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December 2008

"Travels of a Russianist, or How I Learned to Love Area Studies"

By Yanni Kotsonis

As a teacher and a writer of Russian history, I face a daily dilemma: How do I justify the study of Russia when I scarcely believe in the solidity of the geographic boundaries? I've had more than my share of resources from the area studies trough – like all my generation, a goodly part of my education and professional life was financed by the US government – but I do not believe in the world as divided by area studies. I claim authority because of my knowledge about that country's history, but I also don't think that's the point. What's a Russianist to do?

I came to NYU as a Russia specialist, to be sure. As is so often the case, I suspect that I was brought here to "fill a gap" that history departments periodically feel the need to fill. Russia is big, very big. But I caucused, so to speak, with the Europeanists. Where else would they put me? Russian history has been written in the European tradition for some 150 years, with an emphasis on Eurocentric institutions like ministries and armies and diplomacy and classes and modernization and urbanization, all narrated in linear time. Certainly by these standards Russia belonged in Europe, and what I wrote and said made sense to a German or French specialist in a way that it could not to a US specialist. Even if Europe were to end at the Oder or the Vistula, at Lviv,



Yanni Kotsonis is Associate Professor of History and Chair of the Department of Russian and Slavic Studies. He is writing a book on the political economy of taxation in Russia and Europe in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

L'vov, or Lemberg, the boundary only made sense because we had Russia as the antipode, the necessary "0" to western Europe's "1" in the binary that comprises Europe.¹ There was a certain comfort in the position. France seemed more French when it was positioned against Russia, and I could speak authoritatively and negotiate in my institution as Russia, that inscrutable country that was all mine. So I came to the Europeanists.

Since NYU had no Russian area in which to put me (the Russian

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A Conversation on Joan Miró

NYU; Thursday, October 30

By David Idol

The Catalan Center at New York University hosted "A Conversation on Joan Miró" on October 30th at the King Juan Carlos I of Spain Center. Edward J. Sullivan, Dean for Humanities at the NYU Faculty of Arts and Sciences, moderated a discussion between Joan Punyet Miró, the artist's grandson and executor of his estate, and Anne Umland, curator of a current exhibit at the MoMA entitled "Joan Miró: Painting and Anti-Painting 1927-1937."

Joan Miró was a Catalan painter and sculptor, usually associated with Surrealism. The panelists said the exhibit at the MoMA brings together ten years of the artist's paintings and sculptures created during a period of artistic experimentation, when Miró was "doubting the viability of painting" and testing the limits of traditional forms of art. The exhibit shows Miró's work trying to uncover the meaning of Surrealism and to test its boundaries. Umland said that the

last time these works were together was when they were in Miro's studio.

Surrealism during the 1920's was defined, promoted, and policed by Miró's early friend and associate André Breton, said Umland. Miró split from Breton in 1926, rejecting the limits he imposed on art. Umland thus chose to begin the exhibit with Miró's split from Breton, and show his work fighting with tradition and limits in order to find new ways to express the human experience.

Punyet Miró shared reflections on his grandfather during these creative years. He said that his grandfather found inspiration in everyday objects – "bones, nails, staples, hooks, pieces of iron" – trying to find art in the stuff of life, and putting these objects into dialogue with each other. Punyet Miró shared a specific example – a sculpture inspired by a wishbone he found in a plate of chicken paella.

The panelists also commented on Miró's Catalan heritage, and the centrality of Barcelona to the "anti-

art" movement in the 1920's and 30's. They reflected on some of Miró's famous "anti-art" statements, such as "I want to assassinate painting," "I want to break Picasso's cubist guitar," and "Painting has been in decadence since the age of cavemen."

These ten years constitute a very dramatic time in the life of the artist, both because of his experimentation, and because of what was happening politically around him at the time. The exhibit ends in 1937, because this was the beginning of the civil war in Spain. Punyet Miró and Umland agreed that, like the work of Salvador Dalí during the same period, Miró's art during these years contains a sense of presentiment of the coming war. This is especially powerful in the later pieces of the exhibit, made while Miró was alone in Paris, waiting for months for his family to join him. These pieces show the fear and anxiety he felt for his family and his country.

"Joan Miró: Painting and Anti-Painting 1927-1937" is currently on display at the MoMA until January 12, 2009.

An Evening of Anatolian Music

NYU; Friday, November 7

By Suzanne Bayard

Professor Leslie Peirce, director of the Program in Ottoman Studies at New York University, welcomed the Ozan Aksoy Trio for "An Evening of Anatolian Music" at the Jurow Lecture Hall in the Silver Center of Arts and Science. The trio's members include Ozan Aksoy, Emrah Kanisicak and Atakan Sari.

The event was lively and informative, with Mr. Aksoy introducing selections and instruments. The music included folk songs from the Balkan region, Armenia and Turkey, as well as Kurdish and Jewish songs. Mr. Aksoy demonstrated that even down-to-earth subjects were topics of folk songs, including one song praising the wine of the composer's host. Audience members, many with roots in the region, joined in with the singers. The various instruments used during the performance were

traditional instruments from the Middle East region of Western Asia and North Africa. Mr. Aksoy introduced the baglama, a Turkish instrument, as a long-neck lute, similar in shape to a guitar with a thinner neck and rounded back, played by both himself and Mr. Kanisicak. The lavta is the Turkish variation of the lute, with the upper neck bent at a 90° angle. The ney, an end-blown reed flute of Persian and Turkish descent, and the kaval, or the shepherd's flute, a wooden flute from the Balkan and Anatolian region, were also performed by Mr. Aksoy. Mr. Sari performed the duduk, an ancient reed instrument from Armenia, and the kemençe, a small stringed instrument from the Black Sea region. Mr. Kanisicak and Mr. Aksoy provided vocals.

The folk songs performed were in a blend of languages and compositional styles. The trio said they share "the same ideal of solidarity among the societies of the Middle East." By combining various languages and traditions, they seek to share the

"multicultural nature of the region" and to emphasize the "harmonious coexistence of these languages and cultures."

The trio, formed in 2005, describes itself as drawing from Turkish, Armenian, Kurdish, Greek, Jewish, Arabic, and Alevi musical heritages. They have performed in various venues including the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the CUNY Graduate Center. Mr. Aksoy also composes and arranges pieces, and has performed in various locations across Europe and Asia Minor.

Upcoming events by the Program in Ottoman Studies include an afternoon workshop on February 6 titled "Religious Conversion in the Mediterranean and Middle East" located at the Richard Ettinghausen Library in the Hagop Kevorkian Center, 50 Washington Square South.

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Department in those days was languid), NYU let me do something that most other established Russia programs could not do: escape area studies, and insist that Russia was contingent and embedded, not a self-justifying atom. There are good reasons to be suspicious of area studies. Area studies, of course, were as much a product of an American imperial project as the Sixth Fleet. It borrowed from a British academic and geopolitical tradition that used universities to study Britain and France, but Schools to study the rest. The whole eastern and southeastern European borderland got the School of Slavonic and East European Studies (SSEES) to encompass those blurry spaces, from the DDR (but not the FRG) and Poland to Russia, the Balkans, and modern Greece.² The rest of the globe was sent across the street to SOAS, which stood for Oriental and African. So different were they from Eastern Europe, and indeed Europe, that they belonged in the same building. American post-war area studies did something similar, and the funding in particular (through the State Department, the Department of Education, the intelligence organizations, and their respective Quangos) gave us every reason to reproduce the areas. Paradoxically for a system that aimed to promote worldliness, the division of the world into areas reinforced parochialism. Briefly stated, as an academic in the Russia field, I needed to prove my credentials to other Russia specialists according to our shared sense of what was important. Did Stalin order Kirov's death, and was Stalin's childhood to blame? Did the evil begin in 1917 or in 1929? Was Nicholas II dim-witted? Was Nicholas I really that reactionary? Was Peter the Great really new, and did he do it all himself? I rarely had to show that my work was relevant to the same discipline in another field, let alone to another discipline. This gave me a feeling of comfort, I admit, but it also made my work seem inward-

looking, even to myself. I fulfilled my professional responsibility to write books and articles, but few of them made me happy.

NYU never had a strong tradition of Russian studies, and there was no Russia House to match Deutsches Haus or Maison Française. More to the point, there was no one to fund such a *Dom* – the Soviet state? Communist millionaires? – other than the self-same US government and certain foundations. What little there was went uptown, to the established program at Columbia and its Harriman Institute.³ I was the only historian of Russia at NYU when I arrived in 1994, fresh from a first job in England,⁴ and one of the very few Russia specialists in any discipline who came on that wave of junior faculty hires of the 1990s. I could define myself more or less as I pleased, and it pleased me to define myself as a Europeanist, at least in the History Department. It was not only a matter of the clout that it gave me in my department and my university, nor the fact that there was nowhere else to put me, nor only the fact that my categories and concerns were shared with the European field. It was enabling. The very narrow concerns of my field suddenly expanded exponentially, so that my interest in Russian peasants and agrarian economics (!) could morph into a larger conversation about integration that a historian of the US would understand; the very old debate about the inevitability of 1917 became a larger debate about modernity with a Russian inflection. Russia became my stepping stone to Europe, Russian statesmen an entry to Hegel, a 1904 treatise on the income tax an introduction to modern economics, political economy, Keynes, and liberalism. It didn't have to be Europe, incidentally. The idea of exceptionalism – a commonplace in the histories of Russia and the US – falls to the wayside when we talk about Russia as a state, a civil society, an economy. I can have that conversation with colleagues in virtually any national history.

No one is more surprised than I at the fact that I am chairing the Russian Department, given my unhealthy attitude toward area studies, but my predecessor and my colleagues here are involved in a similar endeavor. With little respect for the geographic boundaries or the essentialisms that make those boundaries meaningful, we are collectively engaged in a cross-disciplinary project that begins in Russia (geographically and symbolically) and then disperses. As anthropologists, literary critics, "culturologists" (to borrow the Russian term), as historians, and as political scientists, we come together in our focus on one place, only to head in our different directions. The trick is to come back to Russia regularly to remember our shared starting point, and indeed our shared knowledge base and specialization, if only to continue on our respective ways. The result is a department that is founded on the idea of a nation-state, but it uses that idea in order to traverse it, to study a specific country in order to make it look less than exceptional and less than coherent. For students, the Department is a good place to get lots of knowledge across the disciplines, which is indeed important. But here Russia is an occasion for thinking about the big categories sooner than a destination in itself. This self-awareness makes it one of the better places to study Russia.

Looked at in this way, area studies and its legacies are fun, at the very least because they are founded on brittle assumptions. CEMS is a centre for the study of Western Europe, a brief it rightly takes seriously; but it, too, can relax about the boundaries and let me visit regularly. I can be a part of it because Europe is a springboard for thinking how big things happened in a specific place, and how a specific place gave rise to things bigger than itself. Or take NYU's core curriculum, the Morse Academic Plan, unironically abbreviated MAP, which grappled with the problem of Western Civ. by renaming the familiar geographies. The West was cast into doubt by implying it was a discourse

("Conversations with the West"), as if it were unseemly to give it the power of positive existence; but the rest were sincerely called "cultures" ("World Cultures"), as if it were demeaning to question their positive reality. Only the First World could go po-mo. All very horrifying as an imperial legacy, I'm sure, but only if we give the categories the kind of seriousness that they demand. Instead it's an occasion to amusingly take up some serious questions. Consider the choices of the Russian Department. The department of Pushkin, Herzen, Tolstoy, and Dostoyevsky made the decision to become a World Culture rather than a Conversation in order to play with the very idea of a culture and the attendant normative certainties. It is taught by my colleague as "Russia between East and West," with little confidence in the resolution of Russia, the East, or the West. In the hands of another colleague, Pushkin is newly appreciated as a black man." It does take irony to grapple with the categories, but the task of questioning our certainties and appreciating the suppleness of human experiences is very serious

indeed. It frees us to think for ourselves. It's the main reason why I am an academic.

Our boundaries are the distilled outcome of various imperial ventures, but we can't ignore them or even put them in quotation marks and think that we are subverting them. It's not only that "Europe" is still Europe. Combating these categories head-on –rejecting them or decrying their perniciousness – also won't do, precisely because they are power-laden, historical, and productive of human relations and of ourselves. It's hard to speak truth to power when we are produced by that power and are the conduits of that power; but we can deploy and live that power in truly liberating ways. I find it much better to grasp the categories and watch them slip through my fingers, or watch them crumble under the weight of their own absurdity.

It turns out that I am a Europeanist in the History Department but a member of The Rest when I cross the square to the Russian Department, and there are many places to stop along the way. Did I mention how I became affiliated with Hellenic Studies?

(Endnotes)

¹ As our own Larry Wolff taught us in *Inventing Eastern Europe*:

The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment (Stanford, 1994)

² A very good school, to which I owe a very intensive and exhaustive training in an MA program in the mid-1980s. That was before Thatcher took the knife to the education budgets.

³ To which I owe a very intensive, and very good, education at the doctoral level.

⁴ At the truly stimulating University of Essex, where Thatcher's successor subjected us to something more horrifying than Thatcherism: armies of accountants and management specialists armed with quantitative assessments.

⁵ Anne Lounsbury, "Bound by Blood to the Race": Pushkin in African-American Context," in *Under the Sky of My Africa: Alexander Pushkin and Blackness*, ed. By Catharine Nepomnyashchy et al. (Northwestern, 2006). In Cuba, meanwhile, he falls under world Mulatto literature.

The U.S. Election Seen by European and American Scholars

NYU; Friday, November 7
By Eleonora Corsalini

New York University Max Weber Chair Michael Minkenberg moderated a roundtable discussion on «The U.S. Elections: Transatlantic Perspectives» at the Deutsches Haus at NYU with the participation of distinguished scholars: Ariane Chebel d'Appollonia (Sciences Po Paris), James Goldgeier (George Washington University), Stephanie Hofmann (European University Institute, Florence), Marcia Pally (New York University), Simon Reich (University of Pittsburgh), Andrew Rutten (Stanford University) and Gregory Wawro (Columbia University).

Despite what one might expect after seeing the rejoicing in Times Square on the election night,

three days later the academic environment seemed to be less euphoric: the panel was conducted with a rational and analytical approach, seeking to highlight the future implications of the election of Barack Obama, both in transatlantic relations and in U.S. domestic and foreign policies. The main purpose of the panel concerned "lowering expectations." The historical election of the first African-American President of the United States and the heavy defeat of the Republican party after eight years of the Bush administration has raised expectations, both in the U.S. and in the rest of the world. James Goldgeier argued that this is the main problem now. Campaigns are all about raising people's expectations, he said, and it is the role of the government to try

to lower those expectations and to carry the population back to reality.

As mentioned before, the "rest of the world" to be represented in this roundtable was Europe, European reactions to the elections, and the future of transatlantic relations. For instance, Ariane Chebel d'Appollonia gave an overview of the French perception of the US elections. She stressed that almost 87% of the French population is against the Bush Administration's foreign policies, and that 77% is convinced that these elections were very important not only for the U.S., not only for France, but also for themselves. The French believe that Obama will improve relations between the U.S. and France, even regarding areas of persistent disagreement: Iraq, the war on terrorism, Turkey, climate change,

trade issues, and the EU. Stephanie Hofmann talked about the difference between public opinion and government opinion toward the U.S. elections in Germany. She reported that, at the beginning, the people were for Obama, while German government was for McCain. She said that Germans followed the election most closely among Europeans. In general, Europeans are convinced that Obama will improve diplomatic relations not only with Europe, but with the rest of the world.

Regarding domestic policy, the panelists agreed that Europeans were more skeptical. Marcia Pally suggested that Obama won largely because of the dynamism and the possibility of change that characterize his political views, not necessarily because of a wholesale

acceptance of his domestic policies. The U.S. can only change at a slow pace: politicians still act under the constraints of their constituencies. Gregory Wawro said that the Democrats should act quickly with their new mandate to pass more the controversial measures of their domestic agenda such as healthcare reform in case they lose Congressional seats in the 2010 elections due to fallout from a bad economy.

Simon Reich, after outlining that Obama's policy is based on a diplomatic approach which stresses the importance of dialogue, multilateralism, slow action and «soft power», emphasized the elements of difficulty that Obama will face during his presidency: foreign policy (in particular, the Iraq war), the financial crisis and, he

added, the fact that he is the first African-American president. Therefore, Reich sees Obama's race, one of the main reasons for people's euphoria, as a potential inconvenience.

Finally, Andrew Rutten and Gregory Wawro focused on some domestic and technical issues. Rutten talked about the American Constitution as an "arena" for identity politics, a guarantee, and the guardian of the democracy. Wawro discussed the Congressional elections and how the Democratic party won outright: we are witnessing a clear polarization, with 250 seats in the House and 57 seats in the Senate (the highest since 1996). Wawro stated that one of the main reasons for this Democratic consolidation is the current economic and financial crisis.



EuroDigest: *Europe in November*

November 4 - Osama Bin Laden's son asked for asylum in Spain.

November 6 - Russian President Dmitry Medvedev announced that Russia would place missiles and radio devices close to where NATO and the US are constructing missile defense systems.

November 6 - Nearly 250 were injured by fumes from repair work after a bomb was exploded in Pamplona, Spain by Basque separatists.

November 7 - Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi has come under fire for jokingly referring to US President elect Barack Obama as "tanned." The Prime Minister defended his comments by saying he was paying Obama a compliment.

November 12 - In an effort to cut its bureaucracy, the EU eliminated regulations on the sale of oddly shaped produce.

November 13 - The European Commission announced a plan to increase greener fuel, helping to lower its energy dependence on Russia. The EU currently imports 42% of its oil from Russia.

November 13 - Bulgaria announced it will pull its troops from Iraq by December 31.

November 14 - The Eurozone fell into a recession for the first time in its history. It is composed of 15 nations.

November 17 - Four games ended in a draw between 11th seed German chess team and the highest rated chess team, Russia.

November 18 - Former French Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin was ordered to stand trial for accusations that he was part of a political smear campaign against sitting Prime Minister Nicolas Sarkozy. Villepin has denied the claims.

November 19 - Russia's lower house of Parliament approved a bill to extend the length of the presidential term by two years; international critics say it could allow Prime Minister Vladimir Putin to run again as President.

November 20 - Greek archaeologists uncovered a 6,500 year old village approximately 170 miles (280 km) north of Athens in Thessaly.

November 20 - The European Union formally recognized Welsh as a minority language.

November 21 - Polish scientists have confirmed the discovery of Copernicus' body in a Polish cathedral through DNA comparison.

November 25 - The EU cut 220 million euros (\$286 million) of funding to Bulgaria over unresolved issues of corruption and organized crime in the state.

November 25 - Greenlanders voted over whether the island should become more autonomous from Denmark, which supports the referendum.

November 30 - Switzerland approved the use of prescription heroin by referendum. A related referendum to legalize cannabis failed.

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Thursday, December 4 at 6:30 p.m.
Max Weber Roundtable Discussion:
"Das Schloss? - the Reconstruction of
the Berlin Royal Palace"

Moderator: Michael Minkenberg
(Viadrina University, Frankfurt/
Oder, and Max Weber Chair at NYU)
Participants: Peter Eisenman
(Architect, NYC), Regula Luescher
(Senatsbaudirektorin, Berlin), Jean-
Louis Cohen (Art Historian, NYC),
Nikolaus Bernau (Berliner Zeitung)
Location: 19 University Place, 1st
floor Great Room

Friday, December 5 at 4:00 p.m.
Gender and Transformation
Workshop: "Teens, Sex, and
Reproductive Rights in Croatia,
Romania, and Poland"
With: Iustina Ionescu, Romanian
Attorney and Fellow at the Center
for Reproductive Rights

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Tuesday, December 2 at 12:30 p.m.
Seminar: "The New Bibliopolis:
French Book Collectors and the
Culture of Print, 1880-1914"
With: Willa Z. Silverman, Professor of
French and Jewish Studies (Penn
State University); author of *The
Notorious Life of Gyp: Right-Wing
Anarchist in Fin-de-Siècle France*
(1995), *The New Bibliopolis: French
Book Collectors and the Culture of
Print, 1880-1914* (forthcoming).

Tuesday, December 9 at 12:30 p.m.
Seminar: "Guerre et paix en
philosophie: Jacques Derrida et Jürgen
Habermas"

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

With: Pierre Bouretz, Professor of
Philosophy (Ecole des Hautes Etudes
en Sciences Sociales, Paris); visiting
fellow (Remarque Institute, NYU);
author of *Les promesses du monde :
philosophie de Max Weber* (1996), *La
République et l'Universel* (2002),
*Témoins du futur : philosophie et
messianisme* (2003), *Qu'appelle-t-on
philosophe ?* (2006)
In French

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Tuesday, December 2 at 7:00 p.m.
Seminar: "Fin de la culture française?
Faux-problème, erreur de jugement
ou médisance?"

With: Michel DeGuy, poet;
philosopher; critic; editor, *Poésie*;
author of *Biefs*; *Interdictions du
séjour*; *Figurations*; *Tombeau de Du
Bellay*.

In French

Thursday, December 4 at 7:00 p.m.
Seminar: "Why Beckett Never Gave
up on English, Despite (His) French"
With: Robert Harvey, Professor of
French and Comparative
Literatures, SUNY at Stony Brook;
co-author, *De l'exception à la règle:
USA PATRIOT Act; Témoins
d'artifice*.

Sunday, December 7 at 3:00 p.m. &
Monday, December 8 at 7:00 p.m.
Theater: "Les Justes" by Albert
Camus.
Dramatic reading by NYU students.
Conceived and directed by Daniel
Darwin.
Music by Christopher Alden.
Reservations: 212-998-8750 or
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In French.

Wednesday, December 10 at 7:30
p.m.
Concert: "Centennial Concert:
Olivier Messiaen (1908 - 1992)"
With: Alliance Players, Quartet for
the End of Time.

Nurit Pacht, violin; Todd Palmer,
clarinet; Priya Mayadas, piano;
Darrett Adkins, cello.
Tickets: \$20 (\$10 NYU students with
current i.d.)

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Friday, December 5 at 6:15 p.m.
Poetry Series: Two Latina Poets form
the South West: Rosa Alcala and
Carmen Gimenez-Smith
Introduced by Lila Zamborain

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Tuesday, December 2 at 7:00 p.m.
Reading & Book Signing
With: Nora Bossong (Writer-In-
Residence)
In German & English.

Wednesday, December 3 at 12:00 p.m.
Lunch Seminar; Transatlantic Lunch
Talks: «Law and Literature: Bilateral
Approaches.»
With: Prof. Richard Weisberg, Walter
Floersheimer Professor of
Constitutional Law, Benjamin N.
Cardozo School of Law/Yeshiva
University; Prof. Dr. Bernhard
Schlink, Visiting Professor of Law,
Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law/
Yeshiva University, Professor,
Humboldt Universität zu Berlin.
RSVP required by December 1: Jessica
von Hertsenberg 212 998-8126

Thursday, December 4 at 1:45 p.m.
Join the World Wide Green
Revolution Lunch
Location: NYU Law School, Seminar
Room 318 (Furman Hall), 245
Sullivan Street.

Thursday, December 4 at 6:30 p.m.
Das Schloss? Roundtable about the Reconstruction of the Berlin Royal Palace

Moderator: Michael Minkenberg (Viadrina University, Frankfurt/Oder, and Max Weber Chair at NYU)
Participants: Peter Eisenman (Architect, NYC), Regula Luescher (Senatsbaudirektorin, Berlin), Jean-Louis Cohen (Art Historian, NYC), Nikolaus Bernau (Berliner Zeitung)
Location: 19 University Place, 1st Floor Great Room

Thursday, December 11 at 5:00 p.m.
Deutsches Haus presents: «Brain Talks»

Panel: Perception and Action - from a Comparative, Developmental and Computational Neurosciences Perspective.

«Old brain/new brain Interactions in Perception and Action» (Prof. Dr. Klaus-Peter Hoffmann, Zoology and Neurobiology Ruhr University in Bochum)

«Effects of visual experience on visual development» (Lynne Kiorpes, PhD, NYU)

«How we look and reach - Neural science and neural engineering» (Prof. Bijan Pesaran, Center for Neural Science, NYU)

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http://www.nyu.edu/pages/casaitaliana/index_flash.html

Tuesday, December 2 at 6:00 p.m.
Conversation: "Adventures in Italiana Opera: Tuesdays with Fred Plotkin and Stars from the World of Opera."

With: Marcello Giordani (Tenor)

Friday, December 5 at 7:00 p.m.
Book Presentation: "Assoluzione" (Mondadori, 2008)

With: Antonio Monda, author.

With: Stefano Albertini (NYU), Gian Arturo Ferrari (Mondadori).

Excerpts of the novel will be read in Italian and English. The conversation will be in English.

Monday, December 8 at 6:00 p.m.
Presentation of the Gold Medal of Honor for Lifetime Achievement to inventor/Magician Mark Setteducati
6 p.m.: Cocktail Reception

6:30 p.m.: Welcoming Remarks and Gold Medal Ceremony in the Great Hall and comments by magic historian Montague Chadbourne.
7:15 p.m.: Screening of : The Illusionist (2006)

A film by Neil Burger. From the short story by Steven Millhauser, "Eisenheim, the Illusionist."

Children are welcome with their families to celebrate the holiday season.

This event is reserved for members of Casa Italiana Zerilli-Marimò

Tuesday, December 9 at 6:00 p.m.
Zerilli-Marimò / City of Rome Literary Prize

Reading and Conversation with the Finalist Authors:

Milena Agus, *Mal di pietre* (Nottetempo, 2006), presented by Barry McCrea.

Mario Calabresi, *Spingendo la notte più in là*, (Mondadori, 2007) presented by Michael Moore.

Andrej Longo, *Dieci* (Adelphi, 2007), presented by Jennifer Newman.

Followed by the Award Ceremony: Zerilli-Marimò/City of Rome Prize
Awarded to: Milena Agus.

Friday, December 12 at 5:00 p.m.
Conversation: "The Pleasures of Puglia"

With: Fred Plotkin

A reception will follow featuring food products brought from Puglia for the occasion.

GLUCKSMAN IRELAND HOUSE

1 Washington Mews. All events take place at the house unless otherwise noted. Tel.: 212.998.3950

<http://www.irelandhouse.fas.nyu.edu>

Thursday, December 4th at 7:00 p.m.
Concert: "Airneál na Nollag"

An evening of traditional music agus amhráin as Gaeilge with NYU Irish language students and local musicians hosted by Senior Irish Language Lecturer, Pádraig Ó Cearúill. Bí Linn!

Friday, December 5th at 9:00 p.m.
The Blarney Star Concert Series: John Whelan Group

--COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY--

THE EUROPEAN INSTITUTE

420 West 118th Street, International Affairs Building (IAB), room 1228.

Tel: 212.854.4618; email:

europaeaninstitute@columbia.edu

<http://www.ei.columbia.edu/main.html>

Thursday, December 4 at 4:00 p.m.
University Seminar on Modern Europe

Speaker: Dominic C. Boyer, Cornell University

Discussants: Jane Kramer, The New Yorker; Nicholas Lemann, Columbia University

Burden Room, Low Library

For more information, please contact Myrisha S. Lewis, mssl2155@columbia.edu

THE HARRIMAN INSTITUTE

420 West 118th Street, International Affairs Building (IAB), room 1219.

Tel.: 212.854.4623

<http://www.harrimaninstitute.org/>

Monday, October 27–Tuesday, January 13

Exhibit: "Dostoevsky's Doodles"
Harriman Institute Atrium (12th floor, International Affairs Building)
With: Konstantin Barsht, a researcher at the Russian Academy's Institute for Russian Literature

Tuesday, December 2 at 12:10 p.m.
Discussion: "The End or the Return of the Balkans?: Serbia, FYROM, Kosovo, Bosnia and Montenegro"
With: Dimitris Keridis, Associate Professor of International Relations,

Department of Balkan, Slavic and Oriental Studies, University of Macedonia, Thessaloniki, Greece

Tuesday, December 2 at 1:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

Conference: "Visualizing the Holodomor: the Ukrainian Famine-Genocide of 1932-1933 on Film"
1512 International Affairs Building (1:30-4:30); Rosenthal Auditorium, Schermerhorn Hall (7:30-10:00)
Contact: Ukrainian Studies Program office at 212-854-4697.

Wednesday, December 3 at 7:00 p.m.
Discussion: "The Cold War in the News: Then and Now (Pt. II)"
With: Phil Donahue and Vladimir Pozner
Moderator: Professor Ann Cooper.
Social Hall, Union Theological Seminary
RSVP required:
rsvp@harrimaninstitute.org

Wednesday, December 3 at 7:00 p.m.
"An Evening of Poetry with Kote Kubaneishvili"
Conceptualist Georgian poet Kote Kubaneishvili offers an evening of original poetry and spoken word in Georgian and English, a short film, and his own photography.
Location: Harriman Atrium: 12th floor, International Affairs Building

Friday, December 5 at 3:30 p.m.
The Harriman Institute's Ambassadors' Forum presents: a talk by Ambassador Irakli Alasania, Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations

DEUTSCHES HAUS AT COLUMBIA
420 West 116th Street
212-854-1858

<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/german/dhaus/>

Thursday, December 4 at 8:00 p.m.
Lecture: "On Hesitation"
With Joseph Vogl, Professor of Literature, Cultural Studies and Media at Humboldt University in Berlin, & research scholar at the Institute of German Literature.

LA MAISON FRANCAISE AT COLUMBIA

Broadway at 116th Street, Buell Hall, 2nd Floor. Tel.: 212.854.4482; email: maisoncoordinator@columbia.edu
<http://www.maisonfrancaise.org>

Tuesday, November 2 at 5:00pm

Café Conversation

Note: The Café Conversation is open to Members of the Société des Amis de La Maison Française and Columbia University students with a valid and current CUID.

Thursday, November 4 at 7:30pm

Film: "La Sentinelle"

By: Arnaud Desplechin, 1992

Friday, December 5 at 2:00 p.m.

Discussion: "Levi-Strauss and Literature: Roundtable on the work of Claude Levi-Strauss"

Location: 614 Schermerhorn Hall
Speakers: Vincent Debaene (Columbia University): "Levi-Strauss and Literature: Within and Without"; Boris Wiseman (Durham University): "Symbolism, Sensation, and Mythopoetics"; Rosalind Morris (Columbia University): "The Mule's Mouth"; James Boon (Princeton University): "Levi-Strauss a Longtemps Later, and Still From Afar"
Contact:
maisoncoordinator@columbia.edu

Monday, December 8 at 7:00 p.m.

Book Club: "La Repudiee" by Eliette Abecassis

Contact:
bookclubinfo@columbia.edu.
Note: The Book Club is open to Members of the Société des Amis de La Maison Française and Columbia University students with a valid and current CUID.

THE ITALIAN ACADEMY FOR ADVANCED STUDIES IN AMERICA

1161 Amsterdam Avenue
Tel: 212.854.2306; email: itacademy@columbia.edu
<http://www.italianacademy.columbia.edu/>

Wednesday, December 3 at 5:30 p.m.
Poetry Reading and Discussion: "Poetry in Italy, Poetry in America"
RSVP: nb2413@columbia.edu.

Concluding Wednesday, December 3 at 8:00 p.m.

Concert Series: "The Grand Tour Orchestra"

With: Stamitz and Boccherini; with Eric Hoepflich, clarinet

Admission: \$15 (\$10 for students and seniors)

Thursday, December 4 at 2:00 p.m.

& Friday, December 5 at 9:00 a.m.

Workshop: "Emergent Nanoscience"

Organizers: Vittorio Pellegrini, Italian Academy Fellow, INFM-CNR NEST; and James Yardley, Columbia University

--THE GRADUATE CENTER, CUNY--

THE EUROPEAN UNION STUDIES CENTER

365 Fifth Avenue. Tel: 212-817-2051; email: eusc@gc.cuny.edu <http://euromatters.org>

Tuesday, December 2 at 12:30 p.m.
Lecture: "The Origins of the Financial Crisis of 2008"

With: Dr. Anna J. Schwartz, Research Associate, National Bureau of Economic Research

Room: C201/C202/C203

RSVP by December 1

Monday, December 8 at 5:30 p.m.

The Annual Dr. Otto L. Walter Memorial Lecture: "Ten Years of Euro: Strengths and Weaknesses Revealed"

With: Professor Peter B. Kenen, Princeton University

Rooms: 9206/9207

Reception to follow.

RSVP by December 7

New York University

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*Center for European and
Mediterranean Studies*

*285 Mercer St, 7th Floor
New York, NY 10003*