The Center for Translation Studies at Barnard College

“Music, Poetry and Translation”

An International Conference

October 28-31, 2010
Event Oval, The Diana Center (lower level)
Barnard College, 3009 Broadway, New York City

Welcome to Barnard College!

Analogies between poetry and music go back thousands of years, to the very origins of poetry itself. Poetry, we are told, is music, or at least more like music than other uses of language. Poetry translation also goes back a very long way. And so does the idea that music cannot be translated... If poetry is music (or at least is characterized by a musical element), and music cannot be translated, how is a translator to cope with the music in poetry? That simple question has never been addressed directly and systematically, but it is one that binds together translators themselves, and two of the academic fields of inquiry that have proved most compelling over recent years: translation studies, and word and music studies. This conference will bring together scholars from across the spectrum, from philosophers of aesthetics who have studied how words cope with the strange phenomenon we call music, to literature specialists who have dealt both in theory and in practice with how music in poetry passes from one language to another, to experts on the history of translation. The interdisciplinary nature of this conference will ensure multiple approaches to the problem, and cast new light, we hope, on one of the most challenging questions for literary translation.

(Text by Peter Dayan)
Program

Friday, October 29, 2010

The venue for all lectures is the “Event Oval,” on the lower level of the Diana Center, Barnard College campus.

Session 1:

9:30-10:20 a.m. Clive Scott: “Overwriting and the Overwritten Text: The Suicidal Drama of Translation”

10:20-11:10 a.m. Kenneth Haynes: “Episodes in the History of the Untranslatable”

11:10-11:30 a.m. coffee break – Event Oval

11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Keynote: John Sallis: “Redoubling Translation and the Noncompactness of Art”

Session 2:

2:30-3:20 p.m. John Hamilton: “‘Es ist der Wahnsinn’: Allegory and Poetic Transposition in C minor”

3:20-4:10 p.m. Lydia Goehr: “Ekphrasis: Skinning Marsyas ‘Under a Description’”

4:10-4:30 p.m. coffee break – Event Oval

4:30-5:30 p.m. Reading: Charlotte Mandell reads from her translations of Jean-Luc Nancy, Listening (Fordham UP, 2007); Jean-Luc Nancy, The Fall of Sleep (Fordham UP, 2009), and Mathias Énard, Zone (Open Letter, forthcoming, 2010)
Saturday, October 30, 2010

Session 3:

9:30-10:20 a.m. Marc Froment-Meurice: “Quasi the Same — That Is to Say: Trans/Hallucinations”

10:20-11:10 a.m. Robert Hullot-Kentor: “In the Big X of the Returning Primitive/What's Untranslatable in Wallace Stevens and Adorno” (canceled)

11:10-11:30 a.m. coffee break – Event Oval

11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Keynote: Peter Dayan: “Stravinsky and the Translation of Poetry for Music”

Session 4:

2:30-3:20 p.m. Peter France: “Translating Sound Worlds: The Example of Russian Poetry”

3:20-4:10 p.m. Susan Gillespie: “Paul Celan’s ‘Coronas’: Parsing the Voice from the Voiceless”

4:10-4:30 p.m. coffee break – Event Oval

4:30-5:30 p.m. Performance: Ronnie Apter/Mark Herman: “Translating the Music of the Words and the Words to the Music: Struggles with the 12th-Century Troubadour Bernart de Ventadorn”
Sunday, October 31, 2010

Session 5:

10:00-10:50 a.m. Marilyn Gaddis-Rose: “Durée in Translation: The Survival of Bergson in English”

10:50-11:40 a.m. Brian O’Keeffe: “Putting the Limits on Translation”

11:40-12 noon Peter Connor: Concluding Remarks

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Notes on the Speakers

Ronnie Apter is Professor Emerita of English at Central Michigan University. In 2003, she won the President’s Award for Outstanding Research and Creative Activity. She is the author of Digging for the Treasure: Translation after Pound (Peter Lang, 1984) and the Bilingual Edition of the Love Songs of Bernart de Ventadorn in Occitan and English: Sugar and Salt (Edwin Mellen Press, 1999), which includes literal, poetic and singable translations of the 12th-century troubadour, with an accompanying CD. In partnership with Mark Herman, she has translated 22 operas, operettas and choral works, many of which have been performed throughout the English-speaking world, and seven of which have been included in standard editions published by Ricordi in Milan.

Peter Connor is Associate Professor of French and Comparative Literature at Barnard College, and Director of the Center for Translation Studies.

Peter Dayan is Professor of Word and Music Studies at the University of Edinburgh. His most recent book is Music Writing Literature, from Sand via Debussy to Derrida (Ashgate, 2006); his next will be Art as Music, Music as Poetry, Poetry as Art, from Whistler to Stravinsky and Beyond (Ashgate, 2011). He has written many articles concerning the relationship between translation, literature, and music, including: “Finding Rhythm in Julio Cortázar’s Los premios” (co-authored with Catherine Orloff) (in “Rhythm in Literature after the Crisis in Verse,” Paragraph, 33.2, 2010); “The Time for Poetry” (in Oxford Literary Review, 31.1,

Peter France is Professor Emeritus at the University of Edinburgh. He has edited a number of volumes for Oxford University Press, including The Oxford History of Literary Translation in English, volume 4, 1790 to 1900 (2006), which he co-edited with Kenneth Haynes, The Oxford Guide to Literature in English Translation (2001), and The New Oxford Companion to Literature in French (1995). As a scholar of French literature he has authored works on 17th- and 18th-century French literature, for example Politeness and its Discontents: Problems in French Classical Culture (Cambridge University Press, 1992), and as a translator, his books include Meditations of a Solitary Walker, by Jean-Jacques Rousseau (Penguin, 1979), and Diderot's Letters to Sophie Volland (Oxford University Press, 1972). As a specialist of Russian literature, he is the author of Poets of Modern Russia (Cambridge University Press, 1982), and translator of the 1997 Northwestern University Press volume, Selected Poems 1954-1994, by Gennady Aygi. He was also co-translator, with Jon Stallworthy, of the Penguin Twentieth-Century Classics edition of Boris Pasternak’s Selected Poems, published in 1984.

Marc Froment-Meurice is Professor of French at Vanderbilt University. He is the author of That Is to Say: Heidegger’s Poetics (Stanford University Press, 1998) and Solitudes: From Rimbaud to Heidegger (SUNY Press, 1995). In French, his most recent publications are La Chimère: Tombeau de Nerval (Editions Belin, 2001) and Incitations (Editions Galilée, forthcoming). He maintains a website at http://mfromentmeurice.free.fr.

Marilyn Gaddis-Rose is Distinguished Service Professor in the Comparative Literature Department at Binghamton University and director of the Translation Research and Instruction Program there. She received the Alexander Gode medal of the American Translators Association for her contribution to translation pedagogy and scholarship, and has translated numerous works from the French, including Volupté: The Sensual Man by Charles Augustin Sainte-Beuve, Lui: A View of Him by Louise Colet, two works by Villiers de l'Isle-Adam, Axel and Eve of the Future, and Adrienne Mesurat by Julien Green. She founded and edited the SUNY Press collection of women writers in translation, and is the founding editor of both Translation Perspectives and the monograph series published under the auspices of the American Translators Association. Among her extensive scholarly publications on translation are: Globalization and Aspects of Translation, a collection of essays edited with Said M. Shiyah, Juliane House and John Duval (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010), and Translation and Literary Criticism (St. Jerome Publishing, 1997).

Susan H. Gillespie is the founding director of the Institute for International Liberal Education at Bard College and an active translator from the German. She is the principal translator of Essays on Music, by


Kenneth Haynes is Associate Professor of Comparative Literature and Classics at Brown University. He has written works on the classical tradition in European literature and philosophy since the Renaissance, with particular attention to German and British Hellenism. Books on those subjects include English Literature and Ancient Languages (Oxford University Press, 2003) and Horace in English, an anthology of English translations of Horace published by Penguin in 1996 as part of its “Poets in Translation Series.” His further scholarship on translation includes an edited volume of essays by D.S. Carne-Ross entitled Classics and Translation (Bucknell University Press, 2010) and the fourth volume of The Oxford History of Literary Translation in English, co-edited with Peter France, which appeared in 2006. He also translates from the German, and has published a translation of Johann Georg Hamann’s essays (Cambridge University Press, 2007), and a translation, in collaboration with Julian Young, of Martin Heidegger’s Holzwege, entitled Heidegger: Off the Beaten Track (Cambridge University Press, 2002).

Mark Herman is a literary translator, a technical translator, a chemical engineer, a playwright, actor, musician and lyricist. He has reviewed many books on translation, language and opera, and for over a decade, he has written a monthly humor column for the ATA Chronicle, the journal of the American Translators Association.

Robert Hullot-Kentor is a Professor in the Department of Visual and Critical Studies at the School of Visual Arts in New York City. He has been the recipient of Fellowships from Boston University and Harvard University and is the author of Things Beyond Resemblance, a collection of essays on Theodor Adorno (Columbia University Press, 2008). He has translated a number of works by Theodor Adorno, including Current of Music (Polity Press, 2009), Philosophy of New Music (University of Minnesota Press, 2006), Aesthetic Theory (University of Minnesota Press, 1998) and Kierkegaard: Construction of the Aesthetic (University of Minnesota Press, 1989).

by Guillaume Apollinaire, Blaise Cendrars and Henri Michaux, and a variety of prose works, including Marcel Proust’s *The Lemoine Affair* (2008), Honoré de Balzac’s *The Girl with the Golden Eyes* (2007), Guy de Maupassant’s *The Horla* (2005) and Gustave Flaubert’s *A Simple Heart* (2004), all published for Melville House’s “The Art of the Novella” series. She has also translated *The Tombeau of Ibn Arabi* and *White Traverses* by Abdelwahab Meddeb for Fordham University Press (2010), and her translation of *Zone*, by Mathias Énard, will appear in December 2010, under the imprint of Open Letter Books. That translation was facilitated by the award of a Literature Fellowship by the National Endowment for the Arts.

**Brian O’Keeffe** teaches in the French and Comparative Literature Departments at Barnard College, and serves as Associate Director of the Barnard Center for Translation Studies.

**John Sallis** is Frederick J. Adelmann S.J. Professor of Philosophy at Boston College. He has held professorial chairs at Pennsylvania State University, Vanderbilt University, Loyola University of Chicago and Duquesne University. He is the founding editor of the journal *Research in Phenomenology* and General Editor of the “Studies in Continental Thought” series published by Indiana University Press. His most recent publications are: *Transfigurations: On the True Sense of Art* (University of Chicago Press, 2008), *The Verge of Philosophy* (University of Chicago Press, 2007) and *Topographies* (Indiana University Press, 2006). His specific interest in translation is reflected by the book *On Translation*, published in 2002 by Indiana University Press.


**Phillip John Usher** is Assistant Professor in the French and Comparative Literature Departments at Barnard College, and serves as Associate Director of the Barnard Center for Translation Studies.