

# ROMANCE LANGUAGES

N e w s l e t t e r

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON · EUGENE · SPRING · 2011

## *Dear Friends of Romance Languages,*

This is the last year of my appointment as head of the Department of Romance Languages. Three intense and exciting years have passed since I was appointed in July of 2008. I must say that it has been a very gratifying experience to serve in this capacity, and now more than ever I feel proud of being part of an energetic, dedicated, and generous group of professionals.

This year I am pleased to introduce new faculty members who are teaching for us or joining our ranks next year. We have a new supervisor of second-year French language instruction, Brian Barnett (PhD, 2008, Indiana University at Bloomington). Brian comes with outstanding credentials and his impact on our French program is already noticeable. Also in French, Irina Armianu (PhD, 2010, Rice University) has joined the department as visiting assistant professor to teach courses on contemporary French literature this and next year. Finally, Claudia Holguín Mendoza (PhD, 2011, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign) will join us next year as a specialist in applied linguistics to teach in our program for Spanish heritage learners.

In November of last year, our graduate students organized a wonderful and successful conference “Dis/placing Boundaries in the Romance World.” These conferences are a very important step in the process of professionalization of graduate students. I am happy to see that over the years our graduate students continue to meet the challenges of organizing this type of event.



Congratulations to this year’s conference organizers for creating a very successful event.

In the spring of this year, Associate Professor Fabienne Moore and Assistant Professor Tania Triana will coteach a seminar on the “Legacies of the Haitian Revolution.” The class will address the cultural repercussion in Europe, Latin America, and the U.S. of the Haitian revolution (1791–1804). This course will be associated with a series of related events (invited speakers and film screenings). Moore and Triana were awarded a grant from the Office of the Vice President for Institutional Equity and Diversity and from the College of Arts and Sciences to organize these events. It is always rewarding to see teamwork between faculty members with specialization in different languages, as is the case of Moore (French) and Triana (Spanish). Collaboration among the languages we teach is a characteristic of our department.

I am happy to state that our department continues to be a very strong unit, with high enrollments in the three languages, and with inextinguishable energy and incessant initiative to generate a stimulating academic atmosphere. This year we have renewed our discussion on the future of language learning in French, Italian, and Spanish. As we do regularly, but perhaps with more intensity this year, we are exploring novel ways to give our students the best and most useful instruction.

Undergraduate programs are the foundation of our department. I cannot stress enough how important it is for us to make sure that we are offering our undergraduates the best possible education. Knowing more than one language has become a required skill in the global world of the twenty-first century. We need to make sure that our pedagogy and the contents of our programs correspond with the needs of our future professionals. Thus, this year, we are reviewing our undergraduate programs. We are discussing topics such as new technologies in the classroom, online courses, learning in bilingual and bicultural contexts, and new approaches to integrate language, literature, culture, social studies (history and anthropology, for example), and arts and film in our courses. We also want to make sure that our program continues to have a strong humanistic foundation that fosters understanding and love for other cultures. I am very optimistic about the future of our department, and excited about the projects that we are envisaging.

*Continued on page 3*



UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

## Workshop Introduces Students to Francophone Louisiana

*Ouaouaron? cadien? Lâche pas la patate? boule de tac-tac?*

These words and phrases—bullfrog, Cajun, Don't give up! and popcorn ball—were used during the eleven second-year French classes at the University of Oregon. During the last two weeks of each session, students completed a culture workshop focusing on francophone Louisiana.

Activities included watching the documentary *Bonjour l'histoire* (a film created by Louisiana children to explain why French is spoken in Louisiana), reading the Louisiana folktale *l'Habitation* with the trickster and fool characters of Lapin and Bouki, listening to the Louisiana author Jean Arceneaux read his poem *Schizophrénie linguistique*, comparing the differences between international French and Louisiana French lexicon and syntax, listening to and discussing traditional and modern forms of Louisiana music (Hadley J. Castille's song *200 lignes*, Feufollet's *Fier d'être cadien*, and Isle Dernière's *La terre est enflammée*), and cooking Louisiana recipes.

C. Brian Barnett, a UO career instructor who is the second-year French supervisor, decided to integrate Louisiana into the curriculum to give students an opportunity to discover a francophone community found in the United States and to help students realize that French is alive today in their own country. Francophone Louisiana is frequently absent from the French language curriculum even though students are interested in the topic.

"I'm in this French class not to go to France; my real interest is Creole and other dialects of French," said **Elizabeth**



From left to right: Aubri Bishop, junior, pre-education major; Elizabeth Ashworth, junior, history major; Madison Odenburg, freshman, prebusiness administration major

**Schaller**, a sophomore undeclared major. "It was very refreshing to finally study a community or culture for more than one day and really learn about French speakers who aren't in France."

Students saw the value of being exposed to the American varieties of French. Many students are more likely to interact with speakers of French living in the Americas. Therefore, it is useful to learn about particularities of these varieties of French.

"The other important thing was some of the language differences between French spoken in France and French spoken in the United States," said **Kathleen Kearns**, a junior anthropology major. "There are some large differences and it is more likely that French students will encounter the language in America rather than in France."

Another unit objective was to sensitize students to the linguistic discrimination Louisiana French speakers faced in the

past and to introduce them to current language maintenance efforts. This information was unknown to many University of Oregon students.

"Something I thought that was very important to know was the discrimination and cultural differences that weren't accepted and all the history behind Cajuns and Louisiana," said **Malee Gunaratne**, a freshman undeclared major. "I had never heard of any of it until this class. Also, I feel that it was important to know the different cultures in our country, since it is such an important part of the U.S."

According to Barnett, the workshop was made possible, thanks to the financial support of the Centre de la Francophonie des Amériques. He considered the culture workshop to be a success and is looking forward to developing upper-level courses focusing on the francophone communities of the Americas.

## Graduate Conference

On November 19–20, 2010, the department hosted Dis/placing Boundaries in the Romance World, the biennial Romance languages graduate student conference. This brilliantly successful event included eleven panels with participants coming from fourteen different universities in the United States and Europe.

In addition, three distinguished keynote speakers presented their work in plenary sessions. Professor Norma Bouchard from the University of Connecticut spoke on "Promises and Challenges of Transnational Italy in the Era of Migration"; Professor Alfredo Sosa-Velasco from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill gave a keynote address on "Cultures of Memory from the Periphery in Spain"; and Professor Arthur Saint-Aubin from Occidental College presented on "The Causes and Consequences of Racial Visibility or Erasing the Border Between Black and White: The Case of Haiti and Toussaint Louverture."

The conference program concluded with a lively roundtable discussion with all three keynote speakers and conference participants, moderated by University of Oregon assistant professor Pedro García-Caro. The closing reception included a delightful program of music, poetry,

*Continued from page 1*

As I write these lines, sad news was delivered to me: Perry "Jack" Powers, professor emeritus of Spanish, passed away very recently. When I came to the UO twenty years ago, Jack was already retired. However, his presence and spirit were still well alive in our department. It has been an honor and a pleasure for me to be able to know him for many years. He was a true Romance languages scholar, interested in all aspects of the literatures and cultures of each one of the Romance languages. He was also a genuine humanist, with an absolute faith in education. Generously, he established a fund for scholarships to support

spoken word, and photography presented by University of Oregon graduate students.

At the conclusion of the two-day event, Karen McPherson, director of graduate studies, made the following closing remarks:

The past two days have been wonderfully exciting and stimulating. On behalf of the department and all the participants, I wish to express our admiration, our thanks, and our congratulations to the graduate students who worked long and hard to make this conference happen. The names of those students and their committees are listed inside the back cover of the conference program, and each and every one whose name appears there deserves a round of applause. But I would also like to take this opportunity to single out two students who worked tirelessly and with great vision from the very beginning and all along, the co-coordinators of the Organizing Committee, Sandra Mefoude and Ana-Maria M'Enesti.

I come away from this conference moved and heartened. This is the new generation of Romance scholars, an obviously vibrant and extremely

undergraduate students' education. We will miss Jack very much, and we send our condolences to his family.

I want to thank the friends and donors of the Romance languages department for their continuous support of our work through their generous gifts and endowments. The events that we are able to bring to the university community, as well as the scholarships that we are able to provide to our students, enormously benefit our educative mission. Let me plead for the continuation of your support. To the friends and alumni of Romance languages, please consider

talented generation. I know that you will all agree with me that the level and sophistication of discourse in the conference sessions was impressive. It has been wonderful to see how the widely varying areas and subjects of research covered in the papers came into productive dialogue and resonance with one another. I was also struck by how the papers I heard all seemed to be grounded in a fundamental acknowledgement of the importance of doing the kind of work we do. The message was clear: our work, however disparate the approaches and topics, has to do with the political and environmental and social realities in which we are living and engages with deeply important and lasting questions of ethics and human-ness and humanity. This gathering makes a strong argument for the relevance—or I'd go further, the necessity—of our disciplines. You students have made a strong argument for the vital role of higher education and have shown how intellect and imagination can and must complement each other to enrich our world. Symposia such as this one energize us to continue to fight to stem the tides currently threatening to efface the humanities from the academy.

supporting us. You could change for the best the life of a Romance language student.

I would like to finish by thanking my colleagues and staff for their support during my three years as head of the department. Without their hard work, enthusiasm, and initiative, Romance languages would not be among the finest units at the University of Oregon.

*Leonardo García-Pabón*  
Professor of Spanish, and Head

## Davis, Quarles help develop new online language venture

Middlebury College is a top liberal arts college, internationally recognized for its language studies. Associate Professor of Spanish Robert Davis, who is director of language instruction for the UO Department of Romance Languages, is also director of the Middlebury at Mills Escuela de Español, the new West coast campus of the world-renowned Vermont institution. He and Heather Quarles, a UO instructor of Spanish, are part of the development team for Middlebury Interactive Languages, a venture that aims to bring the success of the Middlebury model to an online environment.

Middlebury Interactive Languages (MIL) is a joint venture between Middlebury College and K12 Inc., the country's largest provider of online education programs for K–12 students. Davis and Quarles are on the development team that is creating an online environment in which students can develop real-world proficiency in a second language.

The project has three parts: an online language course, where students have

access to multimedia content designed to teach specific grammatical and cultural points, a virtual “student interest area,” and a virtual immersive environment in which students can interact with other language learners in a 3-D online world. Quarles points out that these student-driven interest areas function much like clubs do in the face-to-face world. She notes that they will give students “a chance to choose topics that most interest them personally. And personal interest, as we know, is a great motivator.”

Quarles also spent the past summer helping shoot documentary-style films of young adults in various Spanish-speaking cities all over the world for the project. She describes the films as “unscripted, dynamic, and authentic,” and aimed at showing K–12 students how the Spanish language can differ from one country to another.

According to Davis, while language professionals have been trying to bring language learning online for years, “no one has [yet] come up with a completely

satisfactory approach.” Middlebury Interactive will be combining the best of the Middlebury immersion approach with cutting-edge tools for online learning.

He explains that “most online learning programs fail because they only focus on [the] beginning stages of acquisition or provide only mechanical drills in vocabulary and grammar,” but that MIL will “allow learners to go further in their acquisition,” and will offer “opportunities for interaction with other learners that will approximate the immersion environment that is the hallmark of the Middlebury Language Schools summer programs.”

Middlebury Interactive Languages has already attracted significant press coverage, including articles in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Forbes*, and *The New York Times*.

*Sarah Sullivan is a senior at the University of Oregon. She studies public relations and Spanish.*

## Undergraduates Abroad

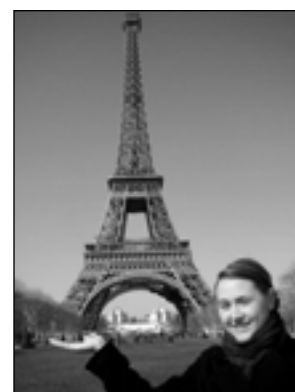
### ANGERS: Allez en France!

This past spring I had to opportunity to study abroad in Angers, France, for eighteen weeks. The only way to describe my time abroad would be to say that it was one of the best experiences of my life. Angers, located in the beautiful Loire Valley, has the perfect feel to it. It's not too big and not too small, but if we ever needed a dose of the big city, Paris was only a train ride away.

My host family was wonderful and we got along really well, but their cooking was probably one of the best things about them. I looked forward to every Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday night because each time dinner was absolutely delicious.

Our on-site coordinator, Sue Crust, was the best help we could have asked for. Whatever question we had, she always knew the answer.

The excursions were equally amazing. We went to Mont Saint Michel, Saint Malo, the beaches of Normandy, the chateaux of the Loire Valley, a zoo, and even a troglodyte restaurant that had the best food in the world. I got to experience so much more of the French cities and culture than I had ever expected.



Study abroad taught me many things about the culture and language that I would not have been able to learn in a classroom and I am so grateful for that. I loved being abroad so much, that at the end of the semester I was not ready to leave, and luckily I had all of summer to stay abroad and work in France. Before I left, many people

told me that study abroad would change me, which I never thought would be true. Now, looking back on my experience, they were absolutely right!

*by Hayley Robinett*

## Visiting Assistant Professor of French: Irina Armianu



**Irina Armianu has been appointed as a visiting assistant professor at the UO Department of Romance Languages for the academic year 2010–11.**

A Romanian-born scholar, she graduated from Alexandru Ioan Cuza University where her interest in philology, both Romanian and French, focused on rhetorical studies and modern novel discourse.

Her interest in researching on French studies was continued when Irina was awarded a graduate fellowship at Rice University. The research area of French studies has been continuously expanding from its original boundaries of French and Francophone language and culture. These new horizons have been always a part of the mainstream, problematic of French studies, but now they seem to have a very clear definition as French thought, French cinema, or feminist studies. In Houston Irina had the opportunity to further expand her academic education and research topics. Her doctoral thesis, “Literature and cinema: the case of Jean Cocteau,” reflects her focus on both literary esthetics and film studies.

Her appointment as a visiting scholar at the University of Oregon gave her the opportunity to continue and develop pedagogical and research skills. She has been granted the opportunity to teach

culture and language courses within a friendly and highly professional language department. During her first quarter here she brought a strong commitment both to independent and collaborative research in planning undergraduate courses. As a part of this commitment she pursued articles and reviews on contemporary France as well as a publishing project of her doctoral thesis.

Her ultimate goal, after completing her graduate studies, was to become a friendly companion for her students and to give them the liberty of critical thinking. Not only was she pleasantly surprised by her students' eagerness to understand French society and French cultural values but also Irina was offered methodological and professional guidance from many professors in the Romance languages department.

It follows from the above that her plan is to continue her research on cinema and to extend her attention on visual arts. Theater and painting as much as photography will probably constitute an extremely interesting field of research, strongly related to the nineteenth-century French novel, as illustrated by writers like Zola or Balzac.

### Our undergraduate majors and minors travel the world

Of the majors and minors in the Department of Romance Languages who have graduated in the last four years, these percentages show how many have studied abroad:

MAJORS:	
French	75 percent
Italian	85 percent
Romance Languages	62 percent
Spanish	70 percent

MINORS:	
French	62 percent
Italian	88 percent
Spanish	53 percent

Compare this to the majors and minors outside the Department of Romance Languages who have studied abroad in the last four years:

Non-RL majors	16percent
Non-RL minors	18 percent

### Fall Forum

The Department of Romance Languages MA Students' Fall Forum took place on October 15, 2010. An audience of graduate students and faculty members gathered in 129 McKenzie Hall to listen to seven second-year MA students present papers based on their summer readings.

The event was organized like an academic conference with papers grouped into two consecutive moderated sessions. Papers addressed works by Luigi Pirandello, Mongo Beti, Ousmane Sembene, Pedro Almodóvar,

Francisco de Quevedo, Luis de Góngora, Emilia Pardo Bázan, Mercedes Cabello de Carbonera, Rosalía de Castro, Antonio Machado, Simón Bolívar, and Andrés Bello. The final fifteen minutes of each session were devoted to discussion, with questions from the audience.

Attendees were impressed by the scholarly research and professional presentation of these papers. The Summer Reading and Fall Forum have proven to be very successful additions to the MA program.



## Are there unintended consequences to imaginary travel?



By Amalia Gladhart, Associate Professor of Romance Languages

Immersed in an imaginary Galápagos—translating *Beyond the Islands*—I have been travelling, mentally, for years. I hope people will read the translation and “travel” as well. And yet, a fragile ecosystem like that of the Galápagos Islands can only support so many visitors. Am I part of the problem? How many people might finish the book and then jump on a plane? What will happen when they get there?

Visitors to the islands marvel at the extraordinary richness of life (and marvel that life survives at all) yet worry about the islands’ destruction, a dynamic common to both fiction and travel guides. The numerous guides to the islands’ flora, fauna, and tourist accommodations are, to varying degrees, at once advocates for their preservation and promoters of the islands as a unique and desirable destination.

The foreword to Pierre Constant’s *Galápagos: A Natural History Guide* extols the islands’ beauty, then sounds the alarm, citing rising numbers of visitors and residents, among other threats, and concluding that “the Galápagos must be safeguarded as the innocence of the world. . . . The magic of ‘Las Encantadas’ may one day disappear under the surface of the waves, but by then, humans would have gone long before.” The reader is placed at the threshold of Eden, on the verge of expulsion yet, perhaps, with a chance

to turn back—shades of Vonnegut’s *Galápagos*, with its apocalyptic premise and misleading brochures.

Overuse of natural resources places the Galápagos at risk, as another guidebook puts it, of “too many tourists ‘loving’ the islands to death.” The authors of *The New Key to Ecuador and the Galápagos* write, “We do realize that we are promoting tourism to the Galápagos with this book, while at the same time lamenting the increased numbers of tourists. Our hope is that appropriate quotas are enforced and that tourists to the Galápagos respect the animals and land while contributing to the benefit of the park.”

Ecologically, the threat of looming catastrophe is hardly far-fetched. The islands have seen huge increases in settlement and in visitors, as well as in problems caused by over-fishing. In 2004, some 108,583 people visited the islands. In April of 2007, the government of Rafael Correa declared an emergency in the Galápagos; in June of that year, UNESCO declared the archipelago “endangered.” Some 35,000 colonists now live in the Galápagos, more than double the estimated 12,000 living there in 1990.

The Galápagos evoked in Alicia Yáñez Cossío’s *Más allá de las islas/Beyond the Islands* are both real and unreal. Blending humor and social commentary, Yáñez Cossío uses the islands’ isolation and the overlapping discourses surrounding them (evolutionary biology, ecotourism, pirate stories) to address issues also present within mainland Ecuador. She draws on the history and folklore surrounding the Galápagos, including varying accounts of their discovery and settlement, their scientific importance, and the place of the archipelago in world tourism. The setting is not accidental, as these specific islands invite readers to think about change and evolution (and about chance and accident) in particular ways. At the

same time, the narrative treatment of the islands is not limited to a strictly realistic representation. The name of the islands appears only twice in the novel—one of those times in the Latin name of the Galápagos hawk.

Taken in the context of the multiple threats posed by settlement, tourism, and climate change, the novel’s title suggests that tenable, sustainable solutions can be achieved only by somehow reaching beyond present realities and terms of debate. This is perhaps even truer today than when the novel was first published in 1980. Unlike the natural history or tourist literature about the islands, Yáñez Cossío’s novel focuses on the human population. Pablo Ospina writes that an analysis of photographs in illustrated books or tourist guides reveals that 98 percent are nature photographs while only 2 percent include people—generally tourists. This, he argues, creates the impression that the islands are uninhabited and that visitors will find a reserve entirely dedicated to preservation (“*islas enteramente consagradas a la protección de la naturaleza*”). By contrast, the novel links the islands as place of isolation or refuge and eventual renewal with a consideration of the creative process and its importance in individual identity. In Yáñez Cossío’s rewriting of the archipelago, the greatest destructive force is not environmental degradation but human intolerance.

Whether reading fiction that ranges far from an individual’s experience builds global tolerance is an open question. Nor would I ever propose a strictly self-improvement model of reading. I don’t read novels just because they’re good for me (though my well-being is regularly restored by fiction).

But it’s worth underlining: imaginatively, writers—and readers—travel freely, widely, even impossibly, but not necessarily without consequences.

## Alumni Career Panel

For the first time, the Department of Romance Languages, in coordination with the Career Center and the College of Arts and Sciences Development Office, organized an Alumni Career Panel. Our winter 2010 event featured a panel of three successful alumni of the UO Department of Romance Languages who shared their career trajectories, including how they have used their language and intercultural skills professionally, and gave advice to current undergraduate students in our department. We are very grateful to these alumni for the time they took to share their enthusiasm and professional insight with our undergraduates.

•**Rosanna Bowles:** Founder of the fashionable tableware design company Rosanna, Inc. (BA in liberal arts, Portland State University; MA in Romance

languages—Italian and French, UO)

•**Jessica Laux:** Admissions counselor for the University of Oregon. (BA in Spanish and international studies, minor in Latin American studies, UO)

•**John Patton:** President and CEO of Cadence Management Corporation. (BA in Romance languages—Spanish and French, UO; Diploma de Estudios Hispánicos, University of Barcelona; MBA, Portland State University)

Here is what some of our students had to say:

*“The fact that there are successful business and career men and women with Romance language backgrounds was inspirational and comforting. I also feel like their preparation . . . allowed them to think thoroughly on the most*

*important things they thought we should know.”*

*“. . . the sense of positivity, acceptance, and encouragement was the most [useful] aspect. It was also very beneficial to hear things such as ‘hard work’ and ‘stay with a job for at least one year’ because this is practical advice.”*

*“I LOVED the panel! I appreciate the department putting this together for us. I felt so reassured and confident in my future afterwards.”*

Given the great attendance and response from our undergraduates, we are currently organizing a second Alumni Career Panel for the upcoming spring term.

## Student Profile: Meredith LaFrance

**Senior** (Graduates June 2011)

**Majors:** Spanish and international studies with a professional focus on diplomacy, law, and international relations and a regional focus on Latin America  
**Study-abroad experience:** Council on International Education and Exchange (CIEE) Managua, Nicaragua (spring semester 2010)

My ongoing devotion to studying Spanish has enabled me to seize numerous distinct opportunities and connect with new communities both in the United States and abroad. I decided my junior year to apply to the CIEE program in Managua, Nicaragua. I was interested in an immersive and challenging program that strayed from the more structured path of other study-abroad programs.

Upon arriving in Nicaragua, I had to hit the ground running and familiarize myself with the everyday Spanish “modismos,” or idioms. I studied international relations,

sociology of development, and precolonial history of Nicaragua at the National Autonomous University of Nicaragua in Managua. I attended classes with other Nicaraguan students and learned about certain aspects of the history and politics of the United States from a Nicaraguan perspective. I also took a class in Spanish with my fellow program participants on the political history of Nicaragua. This course provided me with extensive background knowledge of the sufferings and triumphs of the Nicaraguan people and enabled me to better understand the current culture.

In addition to taking classes at the university, I also taught English through an organization called Quincho Barrilete to children and adolescents in some of the poorest neighborhoods of the city. Some of the students were already somewhat familiar with English, but



most were not. Thus, I connected with them through Spanish.

My experience in Nicaragua was unique and allowed me a type of personal growth that I might not have otherwise found in the U.S. I was able to hone my Spanish skills and connect with the Nicaraguan people on a personal level as I studied and gave back to the community.

*PHOTO: This photo was taken at the top of a tower on Little Corn Island off the eastern coast of Nicaragua.*



## Undergraduates Abroad

Stinky  
Cheese,  
Good Wine,  
and a Year  
of Life  
Lessons . . .  
in French



“I’m not going to lie. Study abroad is not just a wonderful journey full of adventures and life-changing encounters. No . . . it’s more like an intense obstacle course that hits you at the physical, emotional, and mental level. Being in class more than twenty hours a week, in French, and living life outside of class, in French, I’ve learned can kind of beat you down. I’m learning so much from it and I’m learning a lot about myself, but sometimes it’s just a little too much. . . .”

This is an entry from my blog that I wrote at the two-month marker of my study-abroad experience in Poitiers, France. As I continued through the year, I encountered moments of triumph and moments of absolute failure that, looking back now, were probably the most important and defining. Living and studying abroad is a difficult journey, but probably one of the most worthwhile adventures I have ever embarked upon. I was ready to jump into the unknown with both feet and what I found when I took the plunge was an experience I could never have possibly imagined.

At the six-month marker, I wrote in my blog again: “I look back at the hopes and expectations I had upon arriving for where I would be (now) and it makes me giggle. . . . I imagined, not slacking off, but taking a light load of courses so that I could take time to really travel

around France. . . . I received 36 credits last semester (it’s the system . . . not my intention, I’m not that sick). I was going to be fluent in French by this point . . . oops . . . and I thought I knew French grammar before . . . ha! Well, at least I was going to have kicked the American accent by now and [be] blending in with the Frenchies . . . nope. (Note this is not a list of complaints . . . only a list of contradictions to my expectations, which is a very beautiful and exciting thing.) I was going to have traveled Europe, I was going to have partied with that red leather mini skirt that Anne gave to me. . . . And where the heck is that sassy leather-jacket-wearing French man that was supposed to come sweep me off of my feet on his moped?”

I think that I can safely say that my experience has exceeded all of those expectations. Thanks to the amazing people I met and the incredible experiences I had, I came back from France a changed person. I have gained new perspectives and a whole new confidence that I didn’t know I had in me. Once I realized that I was capable of going to university, partying, traveling, finding an apartment, paying bills, and man-handling French bureaucracy, all in French, I realized that I could handle just about anything!

by Alex Bontecou

## Announcements

The 2010 **Spring Awards Ceremony** in May was a well-attended, wonderful celebration of our outstanding students. Congratulations to our many scholarship recipients this last year. In all, thirteen graduate students and ten undergraduate students received scholarships. We would like to express our sincere thanks to all of you who have contributed to these scholarships. *Merci beaucoup, grazie mille, muchas gracias!* Scholarships remain an essential funding source for many of our strongest students, especially those who wish to study and conduct research abroad. If you are interested in making a scholarship donation, please refer to the last page of this newsletter.

At this year’s **Fall Advising Fair** in October, more than seventy-five of our majors and minors attended to talk with representatives from the many campus resources available to them, such as the Career Center, the Office of International Affairs, and the College of Education, as well as with faculty members from our department. The fair provides a one-stop event for our students who are planning ahead academically and professionally.

As of winter term 2011, our department housed:

104	French majors
18	Italian majors
101	Romance languages majors
428	Spanish majors
351	minors (French, Italian, Spanish combined)

Number of students who attended drop-in advising in the Luis Verano Undergraduate Advising Office during the 2009–10 academic year: 1,015.

## Faculty and Student Achievements

In fall 2010, **Barbara Altmann** and **Karen McPherson** cotaught FR150, Cultural Heritage of France, as well as a Freshman Interest Group (FIG) called “Vive la France!” Twenty-three FIG students (pictured at right) enrolled in both FR150 and Humanities 101, which explores Greek and Roman culture. The FIG met weekly with Karen and Barbara to discuss connections between the two courses, discover more about the UO, and learn skills for succeeding as students.

Highlights of the term included a French lunch at Barbara’s house, a holiday party at Karen’s house, and a field trip to Portland, where we toured the Cordon Bleu cooking school and visited the Portland Art Museum. At the art museum, a docent led us through the Greek and Roman sculpture collections and the students themselves played docents for the permanent collection of French Impressionist and Post-Impressionist paintings and sculptures. Many of the FIG students are already taking French language courses or will take them soon. They are all already enthusiastic Francophiles!

**Cecilia Enjuto Rangel** received an Oregon Humanities Center teaching fellowship and a Sheryl K. Coleman and Margaret E. Guitteau Teaching Fellowship for a new course she proposed to teach in spring 2012 or winter 2012, depending on the department’s need. The course is Contemporary Poetics: Spain and Latin America Through Its Poets and she plans to bring four to five speakers to campus from Guatemala, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Argentina, and Spain; she will also ask colleagues who are poets, like Leonardo García-Pabón, Juan Armando Epple, and Jesús Sepúlveda, to talk about their work.

**Juan Armando Epple** published two critical articles, “José Emilio Pacheco y la modernidad transitoria,” *Trilce*, Revista de Poesía, 28 (2010): 41–44, and “Teatro breve y minificción,” Pollastri, Laura, ed. *La huella de la clesidra. El microrrelato en el siglo XXI*. Buenos



Aires: Ediciones Katatay, 2010: 133–143. As a short story writer, he published the collection *Para leerte mejor*. Santiago: Editorial Mosquito, 2010. He had short stories published in three literary anthologies: *Arden Andes. Microficciones chilenoargentinas*. Buenos Aires: Macedonia, 2010, *For favor sea breve II*. (Madrid: Editorial Paginas de Espuma, 2010), and *Audiolibros Patagonia* (Santiago, Chile, 2010). One of his short stories is being published in a bilingual edition of the magazine *Panorama de las Americas*, edited by Copan Airlines for services to the Caribbean and Central America. In October 2010, Epple delivered a paper at the VI International Congress of Minificción in Bogota, Colombia.

During the summer and the fall, **Leonardo García-Pabón** was in Bolivia researching in libraries (Biblioteca de la Universidad Mayor de San Andrés, Biblioteca Nacional de Bolivia) about his new project on nineteenth-century Bolivian literature. This project examines literature, nation, romanticism, and ethics. Also, in 2009, he published an edition of one of the major poets of seventeenth-century Spanish literature, *Sagradas poesías* by Luis de Ribera (La Paz: Plural, 2009). He transcribed the text from Old Spanish, annotated it, and wrote an introduction.

In September 2009, **Amalia Gladhart** was invited to participate in the conference “Seminário Poéticas e Políticas das Américas/Festival Latino-Americano de Teatro da Bahia” in Salvador, Bahia,

Brazil. “Entre la pérdida y la percepción: posibilidades escéncias,” a revised version of the paper she presented, has just been published in *Repertório: Teatro & Dança*, the theater and dance journal of the Escola de Teatro, Universidade Federal da Bahia. The journal has both print and online versions. The online version can be accessed at [www.portalseer.ufba.br/index.php/revteatro/issue/view/532/showToc](http://www.portalseer.ufba.br/index.php/revteatro/issue/view/532/showToc).

**Evlyn Gould** traveled to Oxford University in the United Kingdom during September 2010 to present an original scholarly performance piece at the annual International Society for Religion, Literature, and Culture conference. Titled “Sounds of the Sephardim in fin de siècle France,” this scholarly performance piece or one-woman show launches a new endeavor she calls “humanities in performance.” In February 2010, she also traveled to Jerusalem, Israel, to present an invited workshop called “Kabbalah en Provence: The Ancient Wisdom of the Modern,” which represents part of her new research project. Gould was also the recipient of a 2010 Small Projects Grant from the UO Center for Intercultural Dialogue for “Sounds of the Sephardim,” a Ladino music preservation project. This grant funded musicians to back Gould’s performance pieces. She also has an article forthcoming titled, “Figures du ‘prêtre lyrique.’” Sand, Baudelaire, Mallarmé. It will appear in *Écriture, performance et théâtralité dans l’œuvre de George Sand*. Eds. Catherine Nesci and Olivier Bara, forthcoming in 2011.

**Gina Herrmann** has two articles forthcoming on film and fiction based on the life history of an anti-Francoist woman guerrilla member, Remedios Montero. This research was presented at the International Oral History Association Conference held in Prague in July 2010. Her papers appear in a volume titled *Maquis* and in a special issue of

*continued on page 10*

*Memory and Narrative (the Yearbook of Oral History)*. Associate Professor Herrmann has made the University of Oregon and the Department of Romance Languages co-organizers and sponsors of the most important Hispanic cinema and literature conference held in the U.S., “Cine-Lit.” Cine-Lit VII was held February 24–27, 2011, in Portland Oregon, and was the venue for screenings and presentations from filmmakers and screenwriters from Mexico, Spain, and Cuba. Participating in the conference were current RL faculty members and former graduate students. Analisa Taylor, Juan Epple, Leonardo Garcia Pabón, Cecilia Enjuto Rangel, Pedro Garcia Caro, and Gina Herrmann all delivered papers. Professor Leonardo Garcia Pabón, RL chair, together with Assistant Professor Gabriela Martinez of journalism and Associate Professor Carlos Aguirre from history presided over an extraordinary panel devoted to the fiction and film of Nobel Prize-winner Vargas Llosas. RL graduate students Erma Nezirevic and Antonio Couso also presented their research. Alumna Lisa DiGiovanni and Nicole Mombell in addition were in attendance and delivered papers. We anticipate that the University of Oregon will be a joint partner in Cine-Lit for years to come!

In September 2010, **Nathalie Hester** conducted research at the Archives Diplomatiques in Paris. The pre–Wikileaks correspondence between Louis XIV and his diplomats in Spain, much of it in secret code, will provide an essential political context for her translation and edition of the letters of French “ambassador” to Spain, Marie Gigault de Bellefonds (1679–1681). Hester also presented a paper on the bitter Florentine merchant Galeotto Cei’s sixteenth-century travel account of the Americas at a conference at the University of Notre Dame entitled “From Iberian Kingdoms to Atlantic Empires: Spain, Portugal, and the New World, 1250–1700.”

**Massimo Lollini** won as principal investigator a 2010 National Endowment for the Humanities Digital Humanities Level II Start-Up Grant (\$50,000), to work on *The Oregon Petrarch Open Book*.

He published one article on “Poetic Inspiration and Ethics of Writing as Source of Higher Narrative in Cervantes and Manzoni,” in *Epic and Other Higher Narratives: Essays in Intercultural Studies*, eds. Steven Shankman, Amiya Dev. Pearson Education, India: 2010. With Leah Middlebrook of the Comparative Literature Program he organized the International Symposium on Francesco Petrarca from Manuscript to Digital Culture held at the University of Oregon on April 10, 2010, where he presented a paper entitled “Return to Philology and Hypertext in and around Petrarch’s *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*.”

**Lise Mba Ekani**, MA candidate in French, is proud to announce her first steps in the world of research and publication. Her paper proposal entitled “Écrire la violence coloniale. Ousmane Sembene et la transgression du silence” has been accepted and included in the program for the thirty-seventh annual African Literature Association Conference that is being held April 13–17, 2011, at Ohio University, Athens, Ohio. The paper analyzes the power of language versus imposed silence, as well as the ways in which transgression operates as the *sine qua non* condition for the survival of the colonized. Building on Frantz Fanon’s theorization of violence and on Agamben’s concept of biopower, the contention of the presentation will be that African fiction translates history and opens avenues for the re-invention of the future. Last but not the least, Mba’s article, “Kétala de Fatou Diome: poétique de l’ici et l’ailleurs entre écriture du souvenir et expériences du temps,” has been peer-reviewed, accepted, and will appear as a book chapter in the volume entitled *Postcolonial Exiles and Migrations*, edited by Hervé Tchumkam and Pierre Fandio, with a foreword by Professor Fabien Eboussi Boulaga and a postscript by Professor Bernard Mouralis, two leading thinkers in African philosophy and literatures. The edited volume is under press and forthcoming at Editions Ifrikiya, the leading publishing house based in Cameroon.

The department is delighted to announce that PhD student **Steve**

**McCormick** received a prestigious UO Doctoral Fellowship for 2010–11 for his dissertation project titled, “Remapping the Story: Lombardia as Narrative Community, 1250–1407.” This fellowship is awarded annually to three recipients chosen from all disciplines across campus. The award gives McCormick full funding for the year in place of a graduate teaching fellowship, which means he can work on the dissertation full-time without teaching. In keeping with our Romance studies approach, McCormick’s work is in both French and Italian. He is a medievalist, and his research focuses on the Franco-Italian epic tradition, which flourished in northeast Italy, or Lombardy, during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The texts he is working with are characterized by the use of a hybrid French and Italianate literary language and elaborate the legends of Charlemagne and Roland. McCormick argues that this literature is inadequately explained by our usual understanding of national literary canons. His theoretical approach to exploring this question incorporates recent discussions using postcolonial theory as it applies to the Middle Ages. McCormick identifies Lombardy as a narrative community that has been colonized by modern epistemological borders to do with national language and the printed and reproducible book. By removing those constraining borders of nationalism from past narrative spaces, he is able to reinterpret a minority literary tradition that otherwise falls to the margins of national spaces. McCormick is working under the joint supervision of professors F. Regina Psaki and Barbara Altmann. He will defend the dissertation this spring.

In June 2010, **Karen McPherson** delivered a paper called “Writing in the Language of the Other: Nicole Brossard’s *La capture du sombre*” at the Women in French Conference at Wagner College in New York and a paper on “L’Écriture de l’accompagnement: *La forme et le deuil: Archives du lac* de Louise Warren” at the conference of the Conseil International d’Études Francophones in Montreal. She spent the month of July on a residency at the Vermont Studio Center working on her current project in literary

translation. In November 2010, she gave a paper on “*Naitre humain* in Marie-Claire Blais’s *Naissance de Rebecca à l’ère des tourments*” at the American Council for Québec Studies Biennial Conference, in Burlington, Vermont. Her essay on Nicole Brossard and Hubert Aquin was published in *Transatlantic Passages: Literary and Cultural Relations between Quebec and Francophone Europe* (McGill-Queen’s University Press 2010), edited by Paula Gilbert and Miléna Santoro. She has translations of poetry and short stories by Quebec writers forthcoming in *Saranac Review*, *Translation Review*, and *Zoland Poetry Journal*.

With the support of an Oregon Humanities Center fellowship in fall 2010, **Fabienne Moore** gave three talks on her current book in progress: she discussed representations of colonialism in Chateaubriand (1768–1848) at the Oregon Humanities Center in October; and she focused on Chateaubriand’s journey to America (1790–1791) in November 2010 in a talk for Oregon Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. In November, she was invited to present a paper titled “Quand le sauvage critique le civilisé: reprises de Lahontan et Diderot dans la critique coloniale des Natchez de Chateaubriand” at the Sorbonne during the annual “Journées Chateaubriand.” Moore is also at work on a critical edition of Chateaubriand’s prose epic on the Indians, “Les Natchez” (to be published by Champion) with Professor Pierre Glaudes at the Sorbonne and doctoral student Pierino Gallo. She is also continuing her work on eighteenth-century French prose poetry with a paper titled “Executing Poetry: Coqueley de Chaussepierre’s *Le Roué vertueux* (1770)” (American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies. Vancouver, March 2011). Moore’s teaching has expanded into an RL graduate course on Legacies of the Haitian Revolution in the Romance Language World, cotaught with her colleague Tania Triana (spring 2011). In 2011–12, she will launch a new undergraduate course, *War in French Comics-La guerre dans la BD*, for which she just received a Sherl K. Coleman and Margaret E. Guitteau Teaching Professorship in the Humanities and


an Oregon Humanities Center teaching fellowship.

As a part of her summer scholarship, **Vania Diaz Romero**, a PhD student from the Romance language department, travelled to Bolivia and after several interviews with authors, critics, and publishers, she selected eighty-nine literary books written by women and critical essays about them. This is part of her research on contemporary feminine writing in Bolivia. This project contributes to the creation of a database that allows easy access to literature written by Bolivian women in the last ten years (stories, novels, testimony, poetry, and essays). Texts from alternative publishers, including handmade editions, with limited circulation, are also part of this project. These publishing channels have strong political views as well as sound feminist and Andean notions. The selected books are now available on the shelves, in the catalog, or are still being processed. This activity was coordinated by Assistant Professor Cecilia Enjuto and Jeff Staiger, humanities librarian.

On September 2010, the Italian edition of **Jesús Sepúlveda**’s *The Garden of Peculiarities* was presented in several locations in the Perugian region. Sepúlveda toured in Italy while he was invited to give a talk at the University of Perugia. Last year he was also invited as a guest speaker at the Bowling Green State University in Ohio, and at The College of St. Scholastica, Duluth, Minnesota, where his book is being taught as a required text for introductory classes on philosophy. This book is currently translated into Icelandic. The film *Hotel Marconi*, based on the third book of poetry of Sepúlveda, was premiered on January 2011 at Centro Arte Alameda in Santiago, Chile. The film was previously screened in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and it will be shown at the Film Festival of Guadalajara, Mexico, this year.

Associate Professor of Spanish **David Wacks** is the 2010 recipient of the Ernest G. Moll Faculty Research Fellowship for Literary Studies at the Oregon Humanities Center, where he

spent winter term 2011 working on his next book project, *Double Diaspora: Sephardic Literature 1200–1600*. In 2010 he edited (together with Antonio Cortijo of the University of California at Santa Barbara) a special cluster of articles in eHumanista titled “Multilingual Medieval Iberia: Between the Tongue and the Pen.” His own contribution is titled “Toward a History of Hispano-Hebrew Literature in its Romance Context.” They are available online at [www.ehumanista.ucsb.edu/volumes/volume\\_14/index.shtml](http://www.ehumanista.ucsb.edu/volumes/volume_14/index.shtml). In April 2010 he was invited to give a paper titled “The Danger of Purity: Jacob ben Elazar’s *Love Stories* Between Hispanism and Hebraism” at the Medieval Iberian Studies workshop “Purity and Danger” organized by the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at Princeton University. In May 2010 he participated in a panel of the forty-fifth International Congress on Medieval Studies organized in honor of his receipt of the 2009 *La corónica* International Book Award for the best monograph published on Medieval Hispanic languages, literatures, and cultures. In December 2010 he delivered via webcam a guest class at the University of Portland titled *Los moriscos, la literatura aljamiada, y el moro Ricote de Don Quijote*.



**ROMANCE LANGUAGES**  
N e w s l e t t e r

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON · EUGENE  
SPRING 2011

The *Romance Languages Newsletter* is published once a year.

Editor  
André Djiffack

Design and Editing Services  
Gabriella Narvaez, design

Department of Romance Languages  
1233 University of Oregon  
Eugene OR 97403-1233  
541-346-4021

The University of Oregon is an equal-opportunity, affirmative-action institution committed to cultural diversity and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. This publication will be made available in accessible formats upon request. ©2011 University of Oregon DES0411-071q-A56220.



UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

DEPARTMENT OF ROMANCE LANGUAGES

1233 University of Oregon

Eugene OR 97403-1233

Nonprofit  
Organization  
U.S. Postage  
Paid  
Eugene OR  
Permit No. 63

## **Please Consider Making a Gift to Romance Languages!**

**Contributions of any size make a real difference. In this past year, among many other examples, we have used gifts to bring in guest speakers, support visiting faculty members, award prizes to undergraduates, provide refreshments at professional workshops, and support cultural events. Our programs are much richer, thanks to the generosity of our donors!**

Checks can be made out to the UO Foundation, Department of Romance Languages, and mailed to the UO Foundation at PO Box 3346, Eugene OR 97403-0346. Another option is to make a pledge to Romance languages when you receive a phone call or letter from the UO Annual Giving Program asking you to make a gift to the university.

We invite you to browse the website for the College of Arts and Sciences ([cas.uoregon.edu/index.htm](http://cas.uoregon.edu/index.htm)) and the new and improved site for Romance languages ([rl.uoregon.edu](http://rl.uoregon.edu)). Look for updates on current events at [rl.uoregon.edu/main/news/shtml](http://rl.uoregon.edu/main/news/shtml).

If you have questions or would like more information about any of our programs, feel free to contact Leonardo García-Pabón at 541-346-4021 ([lgarcia@uoregon.edu](mailto:lgarcia@uoregon.edu)) or Denise Sorom, associate development officer for humanities, at 541-346-3903 ([dsorom@cas.uoregon.edu](mailto:dsorom@cas.uoregon.edu)).