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SLAMmag

SLAMmag is the electronic magazine of the School of Literature, Art & Media (SLAM) in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, providing updates on the activities of the School and celebrating our research and teaching achievements.



In this issue:

- Head of School welcome
- School news and events
- Department news & events

Head of School address

Dear Colleagues,

As another year comes to a close, there are many things to be proud of and celebrate. The awards, the fellowships, the grants, the publications, the events: all these keep us financially sound, and respected nationally and globally in our research and education, and show how intellectually motivated and widely appreciated a team we are. Congratulations once again on your achievements, the most recent of which are highlighted in this issue.

Here I want to take a moment to highlight the less visible forces that contribute to our success. I want to say a special thank you to our professional staff that constantly perform excellently across the board and support all our activities. I want to express my gratitude to all the colleagues -- lecturers, casuals, assistants -- who teach, mentor, and generally work tirelessly, keeping our students numerous and happy. And I want to acknowledge the importance of our talented students, supportive alumni and engaged community, who fuel us with continuous energy. Being SLAM is an amazing collaborative exercise we can all be proud of.

Wishing all a beautiful festive season,

Umberto



Professor [Umberto Ansaldo](#)
Head, SLAM

news

SLAM New Faces



Anna Broinowski

I am delighted to be joining SLAM as a Lecturer in Screen Arts at SCA, having taught documentary and screen studies at AFTRS, UTS and Macquarie. As a filmmaker and author, I document the subversive, political and bizarre. My documentaries have screened across Asia, Europe and the USA, and include *Hell Bento!!* (about Japanese countercultures); *Aim High in Creation!* (about North Korean propaganda cinema); *Please Explain* (about Senator Pauline Hanson); and *Forbidden Lie\$* (about hoax author Norma Khouri). My current research builds on my PhD examination of the confluences between documentary and deception, with a new feature documentary exploring magic and illusion; and a cross-disciplinary multi-media project investigating the construction and dissemination of fake political videos online.

I'm thrilled to be joining the team at the SCA in SLAM at the start of the new year. I am a newly appointed Lecturer of Visual Arts with a multi-disciplinary practice working across sculpture, spatial practice, installation and painting. I have some exciting research projects I'll be undertaking in 2019, bringing together public space and the body by examining the role of art in contributing to current definitions of 'play' as they relate to social, physical and experiential understandings of 'place'.

I've exhibited in museums across Australia including ACCA, MCA & AGNSW, am represented by Sullivan + Strumpf (Sydney), and completed my PhD at RMIT in 2008, titled 'The Power of Place and the Politics of Perception: Exploring Multiple Viewpoints through Painting and Installation Practice'. I'm thrilled to be here and hope to find opportunities to collaborate with others across the Faculty in forthcoming research projects. I look forward to meeting you all in the new year!

Sanné Mestrom



Lisa Lim



I join the Department of Linguistics as an Associate Professor from January 2019. Lifetimes ago, I did my PhD in phonetics at the University of Reading, and thereafter held professoriate positions at the National University of Singapore (my alma mater), the University of Amsterdam, and the University of Hong Kong. At HKU in particular, I assumed growing administrative responsibilities, from roles of Coordinator and Chair respectively of undergraduate and research postgraduate programmes, to, most recently, Head of the School of English.

My current research interests centre around New Englishes, especially postcolonial Asian varieties in multilingual ecologies, such as Singapore and Hong Kong; issues of language shift, endangerment, and post-vernacular vitality in minority and endangered language communities, such as the Peranakans in Singapore and the Malays of Sri Lanka; and the sociolinguistics of globalisation, with interests in mobility, urban multilingualism, computer-mediated communication, and their impact on contact dynamics. Recent outputs include *Languages in Contact* (co-author; Cambridge University Press, 2016), *The Multilingual Citizen* (co-editor; Multilingual Matters, 2018), and the launch of the journal *Language Ecology* (co-editor, with Umberto Ansaldo). One of my most engaging projects, since 2016, is my fortnightly 'Language Matters' [column](#) for Hong Kong's *South China Morning Post's Sunday Post Magazine*.

These first months in Sydney I have been settling into the city's rhythms, and getting especially stoked about the Bondi surf with our 8-year-old son.

Words by Christian Haag, SLAM Communications Officer

On 31 October, the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences 2018 Teaching Excellence Awards ceremony was held in MacLaurin Hall. These awards recognise excellence of teaching staff at all career levels. The program promotes reflective teaching practices and supports innovative teaching development.

The Dean, Professor [Annamarie Jagose](#), congratulated each recipient, including eight teaching staff from SLAM. Several inspiring award recipients then elaborated on their approach to promote teaching excellence, student engagement and effective learning.

After the ceremony, the recipients celebrated their achievement with colleagues, family and friends, by enjoying drinks, canapés, and live jazz music provided by students from the Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

The 2018 SLAM recipients were:

Teaching Excellence:

Dr [Donna West Brett](#)
Dr [Mark De Vitis](#)
Dr [Isabelle Hesse](#)

Dean's Citations for Excellence in Tutorials:

Melinda J Cooper
Nikola Markovina
Kyle Moore
Jennifer Nicholson
Benedetto Passaretti
Samantha Poulos



Group shot of some of the SLAM recipients at the Awards ceremony



L-R: Donna West Brett and Isabelle Hesse receiving their Teaching Excellence awards from the Dean



SLAM's recipients of Dean's Citations for Excellence in Tutorials receiving their awards from the Dean. Clockwise from top left: Melinda J. Cooper, Nikola Markovina, Kyle Moore, Samantha Poulos, Benedetto Passaretti, Jennifer Nicholson.

news

FASS Teaching Excellence Awards (cont'd)



Department of Art History

Words by Dr [Catriona Moore](#) | Chair of Department



Artist and alumna Agatha Gothe-Snape creating *Every Artist Remembered* in conversation with Christine Dean at the 50th anniversary celebrations



Emeritus Professor Virginia Spate AC with her brother at the 50th anniversary celebrations.

Engagement

Apologies to Kool & the Gang, but ringing up 50 years of teaching, learning and fun in the Power Department on Halloween night was definitely a *Celebration!* event. We welcomed 250 guests to a convivial gathering of old and new friends in the Holme Refectory, listened to Professor [Mary Roberts](#), media personality Ben Jenkins and AGNSW Deputy Director Maud Page, recount their experiences as students in the Department and paid special tribute to our Emeritus Professor Virginia Spate AC. Power party ranks swelled as more alumni and well-wishers dropped in at the close of the nearby 'Bruce Beresford in conversation with [Bruce Isaacs](#)' event, while another 60 alumni contributed Powerpoint photographs, noted their current activities and remembered how their time at Power affected their subsequent careers. Partygoers also helped contribute to a durational artwork commissioned specially for the occasion - Sydney artist and alumna Agatha Gothe-Snape sat and conversed with fellow artist Christine Dean to create *Every Artist Remembered*. All thanks to Power Council member and alumna Julie Ewington, who led the organising team with entrepreneurial flair and a broken arm, and to our wonderful colleagues in the Alumni office and Marketing. In Julie's summation, the success of the gathering endorsed the continuing goodwill felt towards the Department's core mission of teaching art history, film studies and museum studies in the most innovative and dynamic way.

Also in the context of student engagement, [Helena Robinson](#) organised a follow-up, an end-of-year gathering for Museum and Heritage alumni at the Rose of Australia Hotel in November. This was another enjoyable and valuable opportunity for our alumni and current students to meet up with old friends and build professional networks within the galleries, museum and heritage sector.

Images courtesy Catriona Moore

Teaching and Learning

Once again, our Masters in Art Curating students worked hard through second semester with Sydney College of the Arts postgraduates. Our 'Curatorial Lab' unit is a yearly challenge for students to work directly with artists to research, write, plan, install and promote a stunning series of art exhibitions installed on campus at Verge Gallery and in the elegant though curatorially tricky SCA spaces. Congratulations to coordinator [Donna West Brett](#), and especially to all those participating students for curating such a smart, professional show. Meanwhile in undergraduate teaching and learning, we have built upon the successful mid-year *Fieldwork: Art and The City* trip to Paris, and already have a full plane heading to Berlin for the unit's 2019 iteration.

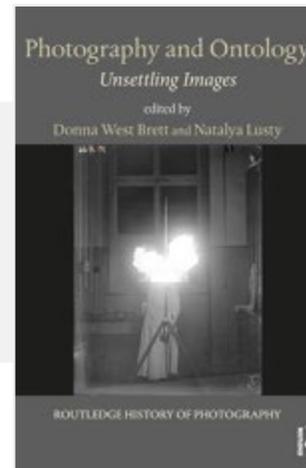
The Department is always quick to acknowledge and encourage the efforts of our great students, but we also know that learning is based on inspired teaching strategies. We join the Dean in congratulating our talented colleagues [Donna West Brett](#) and [Mark De Vitis](#), who this year both earned a Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Excellence in Teaching award.

These have been busy months for Department staff. [Anita Callaway](#)'s research on Australian artist Ida Rentoul Outhwaite was featured in the ABC's broadcast of 'Ida's Road to Fairyland', broadcast on ABC Radio National. Anita also co-curated an exhibition with Fisher Library's Rare Book collection on Australia's popular retail publishing success story, the Bookstall Company. The exhibition of these wonderfully low-brow pulp fictions, with their 'attention-grabbing' cover art and illustrations continues through to the end of December. In November, [Louise Marshall](#) travelled to Houston to deliver an invited guest lecture at the University of Houston, "The Sharp Arrows of Sudden Death: Art and Plague in Fourteenth-Century Italy", and to attend the second biennial Andrew Ladis Memorial Trecento Conference, dedicated specifically to Italian fourteenth-century art. Also in late November, [Catriona Moore](#) presented a paper (with Jacqueline Millner) 'Middle fingers up, put them hands high': Tracey Moffatt's Scarred for Life at the conference 'Mistress-Pieces: iconic Artworks by feminists and Gender Activists' at the University of Johannesburg.

Other news

Althea Kuzman (Master of Art Curating graduate 2018) is a recipient of the prestigious Peggy Guggenheim Internship program in Venice for 2019.

We sadly farewell our colleague Stephen Whiteman, who next year heads off to work at the Courtauld Institute. While with us, Stephen helped to consolidate and develop our international reputation as a centre for research and study in Asian Art. As Deputy Director of the Power Institute, he was instrumental in obtaining a major Getty Foundation grant to host major public lecture series on Asian Art, co-edit (with Sarena Abdullah, [Yvonne Low](#) and Phoebe Scott) *Ambitious Alignments: New Histories of Southeast Asian art, 1945-1990* (Power publications and National Gallery Singapore, 2018) and most recently the 'Site and Space in Southeast Asian Art' project. We hope that Stephen will maintain his close Sydney Uni connections and we wish him, Tanya and the kids the best of luck with their upcoming London adventures.



Recent publications

Donna West Brett and Natalya Lusty (Eds), [Photography and Ontology: Unsettling Images](#). (2018, Routledge)

Celtic Studies

Words by Professor [Jonathan Wooding](#) | Sir Warwick Fairfax Chair of Celtic Studies

Our main activity in the last few months was the 23rd Australasian Irish Studies Conference, which was held from 27-30 November. The venue was the beautiful Main Quadrangle at the University of Sydney, which made a great impression on the over 70 delegates who attended from Australia, Britain, China, Ireland, Korea, New Zealand and the United States. Keynote speakers were Senator Pat Dodson (Parliament of Australia), Dr Oona Frawley (Maynooth University, Ireland), Professor Joseph F. Nagy (Henry L. Shattuck Professor of Irish Studies, Harvard) and Professor Ruairí Ó hUiginn (Director of the School of Celtic Studies, Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies). The theme of 'Myth and Memory in Ireland and the Diaspora' inspired a strong range of responses. In hosting this event we were especially keen to promote diversity in our subject. This was achieved through many initiatives. A well-attended session was held through the medium of the Irish language. The invitation to Senator Dodson recognised the shared Irish and Indigenous ancestry of some Australians. It also acknowledged the shared experience of colonialism and its resistance. Professor Nagy's keynote address on wounding in medieval Ireland explored the medieval dimension of Irish Studies. The Irish Ambassador read a letter from Michael D. Higgins, President of Ireland, to the assembled delegates that was appreciative of the long history and the diverse intellectual aims of the conference. Sponsorship by the University and the Aisling Society of Sydney is gratefully acknowledged. The contribution of the late Anders Ahlqvist to the event and the Australasian Irish Studies was warmly celebrated. Our enthusiastic students also did great work in supporting the event, with special thanks to Chris Baghos.

During the conference, an off-site session in the Crypt of St Mary's Cathedral showcased our project on the work of the Melocco Brothers of Annandale, whose mosaic installations at a range of Australian buildings, based on the Book of Kells, are increasingly celebrated works of medievalist art from the period 1910-1960. Particular thanks go to St Mary's Cathedral, Dr [Penny Nash](#), Dr Lynette Olson and descendants of the Melocco Brothers, for making this excursion such a rich experience.

September saw a second season of the on-going field project at Seljaland in Iceland, supported by grants from the Society for Medieval Archaeology (Mick Aston Fund) and the Quaternary Research Association. The project explores cave as well as upland sites which show possible evidence of pre-Norse settlement - and some possible indications of Irish affiliation to this settlement. Professor [Jonathan Wooding](#) also visited Ireland in October as keynote speaker at the Ferns Heritage Conference. He then joined Irish academic Dr Breandán Mac Suibhne in Donegal to further explore the unexpected story of [Patrick McGlynn](#), Jonathan's great-great grandfather. Dr Mac Suibhne's book has recently won the [Michel Déon Prize for Non-Fiction](#). The Australasian story of Patrick McGlynn will feature in Jonathan's forthcoming book *Green Martyrs: 'Gaelic' Nationalism in Australia, 1880-1950*.



Graffito cross and tool-marks at Seljalandshellar, Iceland.



Peter Melocco addressing the Australasian Irish Studies Conference, 29 November.



Jonathan Wooding and Breandán Mac Suibhne at an old school in Glenties, Donegal, where Patrick McGlynn taught in the 1850s. All images courtesy Jonathan Wooding

Department of English

Words by Dr [Brigid Rooney](#) | Chair of Department

Awards and Prizes

Rachel Franks (a PhD student in English supervised by Associate Professor [Peter Kirkpatrick](#)) has won the 2018 CHASS Australia Prize for a Student. The Student Prize, sponsored by CHASS, is for a student project, performance or exhibition that best exemplifies the contribution of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (HASS) areas to our understanding of Australian nation and society. Rachel's essay, 'Writing the Death of Joseph Luker: True Crime Reportage in Colonial Sydney' was published in the journal [TEXT no. 45](#) (2017).

Cheryl O'Byrne (a PhD student in English supervised by Associate Professor [Rebecca Johnke](#)) has won the 2018 [Abbie Clancy Award](#) given by The Society of Women Writers NSW for an unpublished research paper entitled "'Having Your Representational Cake and Eating It Too': Poppy as a Work of Autofiction' (the paper comes from Cheryl's work-in-progress on mother/daughter memoirs).

Honorary Associate, Dr Beverley Sherry, reports that [Milton in Translation](#) (OUP, 2017), a multi-author book to which she has recently contributed a chapter ('Lost and Regained in Translation: The Sound of *Paradise Lost*') has won the 2017 Irene Samuel Memorial Award from the Milton Society of America, an affiliate of the Modern Language Association of America. The award recognises a distinguished

collection on Milton, on the era in which he lived, or on the context and methodologies that illuminate understanding of his life and works.

Conferences and events

[The Bildungsroman: form and transformations Conference](#) was a brilliant four-day event held at the University of Sydney from 22 to 25 November, convened by Professors [Vanessa Smith](#) and [John Frow](#) and by Dr [Melissa Hardie](#) and well attended by Department of English staff and students. Central to the history of the European novel and embedded deep in contemporary storytelling, the *Bildungsroman* prototypically narrates the emotional and social development or formation of a young person as they learn to make their way in an often hostile world. Over 60 speakers from the US, Australasia and Europe attended and gave papers about the adaptation, permutation and persistence of *Bildungsromane* through transgeneric and transhistorical formations, investigating its past and present conditions, its myriad transformations and diversifications not only in the novel proper but also in memoir, film, young adult fiction, graphic novels and long-form television. Distinguished keynotes were Nancy Armstrong (the Gilbert, Louis & Edward Lehrman Professor of English, Duke), Joseph Litvak (Professor of English and Chair of Department, Tufts), and Katie Trumpener (Emily Sandford Professor of Comparative Literature and English, Yale).

Shakespeare Reloaded

Professor [Liam Semler](#) gave two presentations in Auckland on the Better Strangers project and its Shakespeare Reloaded website. On 13 November at the University of Auckland, he spoke on 'Finding Ardenspace: Teaching Literary Studies between Managerialism and Gamification' which led to an engaged discussion around the pros and cons of the transition of schooling away from traditional discipline-based teaching to new models of problem-based learning. On 16 November, he gave a keynote paper and workshop at the 'Big Day Out', an annual professional development event for teachers run by the Auckland Association for Teachers of English Language. The paper was titled 'English Teachers vs The Three Witches: Do you feel (p)lucky?' and addressed over-systematisation of education, presentism and selfie culture, and the decline of reading. Liam's workshop explored the Shakespeed module on the Shakespeare Reloaded website and how it could fit into classroom teaching and assessment exercises. The Better Strangers project will be holding its [Shakespeare FuturEd conference](#) from 1-2 February at the University of Sydney, with papers and workshops by teachers, researchers and practitioners from the US, UK, Italy and Australia. The State Library, Bell Shakespeare and the Australian Shakespeare Company are also represented. Registration is free.

Publications

The English Department has seen a late-in-the-year flurry of monographs and publications, including:

Dr [Vanessa Berry](#)'s essay "Time Machines" was published in the collection [Time and Memory](#). She and Indigenous Australian poet Samuel Wagan Watson were invited by the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences to research and respond to items in the Museum's collection relating to the themes of time and memory. The book was launched by Bruce Pascoe at the Powerhouse Museum in October.

Associate Professor [Peter Kirkpatrick](#) has published a piece for *The Conversation* entitled [Guide to the Classics: the poetry of Rosemary Dobson](#) (September 2018).

Dr [Beth Yahp](#)'s memoir, *Eat First, Talk Later* (Penguin, 2015) has now been published, and launched, [in Malaysia](#) (November 2018). Beth was invited to participate in the 2018 George Town Literary Festival from 22 to 25 November 2018.

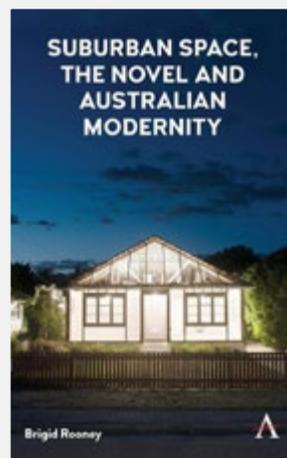
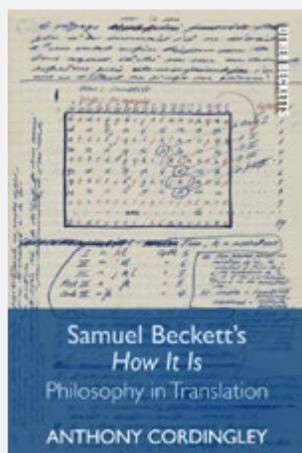
Alumni news

Dr [Nicola Parsons](#) reports that Marc Mierowsky, who completed Honours in English with Nicola before going on to do a PhD at Cambridge, has been awarded a McKenzie Fellowship (3 year postdoctoral fellowship) at the University of Melbourne, which he'll take up in January 2019.

Recent publications

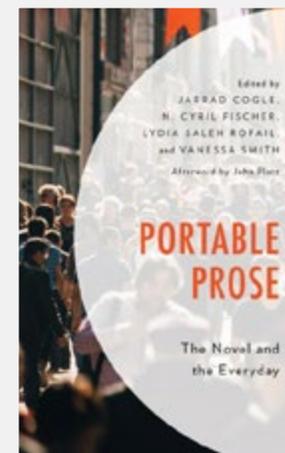
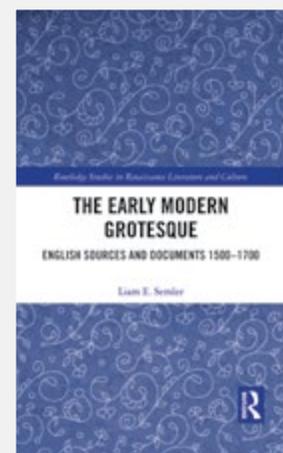
Anthony Cordingley, [Samuel Beckett's How It Is: Philosophy in Translation](#). (2018, Edinburgh University Press).

Brigid Rooney, [Suburban Space, the Novel and Australian Modernity](#). (2018, Anthem Press).



Liam Semler, [The Early Modern Grotesque: English Sources and Documents 1500-1700](#). (2018, Routledge).

Jarrad Cogle, N. Cyril Fischer, Lydia Saleh Rofail, Vanessa Smith (Eds), [Portable Prose: The Novel and the Everyday](#). (2018, Rowman & Littlefield).



Department of Linguistics

Words by Associate Professor [Monika Bednarek](#) | Chair of Department

This semester has been both a busy one (with multiple conferences) and a highly successful one (with multiple fellowship awards). We are proud of a new Internship opportunity for Linguistics students with the Macquarie Dictionary, starting in 2019. Our students are always interested in career paths that draw on linguistics, and the Linguistics Society successfully held their yearly Linguistics Career Evening with participation from Appen, ABC Language, our own [Yaegan Doran](#), and students returning from internships and fieldwork in language documentation and revitalisation. To celebrate the end of semester, Gretchen McCulloch of *Lingthusiasm*-podcast fame, gave a talk on ‘What we can learn about gesture by studying emoji’ and launched [Monika Bednarek](#)’s new book in the [Language and Television Series: A Linguistic Approach to TV Dialogue](#). This was followed by our well-attended end-of-semester lunch.

It looks like next year will continue to be an exciting one, as we’ll be hosting at least three international scholars with support from the SLAM Visiting Research Fellowship scheme: Dr Priscilla Cruz, Ateneo de Manila University; Dr Matteo Fuoli, University of Birmingham; and Professor James Matisoff, University of California, Berkeley. We’ll also be hosting three conferences, so there’s much excitement to look forward to for 2019... Until then – happy holidays and *einen guten Rutsch!*

Conference presentations & other talks

In late September, several of us attended the 30th Australian Systemic Functional Linguistics Association conference at the University of South Australia in Adelaide, convened by former doctoral student, David Caldwell. [Monika Bednarek](#) and Honorary Associate Professor Sue Hood gave keynotes, while the other keynotes were dominated by past (post) doctoral members of the department including Jing Hao, Shoshana Dreyfus, Sally Humphrey, Michele Zappavigna and Helen Caple. [Jim Martin](#) and [Yaegan Doran](#) gave talks and workshops, as did current HDR student Anna Crane and former Honours student Georgia Carr. The breadth and influence of work in Social Semiotics and Systemic Functional Linguistics done at the University of Sydney and surrounds was apparent at the conference.

Also in September, [Monika Bednarek](#) presented two co-authored talks at the *Digital Humanities Australia 2018* conference in Adelaide, on corpus linguistics and on visualisation. [Mark Post](#) and Yankee Modi presented three papers at the *51st International Conference on Sino-Tibetan Languages and Linguistics* at the University of Kyoto.

In October, [Yaegan Doran](#) delivered a plenary at the *XIV Latin American Systemic Functional Linguistics Association* congress in Puebla, Mexico, focusing on the rhetorical strategies used to deliver uncommon-

sense values systems in the humanities, as well as a two-day pre-conference course on Legitimation Code Theory.

[Nick Enfield](#) was in Canberra in November to formally accept his election as Fellow of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia. He made a brief presentation along with other new Fellows at a ceremony at the ANU. Nick also formally launched the Sydney Social Sciences and Humanities Advanced Research Centre (SSSHARC) with a Sydney Ideas panel on the question “Do we Need Cultural Change in our Regard for Truth?”

With support from SLAM, the Department hosted the forum *Functional linguistics: descriptive and typological perspectives* (23-25 November). The forum presented ongoing work on language description informed by functional linguistics. It was the sixth in a series of recent meetings, beginning at Shanghai Jiao Tong University in 2015. Departmental members [Yaegan Doran](#), [Nick Enfield](#), [Jim Martin](#) and [Mark Post](#), HDR student Mus Zhang, and Honorary Associates David Rose and Trevor Johnston presented papers, alongside international speakers Christian Matthiessen, Randy Lapolla, Beatriz Quiroz, Jing Hao, and Wang Pin. We also had a ceremony to officially unveil our new plaque for the late [Michael Halliday](#) on a bench on the site of the former Transient Building.



Images courtesy Monika Bednarek

HDR completions

Penelope Thomas completed her MA/Research thesis on [Facebook in the Australian News: A Corpus Linguistic Approach](#).

Other news

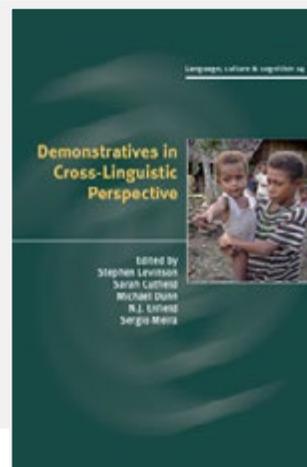
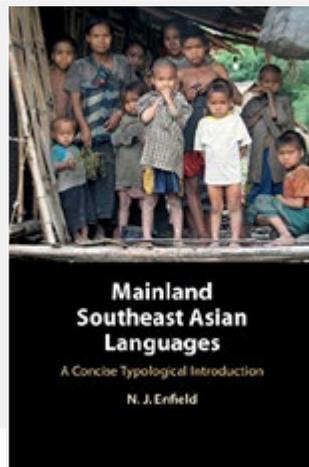
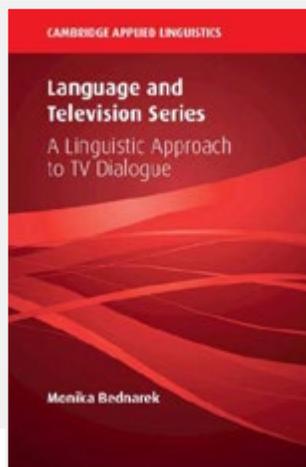
The website for the new [Sydney Centre for Language Research](#) is now up-and-running.

Grants and awards

[Gwen Hyslop](#) has been awarded a University of Sydney Brown Fellowship, which will permit her to enhance her documentary and descriptive research in 2019.

[Mark Post](#) and [Monika Bednarek](#) have both been named 2019 SOAR Fellows. Mark's Fellowship will enable him to expand his current projects partnering with Indigenous researchers and community organisations to document and conserve Indigenous languages of mainland Asia. Monika's fellowship will enable her to establish a new Sydney Corpus Lab, a virtual platform for connecting computer-based linguists across the University and promote the method in other disciplines.

[Jim Martin](#) received a 2018 Supervisor of the Year Award (SUPRA). His application for a SSEAC Regional Mobility Grant was also successful.



Recent publications

Monika Bednarek, [Language and Television Series: A Linguistic Approach to TV Dialogue](#). (2018, Cambridge University Press).

Nick Enfield, [Mainland Southeast Asian Languages: A Concise Typological Introduction](#). (2018, Cambridge University Press).

Stephen C. Levinson, Sarah Cutfield, Michael J. Dunn, N.J. Enfield, Sérgio Meira, David Wilkins (Eds), [Demonstratives in Cross-Linguistic Perspective](#). (2018, Cambridge University Press).

Department of Media & Communications

Words by Associate Professor [Timothy Dwyer](#) | Chair of Department

New Beats Project Report

A big congratulations to Dr [Penny O'Donnell](#) and the New Beats Project team for publication of their research report on mass redundancies and career change in Australian journalism. An estimated 3000 jobs have been lost in this decade, with more to follow from Nine Entertainment's recent takeover of Fairfax Media. The ARC-funded study, which tracked 225 former print and broadcast journalists from 2014 to 2017, found [a pattern of resilient mid-to-late career journalists forging new kinds of working lives](#). At last count, over half the cohort are still re-employed in journalism (including freelancing), or a mix of journalism and other work, while one third have left the industry for other careers. Only around 10 per cent have remained in one single job in the years since redundancy. This relative success in finding or creating new work suggests journalism skills remain highly-prized and transferrable across occupations. Nonetheless, life post-redundancy has often meant reduced income, job insecurity and erosion of professional identity. Career disruption, which is now commonplace for workers across many sectors, is increasingly both a research and policy theme. This New Beats report details the processes and impacts of such disruptions in a profession which many enter in the hope of a job for life.



Images courtesy Tim Dwyer

DH Downunder

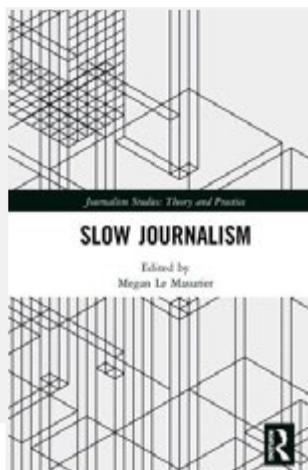
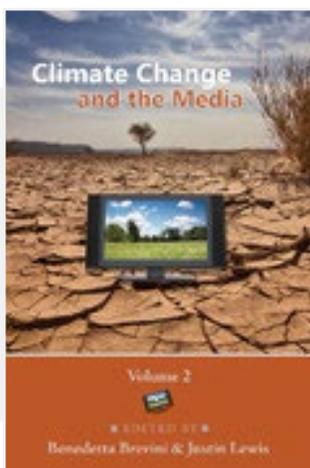
DH Downunder 2018 was a Digital Research Methods Summer Institute that ran from 3 to 7 December at the University of Sydney. This event was organised by [Justine Humphry](#), [Jonathon Hutchinson](#) and Rachel Hendery (Digital Humanities Research Group at Western Sydney University). It was co-hosted by the University of Sydney and Western Sydney University, with classes also offered by colleagues from the Australian National University, and the University of Victoria in Canada.

The organisers ran a five-day dedicated digital media research stream for the first time this year and it was highly successful, showcasing the breadth and depth of digital methods expertise we have in MECO/Digital Cultures with contributions from colleagues from WSU and QUT. The workshops in this stream were very well attended, and organisers received excellent feedback from attendees who appreciated the mix of methods and tools covered and the opportunities to put these into practice with their own projects. The Digital Publics media@Sydney event on the evening of the 3rd was also very successful, with visiting speakers Professor Jean Burgess from QUT and Professor Michele Willson from Curtin University and our own Dr Aim Sinpeng.

Recent publications

Benedetta Brevini & Justin Lewis (Eds), [Climate Change and the Media, Volume 2](#). (2018, Peter Lang Publishing).

Megan Le Masurier (Ed), [Slow Journalism](#). (2018, Routledge).



ARC Discovery Project Success

Associate Professor [Tim Dwyer](#) and Dr [Fiona Martin](#) were part of a successful ARC Discovery project team in the 2019 round, together with QUT colleagues Professor Terry Flew and Associate Professor Nicolas Suzor and international partners Professor Philip Napoli and Professor Josef Trappel. The project is titled “Platform Governance: Rethinking internet regulation as media policy”.

Drawing on this multidisciplinary team of researchers across the fields of communication and media studies, law and economics, the project examines the shifting balance between government regulation and self-regulation, and national content regulation in an age of global digital platforms. The Platform Governance Project will investigate the regulatory and policy implications of understanding global digital platforms as media companies. Responding to ongoing public concern about these companies’ self-management of online communication and social media, the team of leading Australian and international digital media researchers will evaluate regulatory approaches to mediating abusive, offensive, defamatory and potentially illegal digital content.

There is a growing debate worldwide about the political, economic and social power of digital platform companies such as Google, Facebook and Amazon. The Platform Governance Project considers the media policy and regulation implications of conceiving of digital platform organisations as media companies, engaged in the public distribution of online content. The project will investigate these concerns by developing detailed recommendation for reform based on case studies in Australia, the EU, the US and New Zealand, enabling media policy makers to more effectively regulate digital media platforms to better align with contemporary public interest rationales. In doing so, it will provide new insights for media policy makers and regulators in rethinking content regulation in the public interest.

Medieval & Early Modern Centre

Words by Professor [Daniel Anlezark](#) | Centre Director

Overseas Award and Medal for Professor Margaret Clunies Ross

The President of Iceland awarded MEMC Honorary Professor [Margaret Clunies Ross](#) a medal and inducted her into the Icelandic Order of the Falcon as a Knight (*riddarakrossi hinnar íslensku fálkaorði*) in recognition of her work in the field of Old Icelandic Studies, during her attendance at an international saga conference at the University of Iceland, Reykjavik. As far as she is aware, only one other Australian has ever been awarded this order, and that was Professor Ian Maxwell, University of Melbourne, in the mid-1960s.

Overseas Connections

The Associazione Matildica Internazionale-Matilda of Canossa and Tuscany International Association (AMI-MIA) held its first conference *Giornata di Studio* in Reggio, Italy on 23 November. Professor Eugenio Riversi, University of Bonn, presented a paper entitled “Matilde e Canossa nella storiografia internazionale”. The contribution to work on Countess Matilda of Tuscany by the Region, Australia, received a favourable mention.

Other registered regions are Italy, Germany and the United States.

Presentation at the University of Sydney

12 October - John Henderson gave a seminar titled “Death in Florence” as an invitee of the MEMC. Professor Henderson is professor of Italian Renaissance History in the Department of History, Classics and Archaeology, Birkbeck, University of London, and Research Professor at Monash University, Melbourne.

23rd Conference of Australasian Irish Studies

27-30 November - The 23rd Conference of Australasian Irish Studies was held at the University of Sydney

Professor Joseph Falaky Nagy (Harvard University) presented “Wounds, Memories, and Healing in Medieval Irish Myth and Saga”.

On the afternoon of the same day, [Jonathan Wooding](#), Lynette Olson and Peter Melocco, spoke about the Mosaic Art of the Melocco Brothers as part of a two-hour seminar in the Crypt of St Mary’s Cathedral. The three Brothers, early twentieth-century immigrants to Australia from northern Italy, were influenced by designs in the Book of Kells. Members of the Melocco family were present at the seminar. See also Professor Wooding’s account in the Celtic Studies section of this edition of SLAMmag.

Global Middle Ages (GMA) seminar series, Semester 2, 2018

Coordinated by H el ene Sirantoine, the GMA held the final two seminars for Semester 2:

18 September - Keagan Brewer, “Prester John and European Orientalism”

24 October - Megan Cassidy-Welch, “The Crusades in Africa: Imaginings and Encounters”.

Pathways to and from the Early Modern, Colloquium

27 September - [Bruce Gardiner](#) convened a Colloquium to honour the work of two independent scholars, Honorary Associates of the Department of English: Session 1, on Milton, Poetry, Poetic, Pedagogy, honoured Dr Beverley Sherry. Session 2, on Shakespeare, the Stage, Drama Therapy and Medicine, honoured Dr Ursula Potter.

Conferences and other presentations by current and former members, associates and friends of MEMC

17–19 September - Judith Bonzol, “Demonic Possession and the Enigma of Emotion in Early Modern Bermuda”. Paper presented at the conference, Living in a Magical World, University of Oxford.

22–23 November - Keagan Brewer, ““Unless I can see these things, I will not believe””. Paper presented at the symposium, Religion and Emotion in Medieval and Early Modern Europe, University of Adelaide.

Pamela O’Neill increased the knowledge about Celtic studies to many in Sydney, Canberra and Newcastle, through eight courses given by the Australian School of Celtic Learning, of which Pamela is the Principal.

The Sydney Medieval and Renaissance Group (SMRG) welcomed three speakers to the Group’s monthly meetings.

12 September - [James Kane](#), “Pope Urban II and the Origins of the Crusading Cross”.

10 October - Amy Wood, a PhD candidate at Macquarie University, “The Sclavenes”.

14 November - Zdenko Zlatar, Presentation & Book Launch, “Staging History: ‘Il Magnifico’ – A Historical Play on Piero Soderini”.

Members and guests of SMRG celebrated the end of year and early Christmas with “The Flood”, an historical play, written by Michael Nelson, which shed new light on the Ark, its construction, economics in the Old Testament and Armenian border control. John Ward realised a lifetime ambition in playing Noah!

Reading Groups

The Middle English Reading Group (MERG) and the Old French Learners’ Group (OFLG) met during most weeks at the University of Sydney during semester. Jordan Church and others with a keen interest in the subject read *Sir Gowther* and *Sir Degare* for MERG and the *Lai le Fresne* by Marie de France for OFLG.

Book Prize

[Penelope Nash](#) was runner up in the Canterbury Christ Church University / Royal Studies book prize 2018 for her book, *Empress Adelheid and Countess Matilda*, (Palgrave Macmillan, 2017).

Recent additionsn to the MEMC

We welcome David Scott-MacNab to the Centre as an Honorary Associate.

Department of Studies in Religion

INFORM Seminar, King's College London, 24 November 2018: "Health and Healing in Minority Religions"

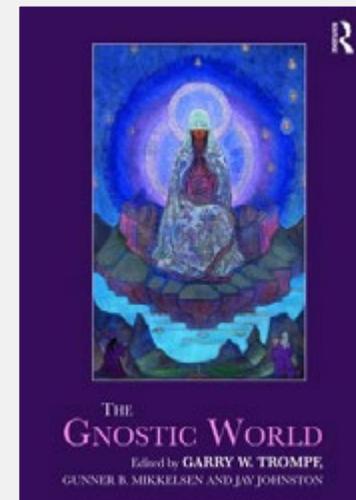
Words by Professor [Carole Cusack](#)

INFORM (Information Network on Religious Movements) recently moved from its long-term base at the London School of Economics to King's College London. The November day-long seminar on the theme "Health and Healing in Minority Religions" had an audience of 70 and featured eight papers, including: INFORM founder Professor Eileen Barker on "Religious Attitudes to the Body, Health and Healing"; Chris French (Goldsmith's College) on "The Psychology of Belief In and Use of Complementary and Alternative Medicine"; and [Carole M. Cusack](#)'s "G. I. Gurdjieff on Health and Healing: Hypnotism, Fasting, Drugs, Diet, Labour and Spiritual Exercises". This invited presentation was Carole's third on Gurdjieff in two months, the earlier two addressing issues surrounding the transition of the Gurdjieff Work from "real-world" to virtual environments.

At the British Association for the Study of Religion at Queen's University Belfast (3-5 September) [Carole Cusack](#) addressed the publication of previously esoteric teachings online; and at the department of Religious Studies at University of Edinburgh research seminar on 31 October she discussed the viability of esoteric practice (Inner Work) via technological mediation (online, by telephone, etc.). These studies feed into two books on Gurdjieff that Carole is preparing with Steven J. Sutcliffe (University of Edinburgh) for publication in 2019. In 2017 Carole recorded a short teaching clip, "[Three Minute Theory: G. I. Gurdjieff](#)" for the Open University, UK.

Recent publications

Garry W. Trompf, Gunner B. Mikkelsen and Jay Johnston (Eds), [The Gnostic World](#). (2018, Routledge).



One-Day Symposium, 9 November 2018: “Children in Religious Communities”

Words by Dr [Christopher Hartney](#)

Studies in Religion organised a one-day symposium on “Children in Religious Communities: Well-Being or Harm”. It was an opportunity to hear the latest research from Professors Liselotte Frisk (Dalarna University, Sweden), and Susan J. Palmer (McGill University, Canada) who were on a joint field-work trip to Australia.

Liselotte Frisk discussed her fieldwork on young people in alternative religions in Sweden. She focused on non-mainstream groups such as the Jehovah’s Witnesses, the Church of Scientology, and the Twelve Tribes. Her findings addressed issues including home schooling, issues of identity for children in such groups, and the ways that the anti-cult movement and governments had politicised children in order to exert control over these religions. Professor Frisk kindly donated a copy of her latest book to Studies in Religion: Liselotte Frisk, Sanja Nilsson, and Peter Akerback, *Children in Minority Religions: Growing Up in Controversial Religious Groups* (Equinox, 2018).

Susan Palmer examined a range of issues that arise when non-mainstream religious leaders turn abusive, together with the reactions by the anti-cult movements and government forces. She recounted numerous cases where children had been removed from the care of parents in new religions and considered how this was, in itself, an act of abuse. Professor Palmer has written many books on issues pertaining to new religions; perhaps her most intriguing is her study of the Raelian movements, *Aliens Adored: Rael’s UFO Religion* (Rutgers University Press, 2004).

The remainder of the day was filled with responses by local scholars to the issues of children in religions. Dr Zoe Alderton (Dept of Economics, University of Sydney) examined religious themes that had developed amongst teen-based extreme weight control movements on the internet. Dr [Christopher Hartney](#), who organised the day, spoke on Australian new religious movements and controversies they had faced regarding children.

The day was a fruitful sharing of ideas in a controversial area of study, and the papers may become a journal special issue.

The Gnostic World

Words by Associate Professor [Jay Johnston](#)

Emerging into physical form this October was *The Gnostic World* (Routledge). This hefty tome - of sixty-seven chapters - was artfully and bravely developed by Editor-in-Chief Emeritus Professor [Garry Trompf](#), with the assistance of section editors Gunner Mikkelsen, Macquarie University (Ancient World) and [Jay Johnston](#) (Modern). Many chapters were authored by Studies in Religion and SLAM staff, honoraries, research associates and former graduate students, ensuring a strong Sydney presence in what is a major international reference work. University contributors (past and present) included [Iain Gardner](#), [Carole Cusack](#), [William Christie](#), Majella Franzmann, Al Boag, David W. Kim, Brikha H.S. Nasoraia, Doru Costache and Milad Milani.

This interdisciplinary volume draws together a stellar international team to explore *The Gnostic World*, starting from its familiar context in late antiquity to trace its filaments through medieval and modern times, across cultures and in forms of artistic expression. The volume’s glowing endorsements include noting that it: “will be the standard reference work for many years to come” (David G. Robertson) and that it is “an indispensable tool for students of Gnosticism and a milestone of critical research” (Kocku von Stuckrad).

After digesting its 716 pages those elusive Gnostics will perhaps be exposed to readers as never before. Special congratulations for the completion of such an enormous project - with such flair and insight - are particularly due to [Garry Trompf](#).

Sydney College of the Arts

Words by Mr [Andrew Lavery](#) | Director and Chair of Department

The plans for SCA's relocation to the Old Teacher's College are moving into the final design stage. Staff and architects ARM have developed the layout and fine detail of each specialist discipline: glass, ceramics, jewellery, photography, screen arts, sculpture, painting and printmaking. ARM's plans include a small futuristic façade along Western Avenue, with a colour scheme that connects sensitively with the heritage interiors of OTC. We are very excited to have come this far in 2018 and are refuelling our tanks in preparation for our final year at Rozelle.

Grants and Awards

Dr [Alex Gawronski](#) was awarded a \$20,000 NAVA Visual Arts Fellowship. Alex will use the \$20,000 fellowship to create three new installations in international contexts in Tokyo, Santiago and Berlin, as well as creating an artist book critically contextualising his installation practices to date. Gawronski works across multiple media, with a particular interest in the contexts of galleries and museums as cultural sites of spatial, socio-political contestation.

Alumnus Tim Silver was awarded the \$20,000 2018 Woollahra Small Sculpture Prize presented by Woollahra Council. Alumna Jess MacNeil was awarded the Peoples' Choice Award.

Conferences

SCA Senior Lecturer Dr [Jane Gavan](#) was an invited speaker at *Cultural Soft Power of Vietnam in the Context of Globalization and International Integration*, held at the Vietnam National Institute of Culture and Arts Studies (VICAS), in collaboration with United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Jane delivered a paper titled "From soft power to firm social, cultural and material innovation-leveraging creative exemplar collaborations in organisations".

Jane also participated in the inaugural Sydney Vietnam Research Innovation Showcase, presenting a paper titled "Manufacturing creativity in Vietnam - exploring emerging issues around creative collaborations for sustainable cultural, social and industrial productivity".

International Exhibitions

In December, Alumnus Jonny Niesche presented *Throb*, his [second solo exhibition](#) at Zeller van Almsick in Vienna. This coincided with the launch of Niesche's first monograph titled *Cracked Actor*. The book, published by Verlag für moderne Kunst, comprises of works from 2013 to 2018 and critical essays by Martin Herbert, Kristina Marberger and Nadim Samman.

National Exhibitions

In December, Lecturer Dr [Michael Doolan](#) will hold a solo exhibition titled [Stories with endings changed](#) at Jan Manton Gallery, Brisbane. Using a combination of ceramics, aluminium, fibreglass and high gloss automotive paint, Doolan created sculptures relating to childhood memories from his mother's ornament cabinet.

In December, Alumna Clare Milledge will hold a solo exhibition [Sacks of wind: a rock harder than rock](#), at Station Gallery, Melbourne. While recent graduate Consuelo Cavaniglia is one of five artists exhibiting in *The Theatre is Lying: inaugural Macfarlane Commissions* at the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art (ACCA), Melbourne.

Department of Theatre & Performance Studies

Words by Associate Professor [Ian Maxwell](#) | Chair of Department

Research and Engagement

Research at the nexus of arts and health is becoming one increasing focus of work in the Department. Dr [Paul Dwyer](#) and PhD candidate James Dalton recently undertook a one-week residency at the University Centre for Rural Health (UCRH) in Lismore, with colleagues from the School of Public Health, the Brain and Mind Centre, and the Children's Hospital, Westmead (the Sydney Arts Health Collective). During the week they presented a rehearsed reading of the play [Grace Under Pressure](#), well attended by students and senior clinicians from the Lismore Base Hospital. *Grace Under Pressure* - called "a very effective and affecting verbatim work exploring the dysfunctional culture of the healthcare system" by the Sydney Morning Herald - premiered in 2017 as part of the acclaimed Big Anxiety Festival. While in Lismore, Paul and James also presented workshops on health ethics for students of nursing, medicine, and allied health disciplines, and attended research meetings with colleagues engaged in the education of health professionals. In 2019, the Sydney Arts Health Collective will host a SSSHARC retreat with visiting international scholars Clive Parkinson and Petra Koppers.

After three groundbreaking seasons in Auckland, and a spring spent in Melbourne, the Popup Globe arrived in Sydney bringing four top-flight productions playing in repertory from 5 September: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Macbeth* and *The Comedy of Errors*. The Popup Globe is an exemplar of dedicated, long-range research influencing real-world practice; it is an outcome of two decades of research by Honorary Associate Professor [Tim Fitzpatrick](#) and Honorary Associate Russell Emerson, to work out what Shakespeare's second Globe playhouse, built in 1614, was really like. Convinced that actors building a theatre for actors

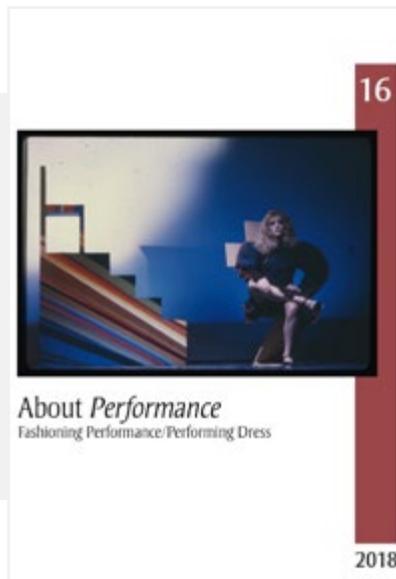
wouldn't have created the unforgiving and difficult performance space that is today's London reconstruction, Tim and Russell went back to original sources, including a sketch done in the 1630s by Wenceslaus Hollar, to recreate via Computer Aided Drawing (CAD) a smaller playhouse which has since been validated by archaeology. In 2015, New Zealand-based director and producer Miles Gregory turned those CAD designs into the 1:1 Popup Globe to give actors and audiences a truer experience of Shakespeare's famous theatre. While the Popup Globe has been in Sydney, TaPS students have had the chance to participate in workshops on the stage, directed by Tim and Associate Professor Ian Maxwell. In addition, a Sydney Ideas panel, "Sydney research goes full scale for Shakespeare: the Popup Globe", highlighted the project in August; see the podcast [here](#).

In October, PhD student Cheng Nien Yuan was invited to give a paper, "Performance, Affect and Memory in Tan Pin Pin's Films", at the Politics in Art in Southeast Asia Seminar Series at the prestigious ISEAS - Yusof Ishak Institute, Singapore.

Honorary Associate Justine Shih Pearson was invited to co-facilitate (with Fiona Winning, Sydney Opera House) the Asia Pacific Sector Summit for Experimental Art as part of the 2018 Liveworks Festival at Carriageworks. Involving over 90 sector delegates from around Australia, Asia, the Pacific, North America and Europe, the meeting was an opportunity to hear from key artists, curators and presenters currently working in the region and to engage in collaborative thinking about the current trends, concerns and urgencies informing contemporary arts practice.

Publications

[The Ripples Before the New Wave: Drama at the University of Sydney, 1957-1963](#) (2018, Currency Press), by Dr [Laura Ginters](#) and Robyn Dalton, covers a period that is under-researched in Sydney theatre history, dealing especially with a theatrical culture in which student and amateur theatre were much more influential than they are now. The book convincingly argues that the years 1957-1963 had a much greater influence on the subsequent development of Australian theatre than has ever been realised, and it reaches backwards and forwards from that period to demonstrate some continuities that have not much been written about. *“It will be of great interest to theatre scholars, in an area that has been neglected, and will have a wider impact. The atmosphere of student life and activity at the time is very well evoked.”* ~ John McCallum



The latest issue of *About Performance* is a special issue (#16) titled Fashioning Performance/Performing Dress. Co-edited by Dr [Amanda Card](#) and Dr Rosie Findlay (PhD 2014; now at London College of Fashion), this collection explores the ways in which concepts of performance, dress and fashion develop and challenge one another. As aesthetic traditions, fashion and performance invite expressive human agency and create a space for the representation and contemplation of the contemporary sociocultural moment. At the same time, performance and dress are both created and enacted by bodies that “speak”, enfolded into everyday practices of trying out and trying on, appearing and presenting ourselves to ourselves and to each other. The issue includes articles by Lyndsey Bakewell, Karen De Perthuis, Rosie Findlay and Natalia Romagosa, Felice McDowell, Flora Pitrolo, Harriette Richards, and Arti Sandhu.

Artist-in-Residence program, Rex Cramphorn Studio

As part of a partnership with Performance Space's 2018 Liveworks Festival of Experimental Art, in September and October we hosted the ensemble Applespiel (Nathan Harrison, Nikki Kennedy, Emma McManus, Rachel Roberts, and Simon Vaughan) as the artists prepared for the premiere of *Return to Escape from Woomera*. This durational work looked back to the video game *Escape from Woomera*, designed 15 years ago by a group of Australians, in which players enter the game in the shoes of a refugee held in immigration detention. In Applespiel's performance experience, the artists created a live commentary to accompany the gameplay alongside human rights advocates, refugees, and the creators of the original game, exploring the contemporary significance of this cultural intervention. Artistic Director of Liveworks, Jeff Khan, says, "Applespiel's work addresses the absent refugee bodies who are at the margins of our experience [in Australia] yet somehow at the centre of our political debate." The project was featured on ABC's *The Mix*: for more, watch the episode on [iView](#), or read more about it on [ABC News](#).

In October, independent performance maker Malcolm Whittaker was in *The Rex* working on *Ignoramus Anonymous*, a participatory performance he originally devised in 2013 as "a support group meeting for the ignorant—i.e. for anyone and everyone", and has been performing at various museums, libraries, and other venues since. Anneke Jaspers, curator at the Art Gallery of NSW, wrote in 2014, "*in our age of 'hysterical technological immediacy' it is easy to construct a thin veneer of knowledge on a vast number of topics, yet the increasing atomisation of our social relations means that we now know less about far more... Ignoramus Anonymous circumvents the kind of 'pedagogical aesthetics' typically associated with the so-called educational turn in art. Materially, the work is as nimble as they come; conceptually it is rich and thought provoking, cloaking philosophical depth behind an irreverent façade.*"

Doctor of Arts student Lisa Schouw was in residence in the studio from late October into November, working on practice-led research towards her thesis, "The Performance of Ageing - Somewhere Between Hello and Goodbye". Lisa's project explores how the ageing process and ageism, within the Western narrative of decline, is currently experienced by individuals over the age of 60. Working with a group of performers and artistic collaboratives all over 60, the theatrical project utilises interview data collected and creative practice experimentation to critique, subvert, and even resist current narratives of decline associated with ageing. Lisa presented *Somewhere Between Hello and Goodbye* in the Rex Cramphorn Studio over three sell-out showings from 9 to 10 November.

Renowned Australian theatre company Griffin joined us in November to rehearse [The Smallest Hour](#), a "bleak romantic comedy" from Phil Spencer and Susie Youssef.

In December, 2018 Australian Dance Award winning choreographer Martin del Amo returns to *The Rex* to continue work with Dr [Amanda Card](#) on an innovative industry-academic research project exploring approaches to archiving dance.

Department of Writing Studies

Words by Dr [Frances Di Lauro](#) | Chair of Department

“You taught me how man makes himself immortal. / And how much gratitude I owe for that / my tongue, while I still live, must give report.” (XV.85-87)

So says Dante to his mentor and friend, Brunetto Latini, when he meets him unexpectedly in the seventh circle of the *Inferno*. Like Dante, Latini was a Florentine statesman and poet, and left a major legacy to rhetorical theory. Latini’s recipe for immortality, so unambiguously achieved by his pupil Dante, might well be remembered as we wrap up the year in Writing Studies: poetry, rhetoric and scholarship.



Detail of Dante from a 14th-century fresco attributed to Giotto, Museo del Bargello, Florence.

We met Latini (and Dante) during a recent Writing Studies Research Seminar, through Dr [Frances Di Lauro](#)’s work on “Brunetto Latini: from rhetoric to the seventh circle of Dante’s *Inferno*” (28 September). Earlier that month, Frances also presented on three WikiVersity Journals (WikiJournal of Medicine, WikiJournal of Science, and WikiJournal of the Humanities), at the Wikimedia Sydney Seminar at the Metcalfe Auditorium, State Library of NSW (12 September).

Frances’ research and teaching interests have aligned particularly closely this semester, with her OLES unit “Writing for the Digital World” currently finishing its pilot run. Students were taught to assess, edit and improve existing Wikipedia pages, and for their major assessment wrote their own article for the Free Encyclopedia. (Incidentally, Brunetto Latini is also credited with writing perhaps the first ever European encyclopedia; his legacy has burned brightly this season.)

In an event that brought poets, rhetoricians and scholars together, Frances was honoured to sit amongst brilliant writers Mark Tredinnick (Writing Studies lecturer and Poet in Residence at the Sydney School of Education and Social Work), [Megan Le Masurier](#) (MECO), [Beth Yahp](#) (English) and the Dean, [Annamarie Jagose](#), at the Sydney Ideas event, “Reading and writing slowly in a digital age” (15 October). The interdisciplinary panel discussed the critical questions of how digital reading – with its many benefits for accessibility and pedagogy – might also negatively affect learning, teaching, and the acquisition of knowledge. It is a question of enduring relevance for all of us in the humanities.

November's Writing Studies Research Seminar featured the double-bill of [Alex Howard](#), director of the Writing Hub, and Daniel Dixon, recent PhD-completer and Writing Studies lecturer. Alex delivered a paper entitled "Writing Austerity", and Dan presented on "The Art of Conversation in Rachel Cusk's *Transit* Trilogy". Both presenters have had a busy and fruitful season before and since. Alex was accepted into the FASS Research Incubator, with his research project, "Every Writer Their Own Style: The History of American Film Criticism". He also presented "Modernist Humour, Camp Modernism" at the fourth Australasian Modernist Studies Network (AMNS) Conference at the University of Melbourne, and on 1 November, *The Bloomsbury Companion to Modernist Literature* was published, to which Alex contributed the Annotated Bibliography. Dan Dixon, meanwhile, has received the news every PhD student anxiously awaits. At the time of Dan's presentation, he had recently submitted his PhD ("Do I Know You?: Ordinary language, postcritique, and how authors enter our lives") and his examination results were due any day. These have just come back to him: unanimous and unconditional award of degree. We extend our warmest congratulations to Dan on this achievement and wish him the very best in his future academic endeavors.

Alex and Dan shared a panel once more ("Bildung Economies") at the international Bildungsroman: Form and Transformations conference (University of Sydney, 22-25 November). Dan reprised his paper on Rachel Cusk's *Transit* trilogy, and Alex presented a rewritten version of "Writing Austerity", entitled "Wild Mood Swings: The Bildungsroman in the Age of Austerity".

Another international conference has also involved and featured Writing Studies staff: the Department of Writing Studies, on behalf of the University, proudly hosted the successful 18th International Symposium on Processability Approaches to Language Acquisition (PALA) on 14 and 15 September. Dr [Bronwen Dyson](#) organised the symposium with colleagues from The Australian National University and Western Sydney University. Approximately 60 national and international researchers gathered in the Woolley Common Room to present papers and posters on the acquisition of a wide variety of languages, including English, Chinese, Icelandic and Malay. While the order in which learners acquire second languages was a major topic of discussion, the symposium also explored how children acquire the sound system of their first language and ways to assess speaking via a language profiling app. The Department of Writing Studies thanks the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences for generously supporting this initiative.

The end of the year always prompts us to reflect upon the trials and achievements of the latest turn around the sun. December also marks the last month of Frances' term as Chair; in January, we will welcome Professor [Peter Marks](#) (Department of English) to the position. Peter's appointment fittingly reflects the ongoing partnership between Writing Studies and the English Department, from which so many of our excellent teaching staff have come. We extend our warmest wishes and gratitude to those who have worked and taught with us this year, and hope for many more years of collaboration. Although we might not, like Dante and his teacher Latini, strive so boldly for literary immortality, we look forward to yet more scholarship and rhetoric in 2019.



Bronwen Dyson with her research collaborator, Vi Thahn Son from Sweden, at the Writing Studies end-of-year drinks party, 29 Nov. Image courtesy Frances Di Lauro



Participants enjoying the PALA symposium in September. Images courtesy Bronwen Dyson



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