SHAKESPEARE ALIVE (AND IN LOVE) ON CAMPUS THIS SPRING

By Veronica Colborn

Since 2013, the Rites, Rights, Writes (RRW) events have been challenging students to answer difficult questions concerning what it means to be human. RRW highlights the important role of the arts as a means of understanding the human condition through interdisciplinary exploration of literature, theater, music, dance and other art forms. This semester, the University will host a Romeo and Juliet/Shakespeare series, which will include a workshop by the Cincinnati Shakespeare Company, a cultural colloquium about Shakespeare’s composition and composition style, and the Dayton Ballet’s performance of Romeo and Juliet at the Schuster Performing Arts Center, to name just a few.

English professor Dr. Elizabeth Mackay, who teaches a Shakespeare class, is helping to plan a few events of the series. One of these is a showing of Tom Stoppard’s 1998 film Shakespeare in Love. In accordance with the goals of RRW, showing this fictional account of the inspiration of Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet will encourage students to think about the play in new and different ways. Romeo and Juliet, a vital part of the literary canon today, was at one point new and exciting, Dr. Mackay reminds us. The film is an interesting and different approach to a play with which we all are so familiar.

Along with fellow English professor Dr. Alex MacLeod and voice and opera teacher Ms. Andrea Chenoweth Wells, Dr. Mackay will participate in a Campus Cultural Connections event of the series, focusing on “compositions.” While Shakespeare’s composition will be one of the topics of the conversation, it will also include UD’s opera program and will encourage students to look for similarities and differences in composing literature and composing a musical score. Despite different content and different mediums, art forms often share some vocabulary and approaches in their composition. One of the most interesting and applicable aspects of the arts is how the different forms interact with and reflect each other. Dr. Mackay is most excited for the ballet performance at the Schuster Center. There are countless film and performed adaptations of Romeo and Juliet, but it is exciting to see the famous play adapted in the medium of dance.

Students who choose to major in a discipline within the humanities often do so because of their awareness of how the arts serve as a reminder of our own human nature — our own feelings of joy and despair, interactions with fate, romances and heartbreaks, philosophies and ideologies, foolishness and failures, sacrifices and successes. The Romeo and Juliet/ Shakespeare series of RRW aims to remind us of that, too. There is a reason that Shakespeare is a timeless and universal writer. It’s because, as Dr. Mackay states, he “knew how to imagine so many different types of people.” And that, indeed, is at the core of what it means to be human.

Explore the arts with Rites, Rights, Writes. You can see a full list of events in this series (and other series) at go.udayton.edu/rrw.

A WORD FROM THE CHAIR

The more time I spend with the faculty, staff and students in the English department, the more inspired I become. The quality of scholarly and creative works we are publishing and the leadership English faculty and students exhibit on campus, in the Dayton community and around the world is a sure sign of good things happening. If you are in Dayton, we hope you can stop by to catch up with us. If you are not, we are happy to hear from you and to celebrate your successes with our own. The English department has become a very special place for me; I am grateful for all the gifts that our faculty and staff, our students and our alumni bring to our communities. — Dr. Andrew Slade

CONTACT

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The University of Dayton’s Common Academic Program (CAP) is a learning experience common among all undergraduate students regardless of major. Integrating traditional learning with life experiences, theory with application, and practicality with creativity, CAP aims to ensure that students will understand the complexity of our global society and respond thoughtfully to its challenges and opportunities throughout their lives.

For English majors, CAP classes encourage exploring timely issues of our local and global communities through reading and writing. Students approach topics from a literary perspective but also explore understanding of a topic through other disciplines, like history, philosophy, the social sciences and theology. This year, the English department has introduced several new CAP courses that will further the goal of interdisciplinary understanding of current issues. They include:

ENG 307 Varieties of English
ENG 313 Social Justice & Dramatic Lit
ENG 318 Detective Fiction
ENG 336 Gender and Fiction
ENG 359 Discourse Analysis
ENG 366 Health Literacy & Social Justice
ENG 373 Writing in the Health Professions
ENG 375 Writing for the Web

Dr. P.J. Carlisle
Herbert W. Martin Fellow in Creative Writing & Diversity
A 2014 Lambda Literary Foundation LGBTQ Emerging Writer
Rachel Bloom-Pojar

Rachel Bloom-Pojar joins the Technical and Professional Writing faculty as a new assistant professor. She earned her Ph.D. in rhetoric and composition from the University of Kansas in May 2015. Bloom-Pojar’s research examines cross-cultural literacy practices in transnational health programs. Her current writing focuses on a qualitative project she conducted in the Dominican Republic with a summer health program that was run by community health leaders and visiting health providers from the U.S. Bloom-Pojar’s other interests for teaching and research include medical writing, health literacy, global health rhetoric and community engagement. She is originally from Wheaton, Illinois, and moved to Dayton with her husband, Dan. She enjoys dancing bachata, merengue and salsa and is always looking for opportunities to practice her Spanish stateside.

Joseph Craig

Joseph Craig earned his M.A. in English at the University of Dayton. This fall he returns to UD as a lecturer in the English department after a few years of cutting his teeth on the road, adjuncting at several institutions in southwestern Ohio. In addition to teaching composition, he has taught online and in the Intensive English Program at UD. Currently, Craig is teaching blended sections of ENG 100, as well as an ENG 200 course that focuses on poverty in the U.S. Outside of the classroom, he can often be found listening to music or cultivating his enthusiasm for bourbon and cooking.

Brittany Cook

Brittany Cook received both her B.A. (English and fine arts, 2011) and M.A. (English, 2015) from UD. She began teaching during her hiatus between degrees while working with AmeriCorps and continued as a teaching assistant at UD. Her scholarly interests in body theory and visual narratives influence her research and artwork alike.

Masha Kisel

Masha Kisel received her Ph.D. in Slavic languages and literatures from Northwestern University. Before becoming a lecturer at UD she taught Russian language, Slavic literature, cultural history and film at the University of Victoria and completed a postdoc at Lawrence University. In her free time, she enjoys hanging out with her 3-year-old twins and her husband, Sam Dorf, who teaches in UD’s music department. (continued)
Rachel Rowe

Rachel Rowe received her M.A. in English at the University of Dayton. After having the opportunity to teach composition as a graduate assistant, Rowe was happy to continue pursuing her passion for teaching as a lecturer at UD. Her scholarly interests range from teaching writing and TESOL to postmodern fairy tales. When she’s not on campus, Rowe enjoys mentoring junior high and high school students through youth ministry. She and her husband, Caleb, are enjoying their first little one, Adalyn, born February 2.

ADJUNCT & PART-TIME FACULTY

We thank our part-time faculty members and teaching assistants for their outstanding service to the department!

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Eric Gilliland
Jason Hentschel
Caleb Hildenbrandt
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ALUMNI AND EMERITI

We’d love to hear from you!
Please drop us a note and tell us what you’re up to.

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