szura
Samuel Vivacqua
Michael Wattai
Gillian Wilhelm
Zane Woerner
Christopher Wrogg
Jacqueline Young
Jenny Yu
Cecilia Zacaïr



Celebrating the Class of 2022

The Graduation Ceremony

A Word from The Department Chair



Majors

Honors Students

Minors

2021-22 Public Humanities Intern: Lena von Moltke

Lena von Moltke, one of our German majors, was one of eight U-M undergraduate students selected to be public humanities interns at the U-M Institute for the Humanities. The Public Humanities Internship Program, a new initiative in 2021-22, gave these selected undergraduate students the opportunity to develop public programs, plan events, and share information about humanities topics with the wider community. One project they worked on was the creation of a new podcast titled "Why Should You Care?". The podcast seeks to answer the question, "Why should you care about the humanities?" by utilizing a humanities lens to look at pressing issues of our time including racism, politics, and public health. You can find the podcast episodes on Spotify, Google Podcasts, Apple Podcasts, and Anchor.

IN THE CLASSROOM

Visualizing Translation

Kristin Dickinson, Assistant Professor

Co-curated by assistant professor Kristin Dickinson, the photography exhibit "Visualizing Translation: Homeland and Heimat in Detroit and Dortmund" was on display in the Downtown Ann Arbor District Library from October - November 2021 and the Peter White Public Library in Marquette from February - March 2022. An additional public installation is on display through Fall 2022 at 4444 Vernor Highway in Southwest Detroit. The exhibits and public art installation received funding and support from the Sawyer Seminar "Sites of Translation in the Multilingual Midwest," the Institute for the Humanities, and the Alamanya: Transnational German Studies Working Group.



Mainstream media outlets have compared Dortmund to Detroit for primarily negative reasons, including each city's postindustrial landscape and high levels of per capita debt. The exhibit "Visualizing Translation" asks instead how migration and multilingualism might constitute positive links between these two cities.

Images by Theon Delgado Sr. and Peyman Azhari reveal how vibrant multilingual communities in Southwest Detroit and Northern Dortmund lay claim to and shape their neighborhoods for the better. The exhibit highlights this first and foremost through a series of 16 portraits accompanied by brief narratives of home and migration, which visitors may listen to via QR code in English, Spanish, or German. Detailing the complex and often perilous routes that brought many residents to Detroit and Dortmund, these narratives grapple with two key terms: homeland and Heimat. Through their multilingual narratives, residents break open the exclusionary modes of belonging these terms have historically evoked. A selection of striking streetscapes further highlights immigrant-owned businesses, multilingual signage, graffiti, and street art from each neighborhood. Together, these images render visible moments of linguistic and cultural contact akin to translation, which encourage us to see Southwest Detroit and Northern Dortmund from new perspectives.

Overall, the exhibit asks visitors to grapple with questions of migration and



local community formation through its focus on transnational belonging. While residents featured in the exhibit all speak more than one language, and have either personal or familial histories of migration, they also very clearly identify Detroit or Dortmund as their "home." These local expressions of belonging also challenge the idea that "Americans" or "Germans" can be identified with a single language, or a single racial or ethnic group. By presenting a wide variety of Latinx residents from Southwest Detroit alongside those who migrated to Northern Dortmund from Lebanon, Gambia, Senegal, England, Brazil, Ecuador, Kurdistan, and Hong Kong, the exhibit highlights multiple forms of community formation. It encourages us all to consider how we can

work toward more inclusive understandings of home, homeland, and Heimat that are not ethnically, racially, or linguistically exclusive, but are rather inherently plural and inclusive.

Over the course of 8 weeks, several U-M German classes visited the exhibit, including German 180 (First-year Seminar), all sections of German 231, several sections of German 232, German 449, and German 731. These visits not only encouraged students to consider the multiple meanings of a term like Heimat in a highly contemporary context, they also encouraged students to draw connections between their German Studies education and local communities in Detroit, all while learning about the specific, highly diverse neighborhood of Northern Dortmund.



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Cover Images

Top Left: Drew Manson

Bottom Left: Aidan Woutas

Right: Tübingen - Shadae Boakye-Yiadom

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Ron Weiser
Katherine E. White
Mary Sue Coleman (Ex-Officio)

We Applaud Our Former Graduate Students!

Congratulations to **Mary Hennessy [Ph.D. University of Michigan, 2021]** for being named as a 2021 Proquest Distinguished Dissertation Honorable Mention. This award recognizes highly accomplished graduate students who have produced exceptional dissertations of outstanding scholarly quality in any field of study.

"Five educators were recognized with the Goethe Institute/AATG Certificate of Merit for their achievements in furthering the teaching of German, [...including] **Kathryn Sederberg [Ph.D. University of Michigan, 2014]**, Assistant Professor of German at Kalamazoo College in Michigan [...]."

"**Ela Gezen [Ph.D. University of Michigan, German, 2012]**, Associate Professor and Program Director for German at the University of Massachusetts Amherst...received AATG's highest honor, the Outstanding German Educator Award. This award is presented in recognition of demonstrated excellence in German education and creative leadership in German language education in local, state, and national arenas. 'This year's Outstanding German Educator recipients represent the best in our profession,' said Jennifer Roper, chair of the awards committee. 'It is inspiring to see how much these extraordinary German teachers have accomplished - and how their students and our profession have benefitted from their work.'

"...**Jonathan Wipplinger [Ph.D. University of Michigan, 2006]**, Associate Professor of German at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, received the Checkpoint Charlie Foundation Teacher Award, which recognizes outstanding teachers of German who strengthen intercultural understanding.