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From the Chair

Sabine Wilke

Dear Friends:

Greetings once again from all of us in the Department of Germanics! This is the first of our e-Newsletters produced in collaboration with the College of Arts and Sciences. We hope that you enjoy the flexibility and depth afforded by the new format!

We started a new school year the end of September, well rested from the wonderful summer break, with high energy and new ideas for projects and teaching. Germanics is moving forward into a new era of greater restraint due to diminishing state support, well positioned as a leader in pedagogical innovation, representing strong academics and a highly ranked graduate program. You will be able to read about the state of our language program and some of the changes we are implementing in the article by our new director of the language program, Professor Klaus Brandl.

Our faculty continue to publish the results of their research in books and journals. We hope to bring you more information about faculty projects with every newsletter. This fall, we are featuring a collection of essays on the culture of performance in modern Austria that Professor Brigitte Prutti and I put together as a special issue of the journal "Modern Austrian Literature." It is hot of the press, so to speak, and it includes essays by two of the world leaders in performance studies, the chair of the Department of Theater at the Freie Universität Berlin, Erika Fischer-Lichte, and the Lockwood Professor of the Humanities at the University of Washington, Herb Blau. We are very proud of this highly visible publication.

Our new affiliate assistant professor, Dr. David Canfield, offered the first Discovery Seminar with an explicitly German topic this summer. Discovery Seminars are geared toward incoming freshmen and it will become ever more important for German Departments all over the country to recruit students into their program from the very day they enter the university as German is diminishing as a language that is offered in high schools. For the same reason, Departments of German also need to increase their

intensive language options and study abroad programs so that students who enter the university without any prior knowledge of German can become majors and minors in their junior year.

Because of its academic strength, the Department continues to serve as host for international visitors who come here to conduct research, lecture, and teach our students. In the fall we are hosting Professor Ingo Cornils from Leed University, who will also give a presentation in our lecture series. We continue as host for the postdoctoral fellow, Dr. Hamid Tafazoli, who is working on his Habilitation about Foucault and the concept of heterotopy.

Other faculty continue to receive prestigious awards and prizes. In one of the upcoming issues you will learn about Professor Jane Brown's new appointment as Josh Hanauer Professor of Western Civilization and her plans for running an interdisciplinary graduate colloquium to enhance graduate education at the University of Washington. Professor Rick Gray continues as editor of the manuscript series "Literary Conjugations" at the University of Washington Press and you will receive regular updates about his work. Professor Richard Block just returned from a year-long sabbatical and will share with you his ideas about his newly conceived honors seminar that he is teaching this fall. Professor Eric Ames will return from his sabbatical next year. He spent a year researching the documentary cinema of German filmmaker Werner Herzog and will offer a lecture on the new Berlin cinema in our popular Frye lecture series in May 2010. More systematic updates on all the projects our faculty are engaged in will follow in the next newsletter.

November 9, 1989, the Berlin Wall fell. We are commemorating this important event in German history by co-sponsoring, with the Center for West European Studies and the Simpson Center for the Humanities, an international and interdisciplinary conference on the "Legacies of German Unification." Our undergraduate students are also engaged in a number of "Freedom Without Walls" projects thanks to the generous sponsorship by the German Embassy and the leadership of our graduate fellows, Bryan Aja, Michele Fernandez-Cruz, Chris Hogan, and Olivia Albiero, who are serving as mentors for the undergraduates. The Embassy outfitted us with T-shirts, backpacks, water bottles, highlighters, and pens to advertise the event and all students registered in German classes this fall received an assortment of these items.

Last but not least, we continue our community outreach efforts, although we had to scale back our engagement with some initiatives because of the reduction in staffing in the office due to budget cuts. Our very loyal partner and board member, the Honorary Consul of Germany Petra Walker, is continuing to organize the popular Wine & Wisdom series and you will all receive invitations to these events. The UW World Series in Meany Hall is sponsoring two German Quartets this year, the Vogler Quartet, which is featured in this newsletter, and the Aurn Quartet, which will perform in February 2010. We hope that you take advantage of the many opportunities of German programming offered through us and through our partners.

Many thanks to our loyal supporters who have stuck with us throughout the years. It is thanks to your support that we are able to bring in that extra special lecturer, offer incentives to prospective students, and sponsor local events.

Enjoy the rest of this year! You will hear from us again in 2010 with the winter issue of this

e-Newsletter.

Sabine Wilke

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Freedom Without Walls

Bryan Aja

An outpouring of recent books, with titles such as *1959: The Year Everything Changed* and *1968: Das Jahr, das die Welt veränderte*, makes the case for certain years as turning points in world history. Yet a bestseller is hardly needed to establish 1989 as a turning point. Interest will reach a fever pitch as we approach the twentieth anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. Two decades ago Bonn was the capital of West Germany, the Soviet Union was a world power, and travelers exchanged liras, guilders, schillings, marks, and pesetas. Politicians debated redevelopment of the former East Germany, intellectuals faced revelations of widespread *Stasi* participation, and a cultural industry of *Ostalgie* was born. It was a fascinating time.

Today's first and second-year college student was born in a world with no Eastern Bloc. How do we teach the events of 1989 and convey the energies of the time to undergraduates today? To that end, the German embassy in Washington, DC, chose the Germanics department as their partner in the *2009 Freedom without Walls* project. We will organize a speech contest on Youtube, create a collaborative art project on campus, and throw a gala for participants to showcase their contributions. Our events coincide with *Freedom without Walls* campus weeks taking place nationwide in November. The students in the Department of Germanics want to commemorate this important anniversary as a way of making sure the new generation that is growing up without immediate knowledge and memory of *Die Wende* has exposure to the events that led to the fall of the wall.

More walls have been strengthened in many parts of the world since 1989. Jerusalem and Nicosia remain divided cities, enmity still separates the Koreas, the southern border of the United States will soon be fenced, and Americans now need a passport to visit Canada. Capital is freer than ever, but humans face more walls. Meanwhile the European Union has eliminated borders between 27 countries. A reunited Germany stands at its center. The European working model for a world without walls is in place thanks to peaceful protest twenty years ago. Hopefully our efforts will further the fascination and joy of the events of 1989 among a new generation.

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Discovery Seminar 2009: *Culture Clash! Beyond the Berlin Wall*

Every August, hundreds of freshmen arrive on campus early to take intensive UW classes before Autumn Quarter begins. Germanics was represented this year among the 27 "Discovery Seminars" with *Culture Clash! Beyond the Berlin Wall*. Taught by affiliate faculty David Canfield-Budde, *Culture Clash!* examined German division, unification, and the repercussions of divided Germany 20 years after the fall of the Wall. Students explored representations of divided and unified Germany in texts and films, learned about the historical reality of the Wall, and examined how national identity intersects with individual identity in the German context.

Many of the Discovery Seminar students were on

campus for the first time, so the course exposed them to UW resources through targeted library projects, guest faculty lectures, and information sessions. Students enjoyed a fieldtrip to Fremont to view a section of the Berlin Wall, Lenin, and other Cold War relics. Guest speakers from off campus talked about first-hand experiences in divided and unified Germany, and a panel discussion explored perspectives on eastern Germany from the West. Students were bound for a wide variety of majors, but we hope to see more of them in the coming years. For more information on this and other Discovery Seminars see <http://www.artsci.washington.edu/discovery/>. Keep your eyes open for another Discovery Seminar offering through Germanics in 2010!

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Legacies of German Unification: Twenty Years of German Unity

Steve Pfaff (Sociology and Director, Center for West European Studies) in cooperation with Sabine Wilke (Germanics)

November 19-20, 2009

The autumn of 2009 will see the twentieth anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall and the beginning of the transformation process that led to the formal act of German unification on October 3, 1990. The approach of these milestones provides an exceptional opportunity to take stock of how life, politics, and culture have evolved in unified Germany, and how the momentous events of 1989 continue to shape the ongoing process of European integration. The conference, to be organized by the UW Department of Germanics and Center for West European Studies, will feature leading US and European scholars discussing the impact and historical significance of the German Wende (³turning point²) from a diverse and complementing set of disciplinary perspectives.

The purpose of the conference is the critical assessment of the history of the German and European integration processes, the state of contemporary German society and culture, the role of united Germany in a unifying Europe, and the question of a new identity for German society in the wake of migration, a widening social gap, revisions of the welfare state, and globalization. While a number of other conferences nationwide around the same date focus on issues of remembering and the process of memorialization (University of Bath, September 14-16, 2009; ³Remembering the GDR and Germany's Unification Process²), explore a transnational perspective (University of California, Irvine, October 23-24, 2009, ³Walls in our Heads²), or examine the fall of the Berlin Wall and the subsequent international political, economic, geographic, and cultural significance of this event (University of Cincinnati, November 8-9, 2009; ³November 9, 1989² 'The Fall of the Berlin Wall Twenty Years After²'), our conference is prospective, taking stock of the past to the extent that it bears on Germany's part in the process of European integration, the transatlantic relationship, political and societal issues, as well as the culture and the arts in the new Germany.

The Department of Germanics and Center for West European Studies have put together a program for the two-day conference featuring potential guests drawn from the University of Washington, Indiana University, and from partner programs in Europe and North America. The program is available online at <http://jsis.washington.edu/cwes/wende/conference.shtml>.

This conference will not occur in isolation but rather

will be weaved into a rich program of related programming focusing on culture and the arts, education, and public events all centered on the 20th anniversary commemorations.

In August, CWES organized a K-12 teacher training workshop focused on the themes of the conference.

A Student Project Week supported by the German Embassy will precede the conference and student work will be shown at a gala in the Walker Ames Room after the conclusion of the conference.

The Department of Germanics and CWES is offering an integrated undergraduate course, German 353 Postwar Germany, which will ensure UW students can take maximum benefit of the conference and associated programming.

Two additional courses, German 323 in Spring 2009 and European Studies 301 in Fall 2009, have prepared undergraduate students for the conference.

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Message from the Language Program Director:

Klaus Brandl

I have been looking forward to the beginning of this quarter and my new role as the director of the language program with great anticipation. I am glad that the quarter is finally underway. Surprisingly, despite the budget cuts and new changes in policies regarding language requirements, the number of student enrolments has increased. This is excellent news and shows that many students are interested in learning German.

I have spent a good portion of the summer moving into my new office and taking time to learn about the many nuances of our program. Luckily, Manfred Bansleben has been very generous in offering help along the way. I am grateful for his patience and making himself available throughout the whole summer. No doubt I bombarded him with copious questions.

I have been asked on several occasions about my plans for the German program, in particular what changes I am going to implement. Needless to say, this question has been on mind for quite some while. Let me briefly share some of my thoughts and ideas regarding my plans and changes for the program.

100-level courses

Having been part of the 100-level program last year has made the transition much easier. I had an opportunity to meet with all my colleagues and to talk with them in person about the strength of our language program, but also about changes they would like to see. At the end of the last quarter, I also conducted a survey in the 100-level courses with the goal of finding out more about students' reactions to the online portions that are integrated in all of our language courses.

The student input from the end-of-year surveys allowed me to restructure the content and requirements for our first-year language courses.

For the years to come, I will continue to experiment with online technologies. This is what I love and where I also like to focus my research. My primary goal this year will be to continue what I started last year. Many of the Moodle activities need to be pedagogically redesigned and brought into alignment with a communicative-based teaching

methodology. My next goal will be to integrate voice-based features and move towards a more task-based approach.

Upper-level language courses

During the next few quarters, my goal is to get a better understanding of the content and skill areas that we address in these courses. My plan is to visit some of the courses and interview the faculty to learn their perspectives. I am equally interested in learning more about our students' points of views and how they learn in these courses. Overall, I'd like to see stronger enrollments in our 400 level courses. In addition, I'd like to see all students at this level pass the Goethe-Institute test at the C1 level.

Reading courses

One of the challenges of the communicative approach to language teaching is to equally balance time and emphasis of different skill areas. The communicative approach has often been criticized for the lack of emphasis on reading skills. To offset this challenge, one of my long-term aims is to develop a program that makes suggested reading materials available to those students who are interested in developing strong reading skills. To achieve this goal, I believe students need concrete suggestions and also some scaffolded guidance. In particular, my goal is to develop brief self-sustainable reading modules for all levels. The use of Moodle as platform may provide a viable solution.

TA program

I am also well under way making changes to our TA program. Manfred and I spent many hours this summer moving all of our resources for all language courses online. We believe that this change will make access to these materials for all instructors much easier, reduce the paper trail, and will allow me to deal with updates more efficiently.

MA program

Our department provides excellent training and support for our new TAs and provides a range of opportunities to develop a great deal of expertise in language teaching. Unfortunately, this training and our TAs experience as teachers are not recognized by the OSPI. My goal is to develop a plan, preferably in cooperation with the MIT program at the College of Education, that grants our TAs certification to teach in public schools. I'd also like to start an MA program that allows our graduate students to minor or major in language teaching or related areas to applied linguistics. I am looking forward to an enjoyable year. My doors are always open and I welcome any suggestions that make our program a successful place of learning.

Best,
Klaus Brandl
Assistant Professor of Germanics (Applied
Linguistics)
Director of the Language Program

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Germanics and the Honors College Working Together

The words "I love you" may come from the heart, but they are nonetheless a citation, even a cliché. What the heart would speak is no more than a commonplace. Utterances of love, it might be said, are always already somebody else's. What is dearest and most heartfelt is thus rendered wholly unoriginal and certainly not one's own. The nature

of love is thus self-estrangement; the lover, if (s)he truly is in love, can be nothing other than queer.

This is the central dilemma that frames the questions that will be pursued in Richard Block's seminar, offered this fall, "The Queerness of Love." The seminar is being offered through the Honors Program with more than a fifteen spaces also available to students of Germanics. This provides our majors an opportunity to broaden their University experience by working with one of the University's most prestigious programs while also deepening their knowledge of German literature.

Students in the seminar will be asked to consider how love, which supposedly transcends history, is conditioned by history. And as the title of the course suggests, the idea of love pursued in this course is a queer one. By that, Block means that the lover is never really herself. Either she is a product of social constructions, or, if there is something like true love, she is so transported beyond herself that she no longer recognizes herself. And while same-sex desire is a central focus of the course, queer can also describe other kinds of love and desire, which the readings are intended to show. The readings thus come from various disciplines and include Plato's *Symposium*, Goethe's, *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, Mann, "Death in Venice," and Kushner's *Angels in America*.

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Report on the MALCA Symposium, "Cultures of Performance in Modern Austria"

Sabine Wilke and Brigitte Prutti

In April 2008, the Department of Germanics at the University of Washington in Seattle hosted the Annual Symposium of the Modern Austrian Literature and Culture Association (MALCA) on the topic of "Cultures of Performance in Modern Austria." Generously co-sponsored by the UW Walter Chapin Simpson Center for the Humanities, the Austrian Cultural Forum in New York, and the Dr. Berthold Löwenfeld Fund at UW Germanics, and organized with Heidi Tilghman, the Germanics administrator, the MALCA symposium with over 75 participants proved to be a resounding success and generated interesting debates among its participants. We had decided on the topic "Cultures of Performance in Modern Austria" because we wanted scholars of Austrian literature and culture to reflect on what Erika Fischer-Lichte has called the paradigm shift in the humanities and social sciences from text-based models of culture to performance-based models of culture. Given the special place of theater and the performing arts in the Austrian high-cultural tradition and in Austrian attempts at self-fashioning over the centuries, we considered it a particularly interesting and productive topic for exploring the key notion of performance and a wide array of performance-related issues in a specific national context. This national focus was to include the more recent transformations to a mediatized and globalized society.

A programmatic essay by Erika Fischer-Lichte opens the volume. Fischer-Lichte is an internationally renowned theater scholar and author of the path-breaking *Ästhetik des Performativen* (Suhrkamp 2004; English translation: *Aesthetics of the Performative* 2008), chair of the *Sonderforschungsbereich* on "Kulturen des Performativen" at the FU Berlin and co-director of the International Research Center "Interweaving Performance Cultures." Her contribution outlines

the trajectory and central issues of the collaborative research project on the dynamics of cultural change. She succinctly explains the concept of "culture as performance" along with constitutive features of performances such the autopoietic feedback loop and the notion of emergence.

The keynote address at the conference was given by Herbert Blau, Byron W. and Alice L. Lockwood Professor of the Humanities, English, Comparative Literature, and Drama at the University of Washington, and an innovative theater director with a long and distinguished career in American professional theater. Blau's far-ranging and stimulating essay deals with scandalous and subversive trends in 19th and 20th century Austrian theater, theory, and performance art vis-à-vis the smugness and complacency of much of Austrian high culture and self-representation. In his subtle and compelling argument he traces a tradition of performative insolence in modern Austrian theater, psychoanalysis, the visual arts, and performance culture from *fin-de-siècle* Vienna to the Viennese Actionists' scandalous experiments with their bodies and with religious ritual. Blau reminds us that Johann Nestroy is the godfather of talismanic disobedience in Austria whose *Possen* contain a more radical assault on the audience than some of his Viennese modernist successors.

On the opening night of the conference, Markus Hallensleben of the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, an expert on contemporary Austrian performance and video art, offered an engaging video presentation on female Austrian body artists. Hallensleben shows that the feminist body and video art of a younger generation of female artists born around 1970 is both playful and provocative in its humorous exploration of gendered spaces. He discusses Austrian performance and video artists such as Miriam Bajtala, Carola Dertnig, Renate Kowanz-Kocer, Elke Krystufek, and Ulrike Müller who are indebted to the grande dame of Austrian feminist performance art, Valie Export. Drawing on pertinent philosophical and theatrical notions of performance and cultural space, his essay provides an intricate map of the richness and variety of contemporary Austrian female body and performance art at the turn of the 21st century and its innovative relationship to Austrian body politics in a globalized context.

In addition to Erika Fischer-Lichte's programmatic essay, Blau's keynote address and Hallensleben's opening lecture, this volume contains two other essays that grew out of interesting talks presented at the conference. Katharina Pewny's essay examines the different notions of Austrianness that have been staged in the context of Austrian theater and performance art from the 1950s up to the present. In her broad overview she traces the most significant steps and major changes in this process, from the successful high-cultural efforts to convey a positive image of Austrian identity after the Holocaust in the 1950s to the critical interrogation and eventual destruction of this deceptive self-image by some of the best-known Austrian performers, playwrights, and media artists since the 1960s, and finally to the very different cultural and political self understanding and agenda of the younger generation of Austrian dramatists and performance artists who operate in a larger transnational European context.

Sabine Kock's informative report on some of the highlights of independent theater in Vienna during the 2007-2008 season provides a fitting conclusion to this performance volume. Kock introduces her readers to the enormous diversity and productivity

of the independent theater-, dance-, performance- and opera scene in Austria today. Her discussion of productions by five independent Viennese performance groups and single artists in a diverse set of locations attests to the vitality of Austrian avant-garde theater outside the mainstream and demonstrates that the performative insolence in the spirit of Nestroy is well and alive.

We thank all contributors to this volume for sharing their exciting work and for their gracious response to our and the anonymous peer reviewer's many requests and queries. We would also like to express our sincere gratitude to the editor of *Modern Austrian Literature*, Craig Decker, for sharing his editorial expertise and for his invaluable help in putting together this volume.

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Guest Lecturer: Dr. Ingo Cornils

We are hosting a visitor from England this fall, Dr. Ingo Cornils, who is the head of the Department of German, Russian, and Slavonic Studies Department at Leeds University, Great Britain. His academic profile and teaching interests include twentieth century German authors such as Hermann Hesse and Uwe Timm. He regularly teaches classes on modern Germany, the Berlin Republic, the shock of the new, freedom & control as well as language and culture classes of all levels. His curriculum vitae with a list of recent publications is available online at http://www.leeds.ac.uk/german/staff/ingo_cornils.htm.

Dr. Cornils will be in residence at the University of Washington for two weeks in November, from November 7 to 21, thanks to a research grant from England. He and Sabine Wilke will be planning a special issue on postcolonial German Studies for the scholarly journal they edit together with three other colleagues from Germany and the US, "Literatur für Leser." He is also looking forward to spending some quality research time in our library, meet all the colleagues and graduate students and take a peek into our day-to-day operations at the undergraduate level.

Dr. Cornils will lecture on "Hermann Hesse: From Outsider to Global Player" on November 13 at 1:30pm in our departmental lecture series in Denny 308 (our Rey Library). A reception will follow and all are welcome to attend.

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Autumn Calendar of Events

Monday, November 9, 6:00 pm: Wine and Wisdom at Henry Bishofberger Violins, 5807 114th Ave. NE, Kirkland, WA
<http://www.hkbviolins.com>

Friday, November 13, 1:30pm, Rey Library (Denny 308): Professor Ingo Cornils, Leeds University: "Hermann Hesse: From Outsider to Global Player." Reception to follow.

Thursday, November 19, and Friday, November 20: Interdisciplinary CWES Conference on "Legacies of Unification: Remaking German Society and Culture Since the Wende." Papers by German scholars Anke Biendarra (UC Irvine), Stephen Brockmann (Carnegie Mellon), Heinz-Peter Preusser (Bremen), Stuart Taberner (Leeds), Paul Cooke (Leeds), and Benjamin Robinson (Indiana). Schedule and information about location and times available at <http://jsis.washington.edu/cwes/wende>

[/conference.shtml](#).

Friday, November 20 5:00pm, Walker-Ames:
Gala-Event to celebrate the student projects in
conjunction with the "Freedom Without Walls: Fall
of the Berlin Wall 1989-2009" initiative sponsored by
the German Embassy.

Friday, December 4: 1:30pm. Rey Library (Denny
308): Professor Janet Swaffar, University of Texas,
Austin. "The Bachmann / Jelinek Connect and
Disconnect." Reception to follow.

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