

UNL ENGLISH DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER AND CALENDAR

Friday, March 7, 2008

Editor: Gerry Shapiro

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"Speaking Truth to people in varying states of powerlessness"

Recent Publications and Other Achievements

Gwendolyn Audrey Foster and Wheeler Winston Dixon have just published *A Short History of Film*, a new film history textbook from Rutgers University Press in the United States, and I.B. Tauris in the United Kingdom. Succinct yet comprehensive, *A Short History of Film* provides an accessible overview of the major movements, directors, studios, and genres from the 1880s to the present. More than 250 rare stills and illustrations, 24 in color, accompany the 464 page text, bringing readers face to face with many of the key players and films that have marked the industry. Beginning with the invention of the kinoscope, the introduction of sound and color between the two world wars, and ultimately the computer generated imagery of the present day, the book details key periods in world cinema, including the early major industries in Europe, the dominance of the Hollywood studio system in the 1930s and 1940s, and the French New Wave of the 1960s, as well as incorporating the stories of women and minority filmmakers who have often been overlooked in other texts. David Sterritt, Chairman of the National Society of Film Critics, writes simply that "this is the film history book we've been waiting for." The book will be formally launched at the upcoming Society for Cinema and Media Studies Conference in Philadelphia, March 7-9, 2008.

Meanwhile, more reviews are coming in for the documentary "Jean-Luc Godard: A Riddle Wrapped in an Enigma," which Wheeler narrated along with Kent Jones and David Sterritt for the new Lionsgate DVD box set of late Godard films. Critic Jason Salzenstein, writing in *The Boston Edge*, February 17, 2008, comments that "there's only one special extra feature [in the set], but it's the kind of thing you wish were on every DVD or at least every DVD for serious films like there. A documentary, 'Jean-Luc Godard: A Riddle Wrapped in an Enigma,' was created exclusively for this collection, and presents an excellent look at the six-time Golden Palm nominated director's illustrious career. I recommend watching one of the films presented, then viewing the documentary before moving on to the others; it practically guarantees an incredible film experience, and is something every film fan owes him, or herself." Peter Debruge in *Variety* calls the film an "enlightening

documentary [which] goes a long way to making rational sense of Godard's more revolutionary devices -- or, at the very least, supplying context for appreciation." *Film Comment* featured the box set as the DVD Box Set of the Month for February 2008.

Steve Behrendt has finished his large recovery and reassessment project on Irish Women Romantic Poets, a very large textbase that is being published electronically this spring by Alexander Street Press, the leading electronic publisher of this sort of scholarly text archive. The project includes fully searchable electronic texts of some 90 complete volumes published between 1775 and 1836 by 55 women poets, along with scholarly apparatus. For the project Steve collected and prepared for electronic publication all the original volumes (about 12,000 pages total), and then commissioned new introductory bio-critical introductory essays on each of the authors from scholars literally around the world (and including, here at UNL, **Sandy Byrd** and **Mike Page**). Steve edited all these essays and also wrote a long introductory essay to the subject of Irish women poets' place both in Romantic-era Irish literary culture and in "British" Romanticism generally. The project culminates many years of research and writing, and represents the fullest and most up-to-date assessment of this body of literature ever assembled. How important the project is may be deduced from some interesting numbers. When Steve began his work, the definitive scholarly bibliography of Romantic-era Irish writing identified a total of eleven women poets; Steve's textbase contains fifty-five. In many cases, the new introductory essays represent the only commentary on the poet since her work first appeared, and so will contribute, along with the poetic texts themselves (many of them very rare) immediately and significantly to the ongoing reassessment of "British Romanticism," which has historically neglected authors (women and men alike) whose origins, lives, and cultural connections were in Ireland, Scotland, and Wales.

Guy Reynolds gave a talk as part of the Paul A. Olson Seminars at the Center for Great Plains Studies (2/20/08). 'Permanence and Transmission: Willa Cather's Entropology' is also available as a podcast: <http://www.unl.edu/plains/seminars/media/centerpodcasts.shtml>

For the 4th year in a row, **Marco Abel** attended the Berlin film festival, where he was once again able to see the latest

German film productions. Finding the 25 or so German films he saw to be weaker than in previous years, however, Marco loved legendary Japanese director Koji Wakamatsu's "United Red Army," a partially re-enacted documentary of the failed efforts by Marxist student groups to engineer an anti-capitalist revolution in Japan in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Truly fresh and even radical filmmaking by a now more than 70-year old director!

Frankie Condon recently returned from the National Writing Centers as Public Space conference sponsored annually by the University of Illinois-Chicago. This year's conference took as its theme, "Race in the Writing Center: Toward New Theory and Praxis." Frankie delivered the opening Keynote Address to the conference in a talk entitled, "From Witness to (Re)Membering: Writing Centers and High-Risk/High-Yield Anti-Racism." Frankie wishes to thank her amazing writers' group (**Joy, Amelia, Barbara, and Shari**) for their terrific feedback and support.

Upcoming Events

TODAY! March 7, Joel Puchalla and Joel Tomfohr, reading from their work, as part of the No Name Reading Series, 4 p.m., Sur Tango Bar *et* Café, 12th & P.

Saturday, March 8: The Clean Part Reading Series, featuring **Anthony Hawley, Kate Greenstreet, and Adam Clay**, 7 p.m., Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery.

Wednesday, March 12: Maria Melendez, reading from her poetry, 7:30 p.m., Bailey Library. **NOTE: THIS IS A SCHEDULE CHANGE.**

Thursday, March 13: Visiting Scholar **Charlotte Hogg** will speak on "Literacy's Laborers: Beyond Marking Women's 'Ordinary' Work," 3:30-5:00 p.m., Bailey Library. Professor Hogg's presentation will examine two sites of women's work: a rural Nebraska town and a museum in Texas that both shape and reflect the women's landscapes through literacy. From these sites, she will discuss how such 'ordinary' literacy endeavors can complicate how scholars and teachers connect to public spaces and conversations.

Thursday, March 13: Women's and Gender Studies Annual Banquet, celebrating Women's History Month and 30 years of Women's studies at UNL, 6:00-8 p.m., Wick Alumni Center.

Tuesday March 25: Women's Lit Film Night Series: A Raisin in the Sun (1961), hosted by Leslie Ianno, 6:30pm, Dudley Bailey Library (Andrews 228). This film explores family relationships and racial identity in mid-twentieth century America. Based on Lorraine Hansberry's play by the same name, this film was groundbreaking when it was released in 1961 and still has cultural significance today. Not rated. All films free and open to the public; feel free to

bring a friend or two! Snacks provided; bring your own soda, juice, or water.

Thursday March 27: Writer-in-Residence **Tim O'Brien** reading from his work, 7:30 p.m., Union Auditorium. Book-signing and reception to follow.

American Life in Poetry by Ted Kooser, U.S. Poet Laureate, 2004-2006

Oh in this endearing short poem by Californian Trish Dugger, we can imagine "what if?" What if we had been given "a baker's dozen of hearts?" I imagine many more and various love poems would be written. Here Ms. Dugger, Poet Laureate of the City of Encinitas, makes fine use of the one patched but good heart she has.

Spare Parts

We barge out of the womb
with two of them: eyes, ears,

arms, hands, legs, feet.
Only one heart. Not a good

plan. God should know we
need at least a dozen,

a baker's dozen of hearts.
They break like Easter eggs

hidden in the grass,
stepped on and smashed.

My own heart is patched,
bandaged, taped, barely

the same shape it once was
when it beat fast for you.

American Life in Poetry is made possible by The Poetry Foundation (www.poetryfoundation.org), publisher of Poetry magazine. It is also supported by the Department of English at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Poem copyright (c) 2006 by Trish Dugger. Reprinted from *Magee Park Poets: Anthology 2007, No. 18*, Friends of the Carlsbad City Library, 2006, by permission of Trish Dugger. Introduction copyright (c) 2008 by The Poetry Foundation. The introduction's author, Ted Kooser, served as United States Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress from 2004-2006. We do not accept unsolicited manuscripts.

EGSA UPDATE!

This past Wednesday, March 26, EGSA held its second open meeting of the school year. Students sat down with **Debbie Minter** to discuss the department's teaching request forms. If anyone was unable to attend the meeting, see one of us representative for a copy of the minutes.

It's also time for the annual EGSA elections. Nominations are now open for four PhD students to serve a two-year term and one MA representative to serve a one-year term on the EGSA executive board. Important EGSA activities include the fall welcome picnic and Tea & Empathy socials throughout the year, representing the interests of graduate students at department meetings and on several important committees, and sponsoring the peer networking program that connects incoming graduate students with people already in the department. Please email **Carrie Shippers** (hera6201@hotmail.com) if you'd like to nominate yourself, your office mates, or your friends. We'll be accepting nominations until 5pm Friday afternoon.

EGSA still needs graduate students who have been in the department at least one year to serve as peer network leaders to incoming students. This is an opportunity to serve as a resource person for a new graduate student and to form new relationships. If you are interested in becoming a network leader, please email Carrie Shippers.

That's all for now. Be on the lookout for information on happy hours and other social events.

Your EGSA Executive Board:

Carrie, Sandy, Leslie, Krista, Lupe, Julie, Dave, Alison, and Mike