Faculty News

Laura Brueck, Associate Professor of South Asian Literature and Culture and Rajeev Kinra, Associate Professor of History and ALC Affiliate, with the help of colleagues on a selection committee, inaugurated the annual Global Humanities Translation Prize competition by awarding it to two manuscripts: Manzoor Ahtesham’s Tale of the Missing Man, translated from Hindi by Jason Grunebaum and Ulrike Stark, and the Poems of Mansur al-Hallaj, translated from Persian and annotated by Carl Ernst. Both will be published by Northwestern University Press in their 2018 season.

Corey Byrnes, Assistant Professor of Modern Chinese Literature, spent the year as a post-doctoral fellow at the Mahindra Humanities Center at Harvard where he participated in a workshop on “slow violence,” a concept that comes out of Rob Nixon’s eco-infected literary studies. While there, Corey completed a draft manuscript of his book entitled Fixing Landscape.

Message from the Chair

We had a wonderfully rich year in 2016-2017! We welcomed visiting scholars and artists from all over the world, graduated four majors and fourteen minors, and celebrated the hard work and tremendous achievements of our students, including the conferral of departmental honors for two of our graduating seniors, Baani Singh and Jaclyn Zhou. In the Fall we welcomed Dr. Thomas Gaubatz, Assistant Professor in Japanese Literature and Culture, and Dr. David Boyk, Assistant Professor of Instruction in Hindi-Urdu, the two most recent additions to our growing faculty. Thanks to everyone who continues to work so hard for ALC’s success, and we hope to see you soon!

Laura Brueck

Congratulations Class of 2017!

We are so excited to congratulate all of our graduated students, including our four majors: Jaclyn Zhou, Sam Garcia, Baani Singh, and Jackson Walker! Jaclyn and Baani are the department’s first two Honors students, and presented their original research in the fields of Chinese gender studies and Indian diasporic formations to a large audience of students and faculty at our first Senior Thesis Luncheon in May.
The Inaugural Phyllis Lyons Lectures in Japanese Studies Convenes Top Scholars in Japanese Literature and Culture

After the retirement in Spring 2016 of Professor Phyllis Lyons, a pioneer in the study of Japanese literature and culture at Northwestern, ALC proudly dedicated an annual lecture on Japanese Studies in her name. For our inaugural lecture, we welcomed not just one, but three top scholars of Japanese literary and cultural history to speak to students and faculty!

Michael Emmerich is Associate Professor of Asian Languages and Cultures at UCLA and a prolific translator and scholar of modern and contemporary Japanese literature. He gave a lecture called “Singular and Fortunate Discoveries in Japanese Literature: Notes on the Early History of Translation” on the origins of literary translations from Japanese to English, and its multiple imbrications with matters of materiality, corporeality, Orientalist aesthetics, and the politics of war.

Satoko Shimazaki is Associate Professor of East Asian Languages and Cultures at USC. She gave a lecture called “Stage Body Stage Gender: Early Modern Kabuki Actors and Print Identity” on the way that print records from Edo and early Tokyo construct the gender identities of male and female-role actors in the Kabuki theater. After Professor Shimazaki’s presentation, Daniel Botman, Professor of Japanese History at Yale University, offered comments on Kabuki theater as social history.
Visiting Scholars Focus on Aesthetics and Politics of Translation

The theory and practice of translation is central to all aspects of the ALC curriculum, from language classes to literature and culture courses in English. Translation as both art form and political practice was at the center of several discussions among students, faculty, and visiting scholars.

Musharraf Ali Farooqi is an award-winning author and translator who is deeply invested in making the literary heritage of Urdu available to a new generation of readers and listeners. In his lecture he explored the dynamics, as well as the stakes, of translating and publishing from Urdu literature in Pakistan today. This was especially meaningful for students enrolled in Professor Daniel Majchrowicz’s course on literature in contemporary Pakistan. These students had the opportunity to interact with Farooqi and discuss both his translations and original fiction.

Professor Emeritus Phyllis Lyons and UCLA professor Michael Emmerich participated in a Translation Salon at Bookends and Beginnings in downtown Evanston, hosted by Northwestern’s Global Humanities Initiative, which is co-directed by ALC Chair Laura Brueck and Affiliate faculty member Rajeev Kunju. Professor Lyons read from her forthcoming translation of In Black & White, a novel by Jun’ichiro Tanizaki, and Professor Emmerich read from his 2004 translation of Sayonara Gangsters, a novel by Genichiro Takahashi.

Across Asia, Through History: Guest Lectures Highlight a Range of Subjects

Professor Deepti Misri (University of Colorado) talked about her research into politically interventionist art and visual media in the contemporary conflict zone in the Indian state of Kashmir.

Professor Travis Workman (University of Minnesota) gave a talk on the intellectual history of colonial Korea and the Japanese empire. This was the first academic talk planned in relation to the burgeoning Korean studies program. The talk reached an audience with transnational interests in modern Korean culture and history, and Japanese and comparative colonialisms.

Professor Hwisang Cho (Xavier University/Institute for Advanced Study) gave a talk on the writing culture of the Choson period in Korea. The audience included faculty and students interested in the culture of premodern Korea as well as others with broad interests in writing and the material cultures of East Asia.
Faculty News

Chin-Hung Chang, Lecturer in Chinese, was accredited as an Oral Proficiency Interviewer (OPI) by ACTFL.

Jingjing Ji was promoted to Assistant Professor of Instruction in Chinese.

Junko Sato was promoted to Associate Professor of Instruction in Japanese.

Paola Zamperini, Associate Professor of Chinese Literature and Gender and Sexuality Studies, spent her sabbatical working on three book manuscripts, namely Boudoir Red, Spell Bound, and Clothes That Matter, on late imperial pornography, gambling in Ming and Qing fiction, and sartorial practices in 21st century P.R.C. respectively. She was able to complete the first two manuscripts and a couple of articles during her tenure as a research fellow at the Humanities Center at Australia National University, and also spent time giving lectures on her work in progress in Australia, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and University of Hawaii at Manoa. Whatever little time left she had between lectures and writing sessions, she spent fulfilling her life-long dream of diving on the Great Barrier Reef.

Film Screenings and Discussions Bring Asia Into Focus


Assistant Professor of Japanese Literature and Culture Patrick Noonan hosted Scholar and Curator Hirasawa Go and director Masanori Oe for the screening and discussion of several contemporary Japanese experimental films from the 1960s. Masanori Oe’s discussions of his experiences making films in New York and Chicago in the midst of political protests, like those at the 1968 Democratic Convention in Chicago, highlighted, for audiences, the historical intersections of global experimental filmmaking and politics in this moment.

Patrick Noonan also hosted documentary filmmaker and scholar Eiji Oguma for a screening and discussion of Oguma’s film. Shortly after the nuclear meltdown at the Fukushima Daiichi reactors, two hundred thousand people surrounded the Japanese Prime Minister’s office to protest the use of nuclear power in Japan. Through interviews with eight individual protestors, Tell the Prime Minister presents these events and the crisis that democracy in Japan currently faces.

Muzaffarnagar Baqi Hai

Assistant Professor of South Asian Literature and Culture Daniel Majchrowicz hosted Indian documentary filmmaker Nakul Singh Sawhney to screen his film, which examines the intersection of violence and politics in India.
Cultural Events Offer Students a Window into the World Outside the Classroom

With support from ALC, Weinberg College Course Enhancement Grants, and the Buffett Institute for Global Studies, Asian language students enjoyed a host of cultural activities outside the language classroom, including cooking in the “Global Kitchen,” singing *Noraebang*, or Korean karaoke, and taking in concerts and exploring Asian restaurants in Chicago.

Assistant Professor of Instruction in Korean Ilhnee Kim (right) led Korean language students in the preparation of a Korean meal.

At Open Mic night, organized by the Korean language program, Korean language students sang Korean songs in a *Noraebang* (Karaoke) setting.

Professor of Instruction in Japanese Noriko Taira Yasohama brought students from Japanese 121-2 to the Symphony Center in Chicago to watch a traditional Japanese drumming performance: KODO’s DADAN2017. The performance, and subsequent dinner at a Japanese ramen noodle house, also provided welcome relief from preparation for midterms!

Lecturer in Chinese, Chin-Hung Chang (second from right) brought Chinese language students to Chicago’s Field Museum to experience the exhibit and 3D movie on the “Mysteries of China.”

Assistant Professor of Instruction Hong Shao (second from left) leads a Global Kitchen for her Chinese 121-3 class.

Faculty, students and guests of ALC surveyed the exhibit Tseng Kwong Chi: Performing for the Camera, on view on campus at the Block Museum. L-R: Thomas Gaubatz, Patrick Noonan, Licheng Gu, Ram Nair
New Faculty

David Boyk
Assistant Professor of Instruction in Hindi-Urdu

Thomas Gaubatz
Assistant Professor of Japanese Literature and Culture

Visiting Faculty

Anne Rebull
Chinese Literature and Culture

Norbu Samphell
Readings in Tibetan Texts

Graduate Teaching

Hye Yun Kang taught Korean 311-2, Korean through Movies: Contemporary Cultures in the Media

Jae Kyu Lee taught Korean 311-3, Korean IV: Topics in the News

Student Workers

A big thank you to all of our student workers who assisted us throughout the year. Kathy Tian, Peter Kim, Beomseok Kim and Ruogu Xu.

ALC Students Take Their Language Skills Beyond the Classroom

Three Chinese language students, Alexandra Hall, Kori Cooper, and Sydney Yockey went to University of Wisconsin-Madison and participated in the Midwest Chinese Speech Contest. They competed against approximately 50 contestants from over 20 universities including the Universities of Chicago, Michigan, Minnesota and Indiana, winning bronze medals in their 2nd year and 3rd year group.

On June 16, the department celebrated with our graduating seniors and their families! Five students won Outstanding Achievement Awards in their areas of study. The awards went to: Clare Fisher, Haokun Ma (pictured third from left), Baani Singh, Jackson Walker, and Jaclyn Zhou.

Faculty Teach Asian Languages for Global Business

Effective Communication in the Workplace

In a 2-part lecture series on intercultural communication in the work place organized by Professor of Instruction in Japanese Noriko Taïra Yasohama, our undergraduate students heard an overview of what the traditional Japanese corporate culture is like and got an introduction to the cultural study of the business world. It served as a starting point for students to learn about Japanese culture in the workplace and to start thinking about how they can prepare for various challenges when perspectives and assumptions differ from their own.

Business Language Lunch and Learn

This event, organized by Lecturer in Chinese Wen-pin Hsieh, invited students and faculty taking and teaching business language courses on campus—Business Chinese, Business French and Business Spanish—to have a lunch together and exchange experiences of learning and teaching languages for business purposes.