

American Women's Club of Hamburg, e.V.

CURRENTS

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EDUCATION

President's Message

I hope everyone is enjoying the beautiful Hamburg weather! As I sit on my patio absorbing the wonderful sunshine, I'm reflecting on a trip that I recently took to Morocco, a beautiful country, steeped in tradition and facing modern economic challenges. The ancient mosques and medinas were breathtaking, while the sight of young children working during school hours reminded me that basic education is a privilege not shared by everyone.



It is estimated that nearly half of young Moroccans have not finished primary school. Low education rates can have a devastating effect on a country's economy. Countries without compulsory education continuously struggle with high unemployment, low productivity and low GDP growth. When their young people enter the labor market, most will face dismal employment prospects and a lifetime of poverty.

Like so many countries in Northern Africa and the Middle East, Morocco struggles with unemployment among young adults. In Morocco, the young represent 80% of the unemployed. This statistic was obvious in the Port of Tangiers, where we saw crowds of young men gathered, desperately seeking transportation to Europe to find work. Some even risked their lives to hide beneath moving buses, hoping to inconspicuously ride onto ferries headed to Spain.

Though the causes of unemployment and poverty are complicated, education clearly has the power to improve lives, fuel economies and change society for the better. Investing in education is one of the most

meaningful actions we can take to change the future. That's why education is one of the key pillars of FAWCO's charitable work and the focus of its current target project, Hope Beyond Displacement. This project is already having a profound educational impact on the lives of refugee women and girls in Jordan. I hope you'll read more about it in this issue of *Currents*. Throughout the year, the club will provide opportunities to get involved and support this worthwhile cause. I sincerely hope you'll participate. Together, we can create long-term change in a part of the world that so desperately needs our help!

Wishing you a wonderful summer,

Lyn Herr, AWCH President



Currents Magazine

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Inside this Issue

AWCH and FAWCO News

AWCH at the LFR..... 04
 Interim Meeting in The Hague..... 05
 Securing a Future for Refugee Women in Jordan..... 10
 The Tree Thing—AWCH Fundraiser..... 15

Theme Pages: Education

Lampada Trado..... 16
 The Ticket Out..... 17
 Hamburg University Is Waiting for You..... 18
 My Daughter's Voice..... 19
 Education in Bulgaria..... 20
 How Does Your Garden Grow 21
 Teach Me...Not! What I Could Never Learn..... 23

AWCH Members and Events

Gainsborough Tour and Lunch..... 24
 Dim Sum Lunch 26
 Creating Connections..... 27
 Lettering Workshop..... 27
 Newcomers' Events in April and May..... 28
 Opera Club: Season in Review and Look Ahead..... 29
 Art Club: Two Fantastic Events!..... 30

In Hamburg

Hamburg's Weather 32
 Art in Hamburg (7th Triennial of Photography) 33
 Theater in Hamburg (English Theater)..... 34
 Film Reviews 36

Out and About

Day or Weekend Trips..... 42

Editor's Message

As I read the articles that came in for this issues magazine with the theme Education, I was reminded over and over again of how much we take the formal education we were given for granted—and how much there is to learn! And yes, it is our responsibility to pass the torch of learning on—not only to the next generation, but to the many who do not have it as easy as we. *Lampada Trado!*

Thank you to all have taken the time to contribute your beautiful stories, share your poems and pictures, and report on all the many activities that our club offers. I am also excited about our new travel blog—see “Out and About.”

I am extremely thankful to the new and not-so new members that support this magazine so faithfully. Enjoy!

— Carol Harbers

AWCH at the LFR



LFR is an independent umbrella association representing more than 60 women's groups and a total of 300,000 women in the city and surrounding areas. Member groups of the LFR are as diverse as the Association of German Women in Engineering, the Center for Women in Music, the German Medical Women's Association, Tatsu Joshogun, and Terre des Femmes.

The monthly meetings are conducted by an LFR member club, who also gives an update on their organization. On April 9 AWCH conducted the monthly meeting of the LFR. A great team of five—Lyn H., Suzana Z., our LFR delegate Joana M-O'N and LFR board member Deborah S., along with myself—represented our club, although we were only supposed to be two or three. I was very honored to give the presentation that Lyn and I prepared to introduce our club, which spanned from the 1938 FAWCO Conference that AWCH hosted in Hamburg up to our present support of charitable causes. It was also a great honor to co-host the meeting with Cornelis Greischer, President of the LFR. The women of the LFR were especially pleased to learn that we support the ratification of the UN

**Landesfrauenrat
Hamburg e.V.**

The Landesfrauenrat Hamburg (LFR), best translated as Hamburg Women's Council, lobbies for women's political and socioeconomic rights at the local level. It is by far the largest women's lobby in Hamburg. The AWCH has been a member since 1986.



Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) by the US. A lovely thank you note from the LFR stated that they found it "great that we came with so many women and so much power".

A warm thank you to Kathrin Y. for supporting the event and to Diane D. I. R. for the fantastic finger food for the pre-meeting networking session. (Carol S.)



The Memory of a City: Streets, Squares and Bridges named after Women in Hamburg

Ever wonder what stories lie behind Hamburg's street names? A three-volume book series put out by the Hansestadt Hamburg offers some clues. The first volume presents an overview of the streets named after persons—when were which traffic areas named after people and what were the reasons in the respective epochs. The second band contains 357 biographies of women who are honored in the Hanseatic city with a street name. In alphabetical order from A as in Ackermannstraße to Z as in Zassenhausweg, this makes an extraordinary city guide to women in Hamburg's history. The books are available through the Hamburg website (sorry, only in German). The LFR website contains many gems of information about women. (<https://landesfrauenrat-hamburg.de/frauenorte/>)

FAWCO Interim Meeting



FAWCO is an international federation of organizations whose mission is to build strong support networks for its membership; to improve the lives of women and girls worldwide; to advocate for the rights of U.S. citizens overseas; and to mobilize the skills of its membership in support of global initiatives for education, the environment, health and human rights. Every AWCH member is automatically a member of FAWCO.

The FAWCO Interim Meeting (IM) in The Hague was attended by over 150 members from 35 clubs, representing all of FAWCO's 11 regions. AWCH had the largest delegation of any club with 11 delegates—Cat C., Charis H., Carol B., Carol S., Becky T., Frauke R.-H., Lyn H., Shelly S., Susan S.-W., Teresa PyL., Tracy M.



Interim meetings offer practical training sessions in organizational development and leadership, which the delegates may use to strengthen their own organizations. The presidents and representatives of FAWCO clubs exchange ideas, share best practices and solutions to common issues, and build their network. It's also a wonderful opportunity to meet and make friends with women living all over the world and there's always lots of fun planned! The pre- and post-tours gave delegates a chance to get to know each other and The Hague.

This year there was an extensive and impressive offer of 55-minute workshops: FAWCO Youth Program, Ensuring Your Club's Financial Health, Club Publications, How FAWCO Benefits its Member Clubs, US Tax and Estate Planning for Overseas Americans, US Voter Registration Workshop, UN Advocacy, Making FAWCO's Global Issues Relevant for Member Clubs, Networking to Support Refugees, Target Project, and Fundraising.

One of the best-attended workshops was "Networking to Support Refugees: FAWCO Clubs Creating Connections Across Borders". This IM workshop has resulted in the creation of the new FAWCO Refugee Network under the auspices of the Human Rights Team.

—Lyn H., AWCH President, FAWCO Newcomer

“ This was my first FAWCO conference. I was surprised (actually amazed!) at how well organized and professional it was. Every day was filled with valuable information sessions and networking opportunities. It was an incredibly busy, energizing and enlightening conference. I highly recommend it for anyone who has considered attending. ”

Highlights of the FAWCO Interim Meeting

Target Project Hope Beyond Displacement

Amanda Lane, Executive Director of the Collateral Repair Project, described the activities that FAWCO donations had supported and would further support. The activities focused on helping refugee girls and women in Jordan access education, including empowerment training for women, and training for men and boys to prevent gender-based violence. The 548 beneficiaries to date include 359 girls back in school, 30 girls in the Super Girls program for trauma healing, 40 women in Economic Empowerment, as well as 29 men and boys in the program to prevent gender-based violence. See our Site Visit report in this issue for more information!

The fundraising target of \$125,000 is close to being achieved, with \$118,000 already raised. **AWCH has joined the rank of Diamond Donors for clubs raising more than \$6,000 on the Donor Wall.**

<http://www.fawcofoundation.org/our-programs/updated-2017/club-donor-wall-hope-beyond-displacement.html>

FAWCO Rep Appreciation Awards

Being a FAWCO Rep can be immensely rewarding, but it can also be challenging. The women who are recognized with the FAWCO Rep Appreciation Awards truly have done an exceptional job in strengthening the bond between their clubs and FAWCO. The nominations were read out and it was amazing to learn how dynamic, talented and com-

mitted these women are—truly inspiring. The winners of the 2018 FAWCO Rep Appreciation Awards were Mary Dobrian (AIWC of Cologne), Sandra Gogel (AWG Paris), Lauren Mescon (AWC Amsterdam) and Orla Blundell (AWC of Languedoc-Rousillon).

Development Grants

The FAWCO Foundation (TFF) Development Grant Program financially assists projects that are passionately supported by FAWCO Member Clubs. The purpose of the program is to fund projects that can make an immediate impact and lead to success for the people they support. The TFF has awarded 127 Development Grants valued at \$472,500 since its founding.

This year eight grants were awarded and AWCH took home one. **Our club's nomination won the FAWCO Foundation \$4,500 Development Grant in the category Environment for the project Hazarwadi Open Well in Maharashtra, India.** This grant will completely finance the construction of an open well in a rural hamlet of 14 tribal families who have insufficient access to water.

For all the 2018 Development Grant Recipients visit the FAWCO Foundation website: <http://www.fawcofoundation.org/our-programs/development-grants-intro/2018-dg-recipients.html>.

“ As a member of the FAWCO Foundation Board, I wear a lot of hats at the annual Biennial Conferences and Interim Meetings. By far, my favorite moments come from announcing the Development Grant and Education Award recipients. There are a lot of emotions and some tears involved when the recipients come forward to accept their grant or award. This year I had the added pleasure of handing Carol Strametz, the AWCH FAWCO Rep, the recipient certificate. The entire 11-contigent from Hamburg—were clapping and cheering as she accepted the grant. ”

— Tracy M., AWCH FAWCO Rep 2011–2015,
The FAWCO Foundation VP Programs 2015–present

Education Awards

The Education Awards recognize and honor the academic excellence and all-around achievement of FAWCO and FAUSA members and their children and grandchildren. FAWCO hopes to promote international understanding and good will by giving annual awards for study, in the U.S. or abroad, at high school, undergraduate and graduate levels. Since 1972 TFF has awarded 308 Education Awards valued at \$947,500. Seven children of AWCH members have received Education Awards.



This year AWCH made a one-time award donation in honor of our 60th anniversary. The AWC Hamburg Continuing Education Award of \$4,000 was awarded to Tammy Sas-Mayaux. She is a member of AAWE Paris. Tammy will further her education through a master's degree focused on the historic context of globalization and economic development, public policy theory, as well as corporate regulation, strategies for citizen action and sustainable development. The knowledge and skills she will learn through this master's program will give her the advantage she needs to promote change on a local, national and international scale.

For all 2018 Education Award Recipients visit the FAWCO Foundation website: <http://www.fawcofoundation.org/our-programs/education-awards-2017/2018-ea-recipients.html>

UN Issues

UN liaison Laurie Richardson brought us up to date on the latest work of the UN Team. This team:

- represents FAWCO through advocacy and action in NGO committees and at UN conferences;
- informs FAWCO members about UN programs on gender equality, education, environment, health and human rights;
- engages FAWCO members in UN events and campaigns, promotes the UN development agenda working with global issues teams and target programs.

FAWCO supports the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the 2030 Agenda. FAWCO is focused on the SDGs for quality education, gender equality, climate action, and good health and well-being. For a fun short introduction to the SDGs with hip hop music, see the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kGcrYkHwE80>.

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) was established in 1946 and is “dedicated to promot-



ing gender equality and the empowerment of women.” The annual sessions provide advocates for human rights for women an opportunity to influence the UN Agenda. Around 6,000 delegates from the 45 Member States of the Commission, United Nations entities, and accredited NGOs attend the annual sessions. A FAWCO delegation of 14 attended CSW62 at UN Headquarters in New York. You can read the delegates’ impressions on the CSW62 blog. In preparation for CSW62, FAWCO signed on to four Written Statements on the primary theme: challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls. FAWCO is proud to contribute to these important civil society statements submitted to UN Women for consideration in the development of an outcome document from CSW62. FAWCO can send 20 delegates to CSW every year. As a FAWCO member, you are eligible to attend. To keep informed sign up for the UN Liaison Bulletin <https://www.fawco.org/about/publications/subscribe-to-bulletins-e-newsletters>.

To find out more about CSW62, watch the video from UN Women: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2zxWxZilGgo>.

“As a long-time FAWCOite and first time as merely an observer, I thought the (new to me) inclusion of the “buddy system” to be a delightful and welcoming idea for newcomers. Now, why didn’t I ever think of that? Spot on, and I do hope it continues!

— Carol B.
FAWCO 2nd VP
1989–1991; 1993–1995;
FAWCO Secretary
1987–1989; 1995–1997

Caroline Curtis Brown Spirit Award

One highlight of the last day of the IM was the presentation to FAWCO Counselor Emily van Eerten (AWC The Hague) with the Caroline Curtis Brown Spirit Award in recognition of her outstanding volunteer contributions to FAWCO, especially her work on the early FAWCO website and her more recent work as Archives Chair. Emily has propelled FAWCO into the future as well as ensured that our past is preserved.



FAWCO Publications

FAWCO produces an impressive list of publications throughout the year. FAWCO members can keep informed and stay up to date with FAWCO’s committees, teams and Board of Directors by reading *FAWCO News in Brief*, *Connections*, *Letter from Headquarters*; and the bulletins from the UN liaison, the US liaison, and the Global Issues Teams on Education, Environment, Health, Human Rights, and the Target Program.

FAWCO’s online magazine, *Inspiring Women*, profiles the lives of members of FAWCO clubs throughout the world who have used their skills, talents and passions to make an impact in the global community. You can learn more and sign up for the publications at <https://www.fawco.org/about/publications>.



The Foundation Dinner, Live Auction and Silent Auction

Alice in the Netherlands —

The Mad Hatter's Tea Party

This year's Foundation Night festivities focused on the theme of Alice in the Netherlands; all guests were invited to attend The Mad Hatter's Tea Party. Partygoers were adorned in Wonderland wear and/or hats of all kinds. It was a bright and colorful evening that included: a costume and hat contest, the wonderful song stylings of Kanika Holloway (AWC Antwerp), and both a silent and live auction.

Guests truly displayed their generosity and spirit in support of The Foundation and its programs. **Raffle ticket sales were brisk all weekend for the spectacular "Butterfly Brigade" Friendship Quilt with many squares sewn by AWCH members Shelly S., Tracy M. and Susan S.-W.**

Over \$40,000 for the FAWCO Foundation's programs were raised during Foundation Night and during other weekend sales.



“The Interim Meeting provided us with a vast variety of workshops, which gave me new insight into FAWCO and its target projects and which I found quite helpful being a newbie to the organization. My highlight has to be the Mad Hatter's Tea Party. 180 women dressed to the nines adorned with hats and glamorous costumes. The silent auction was a successful effort to raise funds for a good cause. Overall being in The Hague was a positive experience for me. I had the opportunity to meet many enthusiastic women and I look forward to the next meeting in Edinburgh!”

—Charis H., AWCH Activities Chair, FAWCO Newcomer

The 2019 Biennial Conference will be held in Edinburgh, Scotland, from March 21–24, 2019. The host, AWC Central Scotland, is already hard at work on preparations. The theme *Bonnie, Brave, Beneficent* is perfect for FAWCO. The beautiful, historic Dalmahoy Hotel outside of Edinburgh is the venue and fantastic pre- and post-conference tours are being planned. Watch for more information in the AWCH Newsletters and on the FAWCO website. (Carol Strametz with text from FAWCO and TFF publications)



“ This was my first FAWCO meeting ever. Although I have always participated in the fundraisers, this is the first year where I got really involved in the organization. The Hague was a great place to begin. Upon arrival I was immediately swept up by the enthusiasm of the group. I felt that everyone there was accepted and had a great time interacting with new friends from all over the world. I loved the Foundation Night theme ‘The Mad Hatter’s Tea Party’ where everyone could show their creativity and I was amazed at the amount of donations and how much money the silent auction brought. I also like that you could meet the various team leaders of the global issues—environment, education, health, human rights—and US issues such as taxes. What also was important was that we had 11 people from our club and that we had a chance to get to know each other away from home. I left with a feeling that I went not only to a conference but that I had made many friends and hope that we will make an effort to stay in contact.

—Shelly S., AWCH Secretary
FAWCO Newcomer



“ My connection to FAWCO goes back 40 years. My first responsible activity was serving on the Hamburg committee to plan the FAWCO Interim Meeting, which took place in 1980 at the Atlantic Hotel in Hamburg. After various responsibilities over the years, I am now ‘retired’ so why do I love to go to conferences? In this case, I very much enjoyed meeting FAWCO enthusiasts from other clubs around the world. Many were old friends from the past; some were new friends who represent the future for FAWCO, which looks bright. My main impression was that, due to the internet, communication has intensified so highly, that work is accomplished in two days, something which took five days during my time. One must be attentive at all times in order not to miss anything. Perhaps it would have been fun and interesting to have seen something of the city of The Hague, but meetings, discussions, and lectures had first priority and were so interesting, that I was content just to admire the town’s very beautiful, modern train station. I can always see The Hague, but these FAWCO topics were so in tune with the times, that I couldn’t miss any.

One sentence still rings in my head, ‘There are eight million Americans living overseas not including the military, but only four percent vote in U.S elections.’ It’s very easy to sign up for an absentee ballot to vote in this next mid-term election just by going to the FAWCO website: www.fawco.org.

— Becky T., FAWCO President 1995–1997,
FAWCO Counselor

Securing a Future for Refugee Women In Jordan

Site Visit of FAWCO Target Project: Hope Beyond Displacement

Amman, Jordan – April 2018

In April 2018, 22 FAWCO representatives were given the opportunity to visit the Collateral Repair Project (CRP) in Amman, Jordan. CRP is a grassroots organization that implements "Hope Beyond Displacement", FAWCO's Target Project 2017–2019. The goal of FAWCO's project is to build better futures for Syrian refugee women and girls in Jordan through education, vocational training, and leadership programs.

Two of our members, WangDi S. and Teresa PyL, were able to be a part of this site visit, to see first hand where and how the funds donated by FAWCO Member Clubs are invested.

Background:

According to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Jordan Factsheet from 2018, 'Jordan is one of the countries most affected by the Syria crisis, with the second highest share of refugees compared to its population in the world, 89 refugees per 1,000 inhabitants. The majority of Syrian refugees in Jordan live in urban areas and in poverty: over 80% live below the poverty line, 51% of refugees are children, and 4% are elderly' (<https://reliefweb.int/report/jordan/unhcr-jordan-factsheet-february-2018>).

Jordan, which is one-quarter the size of Germany with a population of 9.9 million people, has registered 661,114 refugees from Syria alone. On December 6, 2017, Theirworld, a UK charity that campaigns for the rights of children, reported that "Jordan is home to about 330,000 Syrian refugees under the age of 18. New research showed last month that one in five Syrian children there are not getting an education and 13% have never been enrolled."

The majority of refugees in Jordan do not have access to the employment market, and access to public schools for refugee children is restricted (the Jordanian Government recently granted Syrian children access to its public schools). In addition, the residency status for refugees living in Jordan is temporary: in theory, they are waiting for resettlement in other countries. The wait can be unbearably long, culminating in years. Not surprisingly, refugees commonly experience feelings of vulnerability, despair, boredom and fear.

Recognising the importance of helping refugees to rebuild confidence, resilience, and a sense of community while they are in transit, CRP established a community centre in East Amman to provide various training programs to refugees and children. In 2016 FAWCO defined the over-

arching theme 'Education—Empowering Women and Girls through Knowledge and Skills' and launched "Hope Beyond Displacement" as their Target Project. The pressing issues addressed in this program were identified by close consultation with the women CPR serves:

- Ensuring better educational support for their children
- Accessing sources of income
- Better managing the threat of violence in their families
- Learning and developing leadership and advocacy skills

FAWCO is hoping to raise a total of \$125,000 to help the refugee children in Jordan gain access to education; as of April 2018, it has raised \$118,000. So much more can be done.



Our visit to the Collateral Repair Project (CRP) in Amman, Jordan

Our first impression of the CRP center, with beautifully colorful murals painted on walls, was welcoming and inviting. We were greeted by staff members who demonstrated professionalism, dedication and compassion. Equally, we were welcomed by refugees gathered in the courtyard, who later told us that they felt a sense of belonging at the center, a safe place.

Many of the CRP staff had come to the center as refugees looking for aid; all had faced violence in their home countries and had to escape. While awaiting resettlement and not allowed to work in Jordan, they have volunteered their skills to others in similar situations. We heard many of their personal experiences: for example, Kamal, an IT specialist in Iraq, teaches basic computer skills and leads the International Computer Driver's License program. Sara, who fled Syria with her husband, volunteers as youth programs coordinator.



Straightaway we were given the opportunity to see the CRP program in action. Amanda Lane, the Executive Director of the CRP, and Tricia R. Saur, the Target Program Chair, arranged a three-day series of workshops for us to participate in. In the workshops, we learned more about the many diverse programs that CRP offers. Those supported by FAWCO fall under the three main aims of the Hope Beyond Displacement program.

Girls' Education

To make a direct impact on getting girls an education, money raised from FAWCO Member Clubs has gone directly to financing schooling. Annual school fees per child in Jordan are \$60; this does not include school uniform (\$9), backpack (\$8) or school supplies (\$6), equaling an average of \$83. Now, imagine if you have several children and are not legally permitted to work. To date, the FAWCO target project has managed to send 359 girls to school, making a significant difference to the lives of the refugee families affected and generating hope.



Education and schooling for teenage refugees. The education and schooling of teenage refugees is a key challenge, with many young people having missed many years of schooling and therefore finding it difficult to return to education. The Teenage Program at CRP is providing many teenagers at the refugee camp with a place to learn computer skills, take English lessons, participate in e-learning and more. Members of the Teen Group also facilitate activities for the younger children, which encourages them to become more involved in the community and improve their leadership skills.



The Super Girls Program, an after school program launched in 2017, targets girls aged 6–12 who have been exposed to trauma. To date, 120 girls have participated in a six-month program that is designed to help the girls regain their self-confidence and reconnect with children their own ages. The program was developed by two wonderful, inspiring women: Beryl Cheal, an American education consultant, and education specialist Karam Hayef, a Palestinian refugee and former teacher.

Beryl explained, “The Super Girls curriculum was created to help children feel that they have some kind of control over their lives at a time when everything around them seems out of control.” Creating a stable environment and structure is critical to the success of the program. The girls have a routine and practice breathing exercises to enhance calmness. A special teddy is passed around during group work

to ensure everyone speaks in turn. The Super Girls Program includes a kindness curriculum, focused games and cultural lessons. Beryl explained that she encourages the teachers to make a point of saying things like, “I will see you tomorrow” or “Next time when we meet, we will read a book.” Helping the children imagine that they have a future.

Women’s Vocational Training

Hope Beyond Displacement

Education and Empowering
Refugee Women and Girls
in Jordan



The **Women’s Economic Self-Empowerment Program** endeavors to provide refugee women and girls with the skills needed to enter the job market. As part of this program, 120 women are currently enrolled in International Computer Driving License (ICDL) computer skills training; women and girls who have their ICDLs will then be taught computer coding. Other courses within the initiative include cosmetology. During FAWCO’s visit to CRP, all 22 representatives were invited to participate in the initiative’s Beauty Salon program.

The **Hope Workshop Program** provides refugee women with skills training in sewing, crocheting and embroidery. We were enthusiastically welcomed by Hope Workshop women, eager to show us what they had made and share with us how the program has impacted them. For many of the women, the program has helped them work through their trauma and to have a new perspective on life. They are proud that they can help financially support their families by selling their crafts at markets and within the community. We understood that the women at the Hope Workshop work together in a safe and sociable atmosphere—they can escape the reality outside for a short time.



Women’s Leadership Programs

The **Women’s Empowerment 101 Program** strives to provide women in the refugee community with the tools and confidence needed to express themselves, support their families and build social bonds. Childcare is provided to enable more women to access the program, which covers 20 topics over a period of three months, comprising education, livelihood, trauma relief and gender-based violence. The women, many from traditional cultures, learn to express their rights and needs, and that it is OK to be heard and respected. Having experienced the benefits, many of the 120 participants who have taken part are now involved in helping out with the program.



The Gender-Based Violence (GBV) program: In times of conflict, there is an increase in GBV, with women bearing the brunt of it through sexual violence and exploitation. The GBV program, which has welcomed 160 participants to date, works with men and boys, teaching them different ways to communicate, channel their anger and process their own trauma. The refugee men we met at the center were mostly educated, yet unable to officially work in Jordan. Confessing they were skeptical at first, they all agreed that the GBV program had helped them to communicate and manage their anger. They felt less frustrated and agreed their lives had improved as they learned how to deal with their emotions.

The two rooms are small, 10 m² each at the most. One is the official training ground for CRP’s Beauty Salon program; the other has been set aside to accommodate the sudden influx of customers from our group.

There are presently seven or eight young female students training at the salon. Most of them fled Iraq and have no prior experience in cosmetology. Faced with so many strangers with questions in such cramped rooms, these young women appear to be shy in postures but assertive in their voices during the Q&A period. Not particularly comfortable in the spotlight myself, I sit quietly in the crowd and observe the eagerness of women to showcase their newly acquired skills.

The two rooms soon become alive with motion and murmurs ignited by the excitement among us all: chairs re-arranged to create individual work spaces, tools and products procured to meet demand, and words exchanged to discuss and confirm treatment options. The sun casts its warm rays through the windows, smiles are accompanied by giggles as

well as our group’s gasps of exclamation, and occasional laughs and claps of hands burst out loud in the open air.

I don’t understand the rapid exchange between the students, nor do I know their names—yet I am captivated by their concentration at work, their effort to converse in English to ensure everything with us is OK,

and their proud yet reserved smiles when we nod our heads and shake hands to signal the appreciation and gratitude for their work. I am quite certain that behind each name there is a heart-breaking personal story about abandoned homes, lost family and friends,

and an uncertain future. But at this very moment, CRP has given these women a new lease of life. This moment in these two tiny rooms seems to bring out the best from these young refugee women—a moment of pride and joy.

—WangDi S. from her workshop on Economic Self-Empowerment



Noor mesmerized me. I felt myself unintentionally staring at her and formulating stories in my head. I wanted to know her age—she looked very young—whether she would open up, what she thought of us. I just wanted to know everything about her, yet I knew we had to be very sensitive and time was limited. She told me her story (or at least part of it) from her eyes and her smile, which came out for brief moments.

Her husband works 12 hours a day, she has two children (although I did not ask her, I believe they go to school). She was often alone for long periods of time and the isolation was having a harsh impact. Her parents, she told me, had remained in Syria, which no doubt amplified her anxiety and worry.

When she found out about the CRP, she wanted to join; however, her husband initially would not allow it and she respected his wishes. In time, however, she persuaded him to let her enroll in the Women’s Empowerment 101 Session. The program changed her more than she could have expected: for the first time in her life, she understood that her opinion counted and that she was capable of making decisions. When asked “How does your husband feel now?”, Noor smiled and replied, “The sparkle in our lives has come back.”



Towards the end of the session, Noor told us that she had studied French at university in Syria and was hoping to one day teach. I then approached her and spoke French—her eyes lit up and we started talking. The impact for me personally was very emotional: I could communicate with no need for a translator.

She told me that the program has changed her completely; she now feels more fulfilled (something that, had she remained in Syria she said, may have never happened). She found her self-worth and was surprised to discover that it was OK to feel empowered. At that moment, a group of men walked into the room from the Gender Based Violence (GBV) Program. I sensed her body language change and asked, “Do you speak with the men at the center?” She replied,

“No, this would not be acceptable,” and laughed. I encouraged her to remain strong and teach others. Noor, for me, is a natural leader.

On parting, she kissed me three times and said, **“l’avenir réside dans le courage d’une femme à agir.”** (“The future lies in a woman’s courage to act.”)

—Teresa P.yL. from her workshop at the Women’s Empowerment Program

On Saturdays, both girls and boys participate in a Kids Yoga class. Each child has its own yoga mat and the class is taught with sensitivity and compassion. This is a special moment for the children to be peaceful and they enjoy the challenge of the next yoga movement.



During FAWCO’s visit to CRP, we had the wonderful opportunity to participate in a traditional cooking course. We all know how, when we’re travelling and see something from back home, it brings about a sense of security and comfort. It is for exactly this reason that women at the center enjoy preparing traditional meals. There were students from Sudan, Syria, Iraq and Jordan, and the atmosphere was one of pride as we ate the freshly cooked dishes together.

The experience of visiting CRP has changed us. We cannot believe the strength and resilience of the refugees we met. Their stories are horrendous and the challenges enormous, yet at the center they could find time to relax, feel safe, deal with the traumas they have faced, excel in new activities, and see hope in their futures. Amanda Lane and her staff including the refugee volunteers are committed to driving their community forward. The Hope Beyond Displacement program has successfully changed the lives of some many refugees.

Sincere thank-you to Amanda Lane, the Executive Director of the CRP, and all the CRP staff and volunteers; the organizers Tricia R. Saur, Julie Mowat and Therese Hartwell; and all the FAWCO representatives who visited the CRP center and shared their experiences.

Please join WangDi and Teresa on June 26th for “Our Jordan Experience”—See AWCH Invite.

FUN(d)raiser at the Museum für Kunst & Gewerbe



The Tree Thing?

Yes, a fundraiser to get money to plant trees! No, not in Hamburg, but in the tribal village of Bandrichiwadi in the mountainous Jawhar area of India. East of the megacity of Mumbai, it is home to various tribes, who are among the most marginalized sections of Indian society.

Trees to “catch the rain”—to restore the ground water that feeds open wells and thus provide a key resource to sustain and to directly improve the livelihood of 40 tribal families living in the village. The project is carried out by the Integrated Tribal and Watershed Development Programme (ITWDP), which has been working in Maharashtra, India, for years to better the economic situation and alleviate the extreme poverty of the tribes inhabiting this region.

The Tree Thing took place on May 29 in the “creative design playground” of the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe (MK&G) (Museum of Applied Arts). Ulrike H., who has visited and photographed ITWDP sites in India, had always wanted to explore the MK&G rooms, decorated straight out of *Alice in Wonderland* with trunks full of costumes, wigs, and hats, as well as



an array of fanciful backdrops to stage one’s own productions. And what fun we all had, as the pictures testify (see back cover).

AWCH has been supporting ITWDP since 2011, when we joined



two other German clubs to support the development of the village Paregaon Khurd. This year, our nomination to support ITWDP won the FAWCO Development Grant in the category Environment. The \$4,500 grant will pay for the construction of the Hazarwadi Open Well in a desertified area of Maharashtra. This well will provide water for 14 families throughout the year.

Whether it was the chance to discover one’s inner artistic talents, to make a lasting impact on families struggling to survive, or both, over 20 AWCH members and guests came to the event. Our fundraising goal was surpassed, with enough funds being raised to plant more than 214 mango and cashew saplings. In addition to the ecological issue this project addresses, it also has an important social aspect. The tribal, indigenous people of India are among the poorest in the country and have been pushed into the inhospitable, withered hills. This dry land can hardly feed them. Most are without education. Also, their children often cannot attend school, as families roam around in search of day labor. Through ITWDP, families can settle in one place, earn a livelihood through farming, and provide their children with regular schooling.

Missed your chance to help? A second fundraiser is planned for the fall, when Robert D’Costa from ITWDP will come to Hamburg to present a progress report and answer questions. Well done, AWCH! And thanks to Ulrike and the committee (Charis H., Lyn H., Karen M., Teresa PyL., Shelly S., Carol S., and Holly T.) for the fantastic idea and organization. (Carol H.)

Photos: ©Ulrike Cameron Henn

Theme Pages: Education

Lampada Trado

by Jenny Mather

Judy and I have been friends for almost twenty years. We met at the International School Hamburg (ISH) and taught in the English as an Additional Language (EAL) Department. As you would expect in an international school with children from over fifty different countries at any given time, the EAL department is regarded as the school's "engine room."

Judy's retirement coincided with the enormous influx of refugees who arrived in 2015. Germany's response to helping these people was magnificent and one of those who offered support was Judy. She helped in a distribution centre at first, making sure that men who had walked with their families for hundreds upon hundreds of weary miles away from war-torn countries with nothing but the clothes on their backs were given new outfits to wear.

Soon her teaching genes took over and she gravitated towards helping the babies and toddlers of refugee mothers when they had their German lessons. For two mornings a week she drove to a refugee village near her home and played with those children who were too young for kindergarten. There were lots of donated toys and the children began to hear German and to feel safe and comfortable in their new surroundings.

It wasn't long before Judy realised that teaching their mothers to speak German and to learn to read and write in this new language wasn't so different from teaching, for example, a Japanese child to speak, read and write in English. All her skills from ISH were at her finger tips and soon she was helping women from Syria, Somalia and Afghanistan

Photo: Pexels CC



take first steps towards becoming integrated members of German society by teaching them this new language.

It is a sad reflection of life in the twenty-first century that Judy discovered, just as she had to show a small child how to hold a pencil, she had to do the same with some of these women. There are cultures today which still do not require females to be literate or to attend school, so holding a pencil and trying to make sense of squiggles on paper and the sound of a strange new language are quite a challenge. Judy's approach is a kind and gentle one which offers good humour and plenty of encouragement.

Another challenge is that the sheltered lives of many refugee women means that they don't practise their new language in the world outside the camp. They talk only to each other and need only minimal phrases to get by in the grocery store. This should improve when their babies grow older and attend kindergarten and elementary school and they find themselves mixing with German mothers.

When I went to school in England, I carried on my uniform the school's motto *Lampada Trado*, which means "I carry on the torch of learning." Three cheers for Judy and those like her who volunteer their time and expertise and are doing just that today.



The Ticket Out

by Jennifer Kearns-Willerich



I wasn't a remarkable student. Perhaps I could have been if I had, as several of my teachers implored, applied myself. My grades were fine, I naturally loved reading, enjoyed art class and English. My grammar school, an inner-city public school in Jersey City, New Jersey—which was back then an industrial wasteland ringed by second-generation Italian, Irish and Polish families—surely wasn't churning out Ivy League material at any rate. This was the late '70s and early '80s, when students would repeat a year up to three times and lesson plans seemed, in retrospect to me anyway, to center on what the teacher was good at

(in the case of my seventh-grade teacher, for example, this was spelling and definitely not geography, and, above all, always ensuring that the window blinds were even). Many kids—some on their third lap with the chin stubble to prove it—were therefore uninterested in creating a competitive, challenging learning environment. They wanted to smoke cigarettes behind the bleachers, get their diplomas, then get the hell out of there.

The largest public high school in the area was where you went to smoke more cigarettes behind more bleachers and probably get into a few fist fights along the way. My parents, wanting to give me the best start possible academically, opted instead to pay for a private Catholic school. This, of course, had its own drawbacks: ancient nuns whose hands shook enough to make us fear an imminent explosion in chemistry class, itchy polyester uniforms, classic cliques of big-haired "guidettes" (look it up) versus nerdy bookworms versus outcast music types. *Very Breakfast Club*. Very exhausting. What I didn't appreciate then is how much my parents sacrificed to send me to that school. My father worked three jobs—seriously, three—and my mother worked full-time as well. They must have been exhausted.

But to them, having a decent education was the ticket out. It was the first step to something "better"—better than working three jobs or doing shifts

in the railyard or being cowed by a rotten manager so you could keep your 9-to-5 office slog. This belief was held especially by my father, who would always encourage me to keep going, to keep trying. "The only thing they can say is 'no,'" he would say (and still says) whenever I lacked the confidence to push myself a little further. He himself never finished high school, and although through sheer determination he retired as captain of the Hudson County Fire Department, he knew from experience how backbreaking the journey to that point was.



Photo: Pexels CC

Because of his sacrifices, I've never had to think about whether I could go to school or not and, consequently, neither do my own daughters. But, because of the work I currently do, I am more than aware that this is a luxury not afforded to the majority of the world's population, who are unable to enroll or continue their schooling because of poverty, war, ethnicity or because they are women and girls. And it is something that, as I get older, gives me pause for thought.

For those of us who have been fortunate enough to go to school, to learn, to get a decent job, to offer our own children the same opportunities, it's important—in addition to the good grades and diplomas and after-school activities—to pass on the knowledge that this isn't a universal privilege. Equally, I think teachers need to always recognize the crucial role they play in our children's lives, even ancient nuns with shaking hands getting knots in their rosaries.

Hamburg University Is Waiting for You

by Becky Tan

Imagine you are a single American woman, pushing 80. No reason not to continue learning. Right? You have a Bachelor's Degree from a small college in the Middle West, USA, issued in 1963. Why not get that Master's Degree that you always wanted, but never had time for?

The University of Hamburg has detailed information online at www.uni-hamburg.de, which you can click to read in either German or English.

It's too late for the summer semester which started in March, but hey, the winter semester is October 1–March 31 and you can apply for admission up until July 15.

As a foreigner with a foreign degree you also need to pass a written and oral German test. You can take the test at the university and must pass at least the so-called C1 level. Otherwise you can make arrangements to learn German at a private language school which will then confirm your level of understanding German. The better your German, the greater the chance that you will be accepted into one of the 170 Master's programs depending on how competitive the applications are. At least 10% of each Master's semester is reserved for foreigners. And 11 subjects are taught in English/German or just English.

Naturally, you can apply online, but if this gets too complicated or you wish to ask a few questions, feel free to go over to their Campus Center on Alsterstraße (see box). This is the narrow street which goes off from Dammtor train station from the extension of Mittelweg towards the Alster (as if you were walking over to the US Consulate). Go up to the third floor and walk out into the big, well-lighted, friendly center. When your number is called, you go into one of their four offices for conversation.

I talked with a very good-looking young man whom I will call Andreas and who spoke English and German. If I understood all of his facts correctly, one does not need to translate a Bachelor's degree into German if it is in English. This degree should show some kind of list of the main studies one accomplished. If not, then one must ask the original university for a transcript and the grades you achieved

in classes. The higher your grades, the higher the chance of being accepted.

One semester at the university costs 320 euros. This includes a monthly ticket for public transportation, as well as reduced prices at the *Mensa* (cafeteria). Andreas often mentioned STINE which is short for Uni-Management offices, which also helps students.

Age is not an issue but if you would rather just learn without earning a degree, you can easily audit classes as a *Gasthörer*, something many seniors do. You can sign up for the *Kontaktstudium* (see box) and for 124 euros a semester you can go to all of the lectures. For seminars, which entail smaller groups, you need the permission of the teacher. My advisor said that, actually,

anyone can walk into any lecture—they are so big, that nobody really knows if the people in the audience are officially registered (quite interesting considering the high sense of security we all have these days). This is a tip for anyone who wants to “test” an ability to understand what's going on in a lecture, before committing.

So, the next time you are hanging around, waiting for the film to start at Abaton Cinema, walk over to some of the university buildings and take a look. Lists of all lectures and courses at the University of Hamburg are published every semester in the course catalog, which you can buy at local bookstores, as well as see online. The University of Hamburg will celebrate its 100th anniversary on March 28, 2019.



Campus Center:

Alster Str. 1, 20354 Hamburg
Open: Monday–Wednesday, 9:00–15:00,
Thursday, 13:00–18:00 and Friday, 9:00–
13:00

Kontaktstudium “for older adults”:

Applications for enrollment are found in the program, which can be ordered online at www.zfw.uni-hamburg.de

My Daughter's Voice

by Alana Leichert

I was in Oregon the day the U.S. Government shut down. The next day, on January 20th, my daughter and I marched in the **Portland 2018 Women's March**. Several thousand people took to the streets to protest for **Black Lives Matter**, **#Me Too**, **DACA**, and much more. The march was peaceful and without any problems. We marched alongside families, elderly, teenagers, people in wheel chairs, homeless, anarchists and several dogs wearing their own protest signs.

It was my 19-year-old daughter's first protest. It was important for me that she could experience the power and joy of being with hundreds of people who all have the same feelings about something and that, yes, her voice can be heard. It is easy to become overwhelmed and outraged at many political and non-political issues. It is easy to feel that one vote makes no

difference. Since the 2016 elections, there have been hundreds of various protests and marches around the United States. People are beginning to realize that, in unity, their voices can be heard. I hope that the younger generation is learning to speak out for what they believe or don't believe and that they can make a difference. They can vote, they can organise, advocate and one day even run for office.

It gives me a feeling of achievement and pride when I hear the change in my daughter's voice today as she tells others of her experience of marching in a flow of protest.



A Nation's Concern for Quality Education Ensures that Her Spirit Prevails...

by Emilia Jücker

*"March on, enlightened people!
The sunlight of wisdom
Disperses darkness from the
soul."*

These words from the Bulgarian anthem refer to the Bulgarian Slavic monks, Sts. Cyril and Methodius, who created the Cyrillic alphabet at the end of the 9th century, thus giving Slavic countries and tribes their very

own written language, rather than Latin, Hebrew or Greek. The Cyrillic alphabet made it possible for the Bulgarian peoples to develop their own culture, and since the 9th century it is the only alphabet with no alterations.

May 24 honors Sts. Cyril and Methodius, and the "Day of the Slavic Alphabet, Bulgarian Culture and Education." The entire nation celebrates with speeches and flowers for teachers and professors. A lovely celebration—and sacred to every child and adult in Bulgaria.

For the past 80 years the educational system in Bulgaria has been a national priority. By capitalistic and socialistic standards, salaries for teachers were never high. But the love of teachers and teaching was and is still big. Each child brings the teacher flowers on the first school day. When my son Alexander had his first school day in Hamburg, he was the only child who brought his teacher flowers.

The educational system in Bulgaria consists of day care (because all mothers work), a preschool year, four years of primary school, eight years of obligatory secondary school, three or four years at a poly-technical gymnasium, a language gymnasium, or so-called "Technicums" (to learn a profession rather than going to a university). Universities in Bulgaria require special admission exams. The first Bulgarian university was founded some 100 years ago in Sofia in the Kingdom of Bulgaria after gaining freedom from the Ottoman yoke.

Intelligence is not measured in titles or diplomas. I have studied with many who have no diplomas. But a good diploma does open doors. This is more difficult later on when life itself begins to "educate" us.



How Does Your Garden Grow?

by Mary Wienke



My first responsibility for plants came while growing up in Orlando, Florida. Our yard had thirteen orange trees, three palm trees and a very large and aggressive Century cactus. The back of our yard bordered on a Minute Maid orange grove. As a young teen, my job was to clear out all green stuff growing under the orange trees within the radius of the tree branches. There was no explanation as to why but questioning my grandma was not an option. I also had to pull weeds from among the

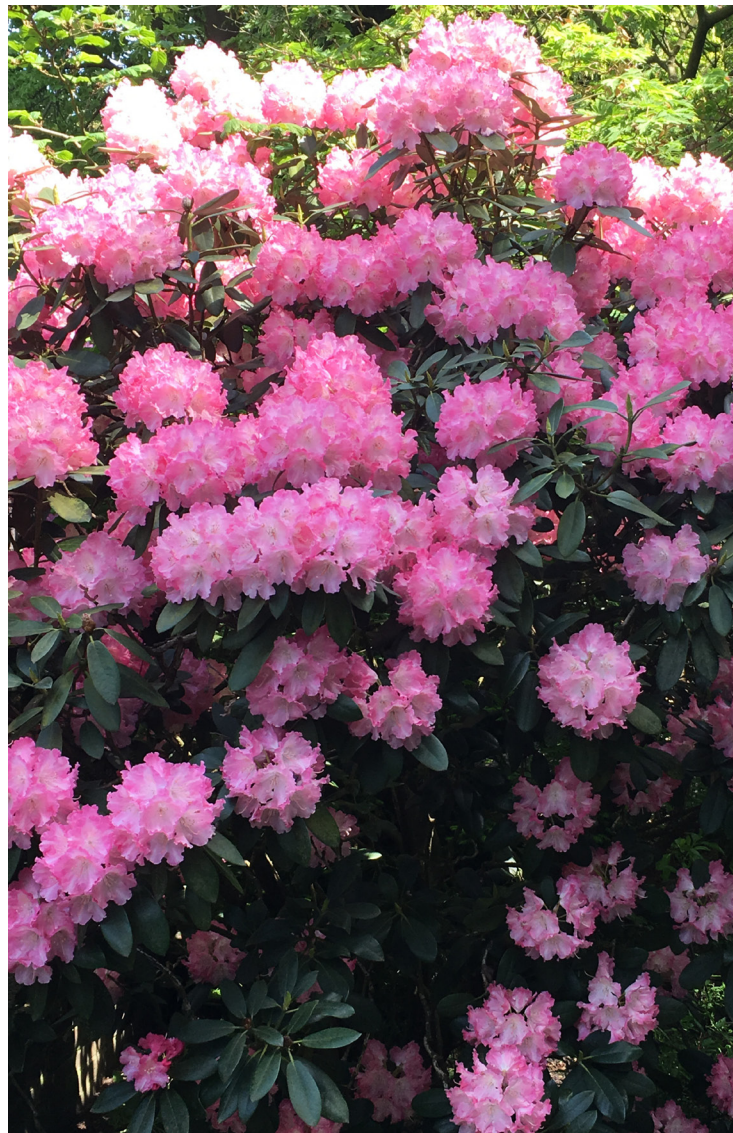
stones that surrounded our Century cactus, which was much wider than me and came up to my chest. And when my big brother would let me, I would mow the remnants of drought stressed grass riding our lawnmower.

Early on I discovered that gardening as such did not come naturally to me. It was if Mother Nature was taunting me, challenging me not to kill something, including myself. With my brother cheering me on to put the pedal to the metal, I raced the mower at maximum speed directly into a tree and fell off after I poked my eye on a branch resulting in a trip to the eye doctor and a blood-red eye perfect for Halloween. Perhaps most memorable was finding a gorgeous coral snake nestled in the weeds under the Century cactus. I rolled back on my heels, reflexively tried to grab something to steady myself and ended up with the sharp black tip of cactus needle wedged between the fine bones of the knuckle of my middle finger. My grandma, somewhat befuddled from a recent stroke, came to the rescue by using her cane to bludgeon the snake to death, poisonous blood spraying all over and a slightly crooked smile of victory on my grandma's face. Another trip to the doctor revealed the cactus tip was too dangerous to remove surgically. So for years I amazed friends and strangers with my

black triangle enhanced knuckle. Alas, now that knuckle is merely swollen with arthritis.

So I learned a lot while doing—don't ride the lawnmower at maximum speed while not looking ahead, stay clear of the weeds under the Century cactus and leave the palm trees alone to avoid humongous flying roaches. And don't eat the sour Minute Maid oranges.

Living in Florida was a blessing and a curse. I loved the clear blue skies, the sun showers at precisely three o'clock every summer after-



noon that freshened the humid air and rinsed the sweat off my brow, the smell of orange blossoms, jasmine and honeysuckle, walking to Howard Johnson's for a Hot Fudge Banana Sundae with my sister (unbeknownst to mom), watching my brother play touch football in the corral, spinning donuts on a dirt bike in the sandy pine groves. But playing tennis on a cement court at high noon in the hot blazing sun, fighting to get to class among the cops and rioters during forced desegregation, being called out of class for intermittent locker checks for drugs, being prohibited from swimming in our lake because of creepy parasites, cutting back on showers due to drought taught me that paradise found can easily be paradise lost.

Eventually, I found myself living in Hamburg. Florida is like Hamburg: they are both flat and I don't like the weather in either place with Florida having no real seasons because of the sun and Hamburg not having four seasons because of the clouds. Of course, this is an exaggeration, but it is my personal perspective. Living in Hamburg for some twenty-odd years has, however, greatly expanded my gardening experience.



After decades of living in cities and spending my weekends and vacations sailing, hiking, skiing or doing other outdoor activities, it is in Hamburg that I finally moved in to the outdoors. Moving into a house with a surrounding yard after spending ten years living in a townhouse on a main thoroughfare into Hamburg felt like paradise found. Our house at the end of a cul-de-sac shares a boundary with seven other properties. But we are surrounded by towering pines, three harmonious birch trees that cling to each other while reaching for sky, and lots of other very large plants; a nature oasis nestled among the growing number of box houses that pop up after glorious trees are felled. At first, I was thrilled to be living among the tall pines, majestic birches, spectacular rhododendrons, and flowers that



surprised depending on the time of year, like tulips, snow bells, forget-me-nots or asters. Then one year the rhododendrons (we have thirteen) did not bloom. I took cuttings to several garden stores and learned that the blooms were killed by cicadas (which we had in Florida!) and the leaves were being eaten by black beetles. I had to pull off every single dead bud, meaning hundreds, from each plant and buy nematodes (like live bugs!) to spread on the soil. I was, however, rewarded a year later when every single plant bloomed beautifully! By living in Hamburg I learned there was more to gardening than pulling weeds. I had to prune, fertilize and protect an astonishing variety of plants of which I knew absolutely nothing about. Then I discovered another rhododendron under a couple of overgrown bushes. I cut back the surrounding plants, gave it some fertilizer and plenty of water. It seemed to breathe again and rewarded me by blooming.



I absolutely love digging my hands into the fragrant earth, chatting with the cute little red-breasted birds that settle nearby, watching the squirrels playing hide and seek up and down the birch trees, catching two pigeons kissing in a tree, smelling the scent of freshly wet pine, observing the growth of new buds after a gray winter, inhaling the luxurious scents of lilacs, jasmine and roses. Spending hours in the serenity of my own back yard has taught me to truly appreciate how we can, as in nature, be renewed simply by staying very close to our roots.

Learn by doing. Learn by living. Learn by loving. The lessons last a lifetime.

Teach Me.....**Not!** What I Never Could Learn

compiled by Becky Tan

I always wanted to **play an instrument**. I have a good ear but I was just too slow when it came to the rhythm. So the drums were out, the clarinet squeaked, the piano always sounded out of tune. This all followed after being thrown out of choir in first grade because the music teacher hated my voice; but I was determined to show that I had talent at the school concerts and that's when I discovered art. The art teacher and I created all the props and backdrops for the various concerts and then I was happy. Concentrating on the world of art seems to be my chosen path. (Shelly S.)

Piano playing is something that I just can't do well. I can read the music, pick out a tune, a chord, a melody... but when it comes to actually playing something that's not beginner level, I make mistakes just about every single time. If I do somehow get a piece right once or twice, then take a day or two away, the errors will just return. Plus, if I play in front of people, my hands inevitably shake with nervousness. One Christmas, I really tried to get some carols in order to play at a party – but at a certain point, I just had to accept that there is just no avoiding the mistakes and the shakes. So Nancy T. will certainly not have any "competition" from me now or EVER at the Christmas Cookie Exchange. But I'm still glad to have my piano for my own private purposes or to play (badly) my latest favorite opera aria. My own little perfect audience of one is satisfied. (Elizabeth R.)

So far in my life, I haven't been able to learn to **crochet**. I have watched tons of YouTube videos, had a good friend show me several times and have tried, tried, tried. I taught myself to knit and am good with my hands but for some reason crocheting is not my thing. (Alana L.)

As an avid fan of virtually any kind of sport, I am quite surprised that I could never learn to **swim freestyle**. Growing up in Florida with half of my friends on the school swim team, I just treaded water hanging out in the deep end of the pool or swam like a frog in the lakes, hoping no one was really paying attention to my lack of skill. Several people have sworn they could teach me, including two real instructors, and failed. Just today I got another offer with some interesting suggestions on how to learn the techniques required to glide gracefully through cool waters. Check with me at the end of the summer! (Mary W.)

I've tried and tried but still can't manage to **draw** anything other than stick figures. Even when I taught elementary school English, all my drawings on the board were stick figures—even the dog, cat, cow and horse. I am really, really good at putting together IKEA furniture, though. Maybe because the little instructions guy is nothing more than a glorified stick figure. (Tracy M.)

Whatever possessed me to choose **violin**? Mom headed entertainment for the USO (United Service Organizations—no, she never met Bob Hope) at the Naval Base San Diego, California, during World War II. No surprise then, our household's foot-tapping music flowed. As kiddies our tap dancing/singing routines delighted audiences at dance school recitals. Piano lessons followed, once arms could reach keyboards while sitting on the stool. Later, a second music instrument was obligatory: clarinet, trumpet, trombone, and...me and my nemesis. Lessons, and stubbornness, spurred me on, resulting in playing in the high school orchestra's second violin section. Watching the first violinist's wrist flutters and pulsing as her fingers glided, raced, and stretched over the strings was awesome to behold. Curiously, what stymied me was a non-cooperative wrist, i.e., a wobbler. The violin, to be sure, proved too tough a nut to crack; I retired from any future endeavor involving that pesky instrument. In spite of that, watching orchestras' string sections perform is immensely appreciated and gratifying to this day. (Marinell H.)

I have always had a problem with **escalators**. My mother, who was in an escalator accident in NYC when she was a young woman, transferred her phobia to me. We avoided them like the plague—always finding the alternative stairs or elevator. As an adult I have learned to go up escalators with ease, but going down still poises a big problem. Especially feared are the extremely fast ones in the Fashion Institute of Technology in NYC, the Centre Pompidou in Paris, and the dreadfully steep Moscow subway, where a couple of men had to literally hold me down. I can manage department store escalators by standing directly behind someone else but impossible still are the steep ones at the U2 or in the London tube. (Thelma F.)

I have learned a lot in my past: how to sew, how to speak German, theories of genetics and moral development. I even learned how to teach children how to learn. But I have never succeeded in learning how to use my **android cell phone** properly. I have had it for years, but I am still dumbfounded when I try to get to the menu and am faced with an idiotic backdrop I never selected, or worse yet, all kinds of security apps that tell me they aren't functioning. I "wisch" and "wisch," but nothing happens. Sometimes it blinks or makes funny sounds like someone plucking a string. And sometimes, by some stroke of misfortune, I manage to turn on a kind of flashlight that glows eternally. I've discovered that I have to click on the camera to get rid of the flashlight, but I don't understand why. Since I don't have a grandchild to clue me in, I have tried other children, but they are usually too impatient with an old lady like me. I had a refugee take a look at things, and he proceeded to cancel just about all the apps I had downloaded. And then I hired a teacher, who turned out to be a 300-pound former sea captain, ate up all my cookies, and charged €250, but didn't help me much. A new phone and a new teacher would probably help. But what I really need is a different brain. I am a technological moron! (Pat N.)

How to impress a cute Chinese student that I had a crush on? **Learn Chinese!** It should be easy considering I was a language "expert" with degrees in English, Spanish and German and classes in French and Latin. No problem, right? Wrong. After two whole semesters at the University of Hamburg I realized that I would never learn Chinese, at least not without moving to China. My ear could not differentiate pronunciations of words—they all sounded alike. I learn languages best when reading the words, but what is there to read in a symbol with little lines leading in all directions? After a whole year, totally exasperated, I gave up learning Chinese. The only thing I took away from the experience was *Ni hao* and 50 wonderful years with the Chinese student. (Becky T.)

I was in China for five weeks and could never get the hang of eating with **chopsticks**, despite numerous 'lessons' from people in the group (Chinese, Japanese, Korean). I did try, honestly....many times...but I would have starved and the meal would never have ended if I'd been forced to survive with them. Luckily I had a set of camping cutlery with me, so that is what I ended up falling back on. (Wendy G.)

Many moons ago, when I was much younger and fitter, we were on holiday in Majorca and decided we would try **surfing**. All went well with my husband who mastered the technique very quickly and enjoyed the sense of speeding over the water. Then it was my turn: what a sorry sight, my bottom was glued to the water surface and my legs refused to straighten! After quite a few attempts and after being fished out of the water each time it finally dawned on me that I was never going to be a super athlete or even a minor one and I had better come to terms with my physical limitations! (Freda P.)

My dream was to **study music**. That requires money and talent. Both sources were low when they were required. So I obtained a BA at Northwestern in Chicago. It was most likely the name of the university rather than mine that attracted a headhunter from IBM, who tried to convince me to learn to be a Systems Engineer. Even the word 'engineer' made me think in the other direction. When after two hours of lunch and persuasion the headhunter gave up and asked me what I would prefer to do, I answered, "study music." With a sigh he whispered "and why don't you?" I answered, "I have two problems: no money and no talent." He beamed, got out the contract and said, "Close your eyes and sign this. And as long as you stay with us (IBM) I assure you a box seat in any opera house of this world." I signed. That evening I asked a friend, "What is a computer? I think I just signed my life away." From then on I took private guitar lessons—when my job left me time for it. I'm sure it was the lack of time that kept me from becoming a classic guitar performer. (Frauke R.-H.)

I never could and never did absorb the **correct grammar** rules in my attempts to learn any "foreign" language properly. This still haunts me. People are very kind when they hear my accent—and overlook my faux pas. It is said that it is best to learn (or begin learning?) a foreign language by the age of 11. *Was Hänschen nicht lernt, lernt Hans nimmermehr* fits me to a T. We had an American club member who didn't "dig" all the *Du* business, so *dutzt* everyone she said we were snobs....we said WHOA—be careful! Remember our friend Rebecca, who *dutzt* her next-door neighbor, then was astonished that it meant something entirely different from what she assumed. She asked what she should do, as the neighbor had become a pest. I said, "You cooked your own goose; best is to move!" (Carol B.)

Gainsborough Tour and Lunch at the Kunsthalle



Mr. and Mrs. Andrews, Thomas Gainsborough, National Gallery, London. Photo courtesy of the The Yorck Project (2002), Direct Media.

In April AWCH was happy to accept a very special invitation from the Stiftung Hamburger Kunstsammlungen (see box) to a tour in English of the Thomas Gainsborough exhibition at the Hamburger Kunsthalle followed by a delicious lunch at the museum's Cube restaurant. While Gainsborough is one of the world's best-known portrait painters, there are not many works by him in German collections and the Hamburg show was the first monographic exhibition of his art in this country. When one of two of us expressed disappointment at not seeing elegant full-length portraits of lavishly dressed English society, our guide, art and film historian Anja Ellenberger, told us that while these earned the artist fame and a lucrative living, landscape painting was his true love. The focus of the Kunsthalle exhibition was Gainsborough's role as a "pioneer of 'modern' landscape painting."

Because it ranked lower on the hierarchy of academic painting, Gainsborough felt freer to experiment with landscapes than in his commissioned portraits. He developed new techniques and adapted older ones to suit his needs. For example, we saw one of several works painted on glass which were intended to be backlit by candles in "slideboxes". Since these were viewed through the unpainted side of the glass, the painting process was reversed here, i.e. highlights and elements in the foreground were painted first and the (back) ground last. Elsewhere Gainsborough had brushed milk on landscape drawings between applications of color, letting it dry before adding more color, i.e. constantly refining the images in transparent layers as is done in traditional academic oil painting. Vice versa he brushed considerably diluted oil paint onto his canvases in quick, calligraphic strokes previously reserved for drawn sketches. This results in impressionistic breezy landscapes pulsing with life and subtle color which lay the groundwork for the 19th century painterly landscape masterpieces by John Constable or William Turner.

Gainsborough's landscapes were modern not only in technique. While we debated the merits of Gainsborough's iconic *Mr. and Mrs. Andrews at the Watering Place*, 1777, on loan from the National Gallery in London, Ms. Ellenberger pointed out that over half of the portrait space is taken up by landscape. The couple is portrayed on their own estate, but the setting is not a stylish garden but rather consists of a ploughed field, grain sheaves, and a sheep-dotted pasture all carefully demarcated by the stone walls and hedges of a working farm. Gainsborough's poetic depiction of fresh and productive rural life in this and other works, an early reaction to the poor living conditions of workers and overcrowding in cities that accompanied the rise of industrialization, heralds the romantic preoccupation with bucolic landscape among artists like Constable or Caspar David Friedrich in Germany in the 19th century. (Holly T.)



Stiftung Hamburger Kunstsammlungen (SHK)



Our generous host for the Gainsborough tour and lunch, the SHK or Hamburg Art Collections Foundation, was founded in 1956 with the express purpose of supporting the Hamburger Kunsthalle, the city’s art museum, and the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, the city’s museum of arts and crafts. Together with two other heavyweights among Hamburg-based charitable foundations supporting art in Germany, the Hermann-Reemstma Stiftung and *die Zeit*-Stiftung, the SHK spends ca. 1 million euros yearly to purchase works suggested by the two museums’ directors and curators. These remain in the possession of the SHK but are on view in both museums as long-term loans. The Foundation currently has around 200 private and corporate donor-members who contribute a minimum of €1,500 annually. If this is a bit beyond your budget, but you would like to support one or both museums, be sure to check out their “Friends” organizations with benefits including invitations to openings, special events and tours in German as well as free admission (<https://www.hamburger-kunsthalle.de/en/become-member> and <https://www.mkg-hamburg.de/en/support-us.html>). To find out more about the SHK see <http://www.shk-museum.de>. The website is in German but worth a look if only to see photos of the many impressive works collected for Hamburg by the SHK since its inception. These include Caspar David Friedrich’s iconic *Wanderer Among the Clouds* of 1818 and works by Picasso, Munch, Gauguin, Neo Rauch, Tina Barney and many other artists as well as numerous gems of furniture, clothing, graphic and industrial design.



In thanks for our wonderful outing, Events Chair Teresa P.yL. invited the gracious and enthusiastic manager of the SHK, Nicola Verstl, who accompanied our group, to join AWCH. Happily, Nicola accepted and we look forward to seeing her again soon at another AWCH event. (Holly T.)



Dim Sum Brunch

I never used to like Chinese food, but then again, I never really had actual Chinese food. The foreign-take on Chinese food is so drastically different than the authentic dishes China has to offer—but how do you know if the food is authentic? You need an insider who knows the food and language. For AWCH, that insider is Stella.

As I entered the Dim Sum Haus (conveniently located across the street from the Hauptbahnhof), I was overwhelmed by the splendid décor. I've never traveled

Susan in the middle, which always had seemingly endless amounts of green tea. As the Chinese effortlessly rolled off of Stella's tongue, more and more food kept coming. As each dish arrived, Stella explained to us what we were about to eat and then we each tried a small piece, some of us managing with chopsticks easier than others. The amount of new flavors and textures were surprising to me since I thought that I had known what Chinese food was like! Some were crunchy and filled with seafood, while others were spongy and filled with tofu.

All-in-all, there was a general consensus that it was all good, and that the Lazy Susan should spin back to us with the rest of whatever we had just devoured. Dessert was also a big hit; we ate warm, sweet, steamed dumplings with a custard filling that I have been dreaming about ever since (and that the

group accurately renamed a "Hot Berliner"). The venue and service were great, the food was to-die-for, our "guide" through this novel (for me anyways) experience (Stella) was spectacular, and the company (like always) was amazing! (Callie H.)

to China before so I don't have much to compare it to, but it really felt like I had managed to fly there just for lunch. The restaurant is covered with gold and red paintings, Buddhas, and intricate dragons.

The twelve of us sat around a large wooden table with a Lazy



If you want to replicate our experience and can't wait until the next event, here is a list of the foods we have tried:

- Har Gow (shrimp in rice flour)
- Siu Mai (steamed pork and mushroom)
- Turnip Cake (small square flats)
- Fried WonTon
- Spring Rolls
- Vegetarian Rolls with Chinese Vegetable Filling
- Siu Lung Bow (steamed soup dumplings)
- Dessert: Steamed Egg Custard Bun (also known as Steamed Malaysian Cake)



Creating Connections

Five interested AWCH members took part in a morning workshop hosted by Anna S. with the title “Connect before You Correct”. Anna is an AWCH member and the founder of the “Institute for Intercultural Psychotherapy and Counseling”. She is offering a series of three seminars under the heading “Attachment and Relationships” for our members.

We learned the role emotions play in our daily lives in the context of evolution. Emotions help the body regulate its response to different situations. The prefrontal cortex, which houses our ability to take complex decisions and moderate social behavior, is not developed until our early twenties. Until then, seeking and maintaining contact is a prime motivation to ensure survival. Therefore a secure connection offers a safe haven to explore the world and a firm base to return. Disconnection, on the other hand,

can lead to trauma and detachment. Only a safely attached infant feels secure enough to venture out in the world.

Anna also introduced us to the system of PACE to connect with our children, partners or friends. P stands for Playfulness and means a joint positive experience, such as laughter, which allows one to build memories of unconditional acceptance. A stands for Acceptance, C for Curiosity, and E for Empathy. Anna encouraged us to raise our children as “experts”, letting them give us advice and to teach us something with and through them in order to avoid daily struggles. The participants were very excited to try out the learned content at home and are looking forward to the next workshops. (Kathrin Y.)



“This was a fascinating topic! The seminar provided a great opportunity to explore the presented concept with other mothers, with the added bonus of discussing ways that our multicultural lives may influence our family interactions. It gave me a lot to think about; many things I put into practice immediately!”

—Andrea H.



Next seminar dates:

- June 12: What makes relationships work?
- June 18: Mysteries of the teenage brain.

“The seminar was on an important subject with a well-prepared lecture, lively discussion and lovely atmosphere. Thank you for the well-selected theme, professionally defended, with careful attention to family and children relationships and club activities.”

—Emilia J.

Lettering Workshop

In March AWCH member Karen M. held a Lettering Workshop in her home. The participants had won the opportunity to take part because they were the five highest bidders of Karen’s offer at the Silent Auction during the Annual General Meeting.

Karen began with a short history of calligraphy and lettering and how it has seen resurgence now in advertising, invitations and above all, on Pinterest.

We started practicing individual letters on worksheets minding the upward and downward strokes. This is not easy to grasp right away, and a lot of practice is necessary. Memories of learning how to write the alphabet in the first grade came running to my mind.

After practicing letters for what seemed like hours, we moved on to faux calligraphy. This is basically normal handwriting, just bigger and more elaborate. You don’t need to concentrate on the thin upward strokes and thick downward strokes of lettering. Faux calligraphy relies on shadowing and embellishing the letters.

We finished up with designing our own Easter Cards, adding banners and leafy borders around the letters.

Karen is an enthusiastic and talented workshop leader and has the patience of a saint. We look forward to the next workshop because, although we finally see some progress, we are afraid more practice is required in the future! (Tracy M. and Susan S.-W.)



Newcomers' Events in April and May



With the enthusiasm and help of Hamburger Helpers Coordinators Natalie Hunter and Carey Witt, AWCH hosted two newcomer events this spring. The first, a morning coffee get-together in Blankenese in April, took place at the home of Activities Chair Charis H. Four new members attended along with several Hamburger Helpers and Board Members who took turns briefly introducing AWCH groups and activities before we sat down to enjoy a lovely array of cakes and other goodies. Then at the end of May I hosted an evening get-together at my apartment in Altona with wine (*Sekt!*) and tapas. Five new members and two prospective members attended with two Hamburger Helpers and Board Members.

The current group of new and prospective members ranges from 20-somethings to grandmothers and includes three who are expecting babies. I got several emails from newcomers unable to attend asking if we would repeat the events. The ones who came seemed happy to hear more about AWCH and, especially, to connect with one another. Not surprisingly there seems to be a greater demand for evening get-togethers. If anyone would like to host a newcomer get-together in the fall, please let me know. Ideally, I'd like to have them happening every two months or so and I'd be very happy to do it again at my place. (Holly T., Membership Chair)



Celebrate with Us!

When: July 4 at 4 p.m

Where: Amerikazentrum
in Hafen City

Children & guests are welcome!

Please RSVP on our website.

Please bring a dessert.

Opera Club: Season in Review and a Look Ahead

Just like the world's major opera houses, the AWCH Opera Club is winding down its 2017/2018 season while looking forward with great excitement to brand new upcoming projects.

Looking back, the Opera Club's season got off to a fast start with the double bill of Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana* and Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci*. Our study of these two powerful works plunged us intensively into the world of verismo opera, culminating in a lively evening at the Staatsoper.



The new year saw the commencement of our next project, namely, Beethoven's one and only opera, *Fidelio*. Hamburg's new modern production received seriously mixed reviews from our group members, but we were all just quite happy to finally attend a live performance and observe the many curious details that went into the staging. We all certainly finished out the evening with full hearts, thanks to the music, as well as full stomachs from our traditional late-night, post-opera dinner.

As previously reported in *Currents*, an exciting highlight of the "Fidelio" project was our Opera Lunch with baritone Kartal Karagedik. Kartal himself was

so inspired by our gathering that he invited us all to come hear him sing Rodrigo in Leipzig Opera's production of *Don Carlo*. A large group of us took him up on this, and Opera Club made its first venture in an exciting new direction: road trips! Our two-day venture to Leipzig was highly entertaining and quite unforgettable. The process of choosing a fresh new destination for 2019 is already underway. Dresden? Milan? Budapest? Naples? Europe is calling!



However, before we head out of town again, two new fantastic projects and operas await us here in Hamburg.

First, the Staatsoper will open its season with Mozart's *Così fan tutte*, featuring two of the Opera Club's favorite singers in starring roles, and, of course, we will be in attendance. There won't be time in the days before this September show for our usual thorough preparation, but one lively meeting will be plenty to get us in the mood for the big premiere.

Our second project will then take a look at the roots of opera. Over the course of three fall/winter meetings, we shall consider some of the earliest operas in the modern repertoire with a particular focus on Christoph Willibald Gluck's groundbreaking *Orphée et Eurydice* (1762). While this exhilaratingly lovely work sounds very different than modern creations, its powerful beauty cuts through the centuries and reaches directly to the heart. This is timeless sound with an expressivity that is at once moving and fascinating. The Staatsoper's new production of *Orphée* will feature both opera and ballet, yielding a perfect combination of these two beloved art forms.

I look forward to sharing these treasures of the opera world with Opera Club "veterans" as well as with new members. Beginners are always welcome in our friendly and diverse group.

Next meeting is Friday, September 7 in Hamburg-Poppenbüttel. For more information, please contact me at opera@awchamburg.org. (Elizabeth R.)

Art Club: Two Fantastic Events !



Nava Berg turns *Abfall* into Sculpture

In February our club member of many talents, Nava Berg, held a presentation for AWCH's art group. Nava attended art school in Israel and her talk was about her final exam project—the creating of a sculpture. She discussed her work from the beginning to its final form with the aid of slides as well as her original sketchbook of drawings. Her thought process was greatly influenced by her Aunt Janet's lifestyle and by her mentor Professor Doron, who obviously provided her with the means to think through her ideas and realize them. She told of how she went about coordinating various materials (cloth, foam, wood, *etc.*) and deciding how to assemble them to become a giant cube called *Abfall*. One could see what painstaking work this involved. Nava did not just lecture but got the audience to contribute ideas by asking what we were observing during the slide show. Thus the presentation became interactive.

Nava's talk along with Shelly S.'s hospitality and generous buffet plus contributions from a full-house of attendees made for a wonderful and interesting day. (Thelma F.)



Addendum from Carol B.

Nava's upended sculpture was created from scavenged (ergo the title) scraps of fabric, stuffing, and wood. We also saw slides of the room-size *avant garde* creations of British sculptor, Louise Nevelson, plus Christos and Jeanne-Claude's exciting 1995 wrapping of the *Reichstag* in Berlin. Also discussed were the thought-provoking reasons for which sculptures are given names, e.g. Joel Shapiro's *Marriage*, a large outdoor abstract work.

Special thanks to our new club member, Adrian Schoeneshoefer, who took care of all computer and technical arrangements.

We look forward to photos of Nava's new adventure in designing and building her "tiny house" in Austin, Texas.



Nicole Wermer at the Kunstverein

AWCH's popular new Art Group visited the Hamburger Kunstverein in April to see an exhibition of works by Nicole Wermer. An internationally acclaimed contemporary German artist who now lives and works in London, Wermer was a finalist for the Tate Gallery's prestigious Turner Prize in 2015. Surprisingly, the show at the Kunstverein was her first big survey exhibition in her native country. That this took place in Hamburg was especially fitting since Wermer studied art at the Academy of Fine Arts here (Hochschule für bildende Künste).

In her large sculptures Wermer calls attention to the way ubiquitous objects and design strategies that we take for granted accompany and affect interactions with our surroundings and one another. We began the tour by experiencing an extended "entering" of the exhibition by walking over a walkway made of doormats of different forms and materials lined up one after another and wittily titled *The Long Hello*. In another work Wermer focused on the way we drape coats over the backs



of chairs in restaurants and other public spaces. While this "social ritual" normally temporarily and rather sloppily marks the chair as one's own space, Wermer transforms it into an assemblage of highly aestheticized permanent works of art. With the help of subtly matching lining and custom upholstery, she sewed a collection of (secondhand) extravagant short fur coats onto Marcel Breuer's tubular steel Cesca chairs, icons of modern functional simplicity. One of the works most popular among our group, consisted of another incongruous but aesthetic juxtaposition: a series of color photographs of different croissants, each paired with the front or back side of one of a similarly varied assortment of sheets of sandpaper.

Our guide, Assistant Curator Tobias Peper, gave us a terrific introduction to the work of this important contemporary artist in excellent English. He was cheerful, animated and attentive throughout. We will surely be returning to the Kunstverein soon, if only to take another of Tobias' exceptional tours! After the tour we walked over to the nearby Deichtorhallen and had a very nice time getting to know each other better over lunch at the restaurant there, Filet of Soul. (Holly T.)

Hamburger Kunstverein

The Hamburger Kunstverein is one of 300 *Kunstvereine* or non-profit arts clubs in cities throughout Germany, whose purpose is to make international and local contemporary art accessible to the public by staging exhibitions. These are temporary loan exhibitions since the *Kunstvereine* do not have their own permanent collections. They often commission works from contemporary artists to sell to their members at special prices. They also organize tours, art courses and art trips.

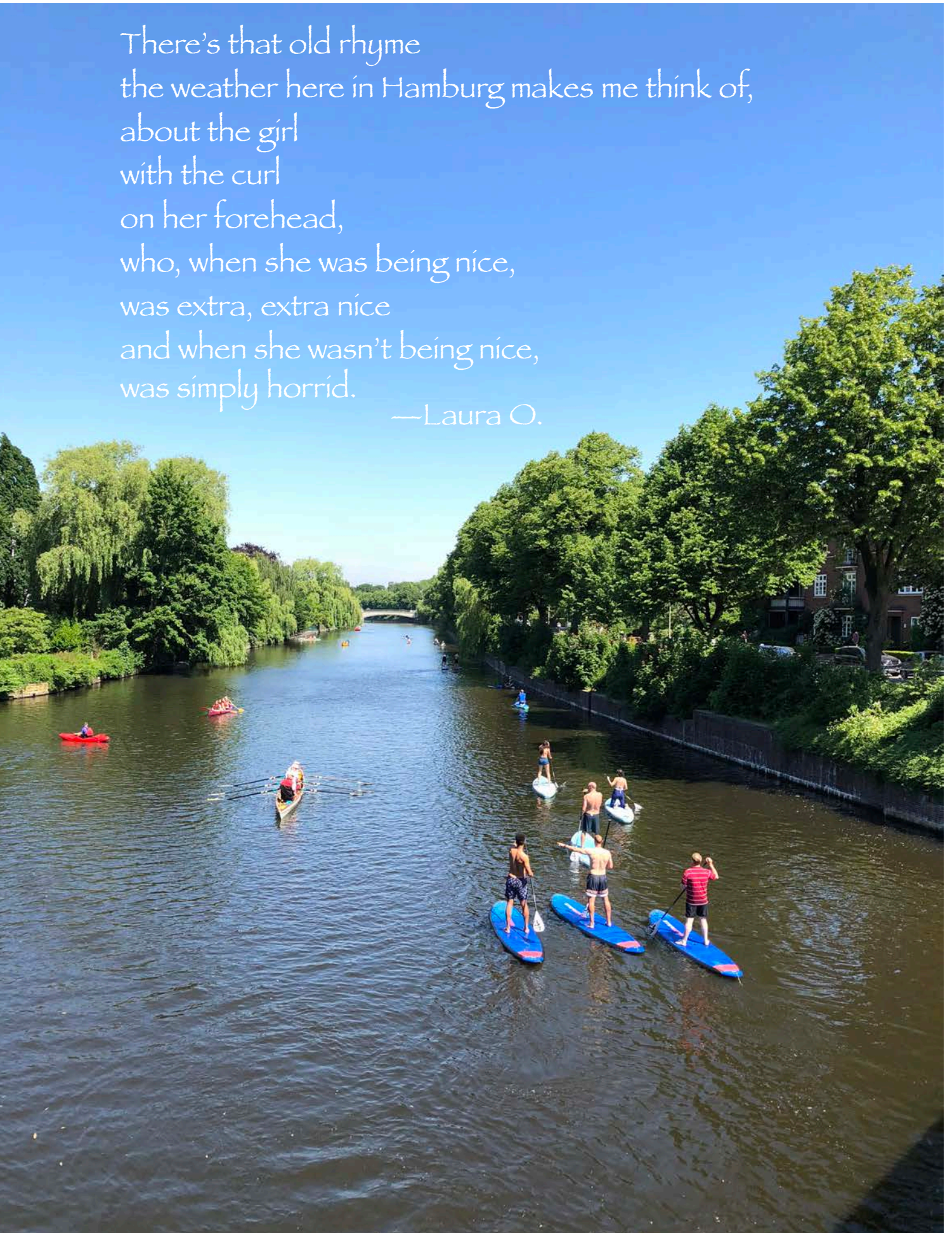
The founding of most of the *Kunstvereine* in the first half of the 19th century by artists and private citizens accompanied a shift in art patronage from the church and nobility to middle class art collectors. Founded in 1817 the Kunstverein in Hamburg is the second oldest in Germany (the Albrecht-Dürer Gesellschaft was founded in 1792). Its first exhibition in 1826 featured new works by Caspar David Friedrich and others and included Friedrich's famous *Sea of Ice* now in the collection of the Hamburger Kunsthalle. Later, Jackson Pollock had his first German exhibition at Hamburg's Kunstverein in 1958. Francis Bacon, Angela Bulloch and Olafur Eliasson are among the many other internationally recognized artists to have had earlier exhibitions here. In one of its more dubious episodes, the Kunstverein's director from 1931-33 was Hildebrand Gurlitt, who later became a dealer of Nazi-confiscated artwork and the main art buyer for the planned Hitler Museum in Linz. His personal collection containing a number of "lost works" confiscated by the Nazis was dramatically discovered by customs investigators in his son's Munich apartment in 2012.

Annual membership to the Hamburger Kunstverein costs €50, €70 for families, €25 for artists and students. As a member you'll be invited to lively openings, artist's talks and art-focused excursions and trips. You will also be able to purchase limited edition artworks specially commissioned for the Kunstverein membership. Your membership card will also gain you admission to all other *Kunstvereine* in Germany.

The Hamburg Kunstverein is located at Klosterwall 23 between the main train station and the Deichtorhallen. It is open Tuesday-Sunday from 12-6 p.m. Admission for non-members costs €5. Combine a visit with lunch or dinner at the cozy and arty nearby Italian restaurant: Pane e Tulipani.

There's that old rhyme
the weather here in Hamburg makes me think of,
about the girl
with the curl
on her forehead,
who, when she was being nice,
was extra, extra nice
and when she wasn't being nice,
was simply horrid.

—Laura O.



Art in Hamburg

Hamburg's 7th Triennial of Photography Is Now Open!

by Shelly Schoeneshoefer

One of the world's largest photography festivals, the Triennial of Photography Hamburg, opens from June to September 2018 in 80 locations across the city. Featuring works from 320 international photographers, the theme of this year's triennial is "Breaking Point. Searching for Change". It takes a closer look at the medium of photography and what it can teach us: catch a fleeting glimpse of the past or freeze it for a moment. The exhibitions are named after computer commands: [ENTER], [SPACE], [HOME], [SHIFT], [CONTROL], [RETURN], [DELETE] and [ESCAPE]. So, put on your jogging shoes, because this is an event not to be missed!

One of the event's major shows is [RETURN] at the Altonaer Museum, which features *Fotografie in der Weimarer Republik 1918-1933*. Using archive images from the LVR-LandesMuseum Bonn, der Stiftung F.C. Gundlach Hamburg, der Deutschen Fotothek Dresden, und des Altonaer Museums, it provides not just a history lesson, but a look at what could have been.

[RETURN] is also connected to the city of Hamburg's program marking the German Revolution of 1918/19. The years of the Weimar Republic illustrate not only what was happening in politics and society, but also give us a view into the fashion scene as well as the entertainment and discoveries of the era, such as the rise of the In-

dustrial Revolution with its new technology and innovations.

The Altonaer Museum exhibition comprises four themes: "Revolution und Republic", "From Slow Fox to Grotesque Dance", "The 1920s Fashions", and "New Objectivity / New Things to See".

This is just one part of a this colossal exhibition, which looks at the influence that technology has had and where this might lead us. Where will this journey take us after we have viewed these photographs? Will we see our current position in the world any differently?

I, for one, intend to see as much as I can. The triennial's other events include [ENTER] at the Festival Center, [SPACE] at the Deichtor Hallen, [HOME] at the Altonaer Museum Hamburg, [SHIFT] and [CONTROL] at the Hamburg Kunst Museum, [DELETE] at the Kunst und Gewerbe Museum Hamburg, [ESCAPE] at the Volkerkunde Museum Hamburg, [Anton Corbijn] at the Bucerius Kunst Forum, [Joan Fortuberta] at the Barlach Halle, [Shirana Shahbazi] at the Kunsthaus Hamburg and [recommended] at the Akademie de Kunst.



For more information, visit <https://www.phototriennale.de>.



Man Ray, Djagilew Ballett, Sergej Lifar als Romeo, Kostüm Max Ernst, 1920er Jahre, Foto Man Ray Trust



Martin Badekow, Edith Meinhard, 1920er Jahre, Foto Ullstein Bild

Top: Kundgebung der Regierung Ebert und Scheidemann auf dem Wilhelmplatz, Berlin, 6. Januar 1919, Foto Ullstein Bild

Upper: Martin Munkacsi, Rosy Barsony bei einem ihrer Grotesk-Tänze, Berlin 1932, Estate of Martin Munkacsi, Courtesy Howard Greenberg Gallery

Theater in Hamburg

Songs Changing Over a Lifetime

by Marinell Haegelin



From left Alex Wadham, Alice Redmond, and Scott Ellis

The play's witty beginning advances through a succession of vignettes imitating people's lifetime journey. Four very talented thespians slip in and out of 50 characters portraying personalities as varied as nervous, fumbling first daters to satisfied singles, matrimonial cold feet to doting parentage, and typical family routine through to the golden years.

Since Adam and Eve, rituals remain perpetually circling, with adolescence a rite of passage to relationships. "Everything you have ever secretly thought about dating, romance, marriage, lovers, husbands, wives and in-laws, but were afraid to admit," is the tagline for this musical comedy by Americans Joe DiPietro, book and lyrics, and Jimmy Roberts' music. A sample of song titles within the nineteen scenes in two acts that outline one's life cycle are: *A Stud and a Babe*, *He Called Me*; *Wedding Vows*, *The Baby Song*, and *Marriage Tango*; *Waiting Trio*, *The Very First Dating Video of Rose Ritz* and *Funerals are for Dating* to *Epilogue*.

Undoubtedly, DiPietro and Roberts' New Jersey/New York backgrounds were influences in capturing the inexplicable capriciousness of humans. Playwright, lyricist and author, DiPietro's musical *Memphis* received a

I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change

A musical by Joe Di Pietro and Jimmy Roberts

at English Theatre

with Paul Glaser directing



2010 Tony award; Roberts is a pianist and performer, as well as composing for theatrical musicals, special arrangements, and making guest appearances. *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change* has at least seventeen language translations; performances worldwide include London/UK, Budapest/Hungary, Mexico City, Bratislava/Slovakia, Tokyo, Buenos Aires, and Beijing/China.

Director/choreographer Paul Glaser pointed out that although set in the 1980–1990s, its foundation is timeless. Glaser, Associate Director at the theater, updated some terminology in the dialogue, and utilized an open stage concept with minimal props. Lighting modifications boost shifting ambience in the altering quickly paced scenes, creating maximum effect for the range of characters over time. James Mironchik revealed, "I have the best seat in the house," and loves being involved with the production. The on-stage pianist also talked about how much dexterity the music arrangements require.

Mironchik provided musical direction, and was impressed that the London actors had American east coast accents “out of the box.” Also a New Jersey/New York native, Mironchik’s coaching finessed some dialogue points. “They’re a great cast to work with.”

The four vivacious thespians concur that changing into so many costumes is challenging; all have designated areas just offstage for each one’s props and costumes. Alice Redmond wears eleven different wigs during the production! From the beginning, the cast “gelling” made the intensity of the short rehearsal time easier, said Alice. (Listening to them banter attests to their camaraderie.) One song was especially demanding for Scott Ellis, requiring much work because of its vocal range while matching the lyrics. Now, it is his favorite song. Since Scott is seldom required to dance, choreography was somewhat tricky. Alex Walham and Alexandra Fisher agreed it is not often an actor gets a chance to play so many different characters in one production, so this is a great experience. Alex thought through the personality of each of his characters to make them more real for audiences. Just as Alexandra explained how before every production, and during the interval each actor checks/double-checks his/her costumes.

From left Alexandra Fisher, Alice Redmond and James Mironchik (background)



From left Alice Redmond, Alexandra Fisher, AlexWadham and Scott Ellis

I LOVE YOU, YOU’RE PERFECT, NOW CHANGE, a musical by Joe DiPietro and Jimmy Roberts premiered April 26, 2018 and runs through June 23, 2018.

James Cawood’s thriller DEATH KNELL will kick-off the 2018–2019 Season, premiering early September 2018.

Evening and matinee performances; tickets available at the theatre or online: www.englishtheatre.de. The English Theatre of Hamburg, Lerchenfeld 14, 22081 Hamburg, Tel: 040-227 70 89: U-Bahn Mundsburg.



From left Scott Ellis and AlexWadham

I Love You, You’re Perfect, Now Change stirs audiences’ imagination with its witty humor, zany depictions, and poignant sensitivity. A smart, timeless musical, it reminds audiences of special events in their lives, and/or leads them down memory lane. Not your run-of-the-mill song and dance entertainment, it is sure to put grins on faces and a spring in people’s steps.



From left Alexandra Fisher, AlexWadham and Scott Ellis

Credit for Photos: © Kock, ETH

Film Reviews and more...



Die brillante Mademoiselle Neïla (Le brio) ****
 France/Belgium 2017
 Opening June 14, 2018

Directed by: Yvan Attal
 Writing credits: Yvan Attal, Victor Saint-Macary, Yaël Langmann, Noé Debre
 Principal actors: Daniel Auteuil, Camélia Jordana, Yasin Houicha, Nozha Khouadra, Nicolas Vaude, Jean-Baptiste Lafarge



Neïla Salah (**Camélia Jordana**) is of foreign extraction and lives in a working class neighborhood in Paris with her mother. Her boyfriend Mounir (**Yasin Houicha**) drives a taxi. In spite of this difficult background she has been accepted for her exceptional abilities in the renowned Assis School of Law

in Paris. She arrives late on the first day of her first course and attempts to slide unnoticed into a seat during the lecture of Professor Pierre Mazard (**Daniel Auteuil**). Mazard, who has the reputation of being racist, biased, and arrogant, stops his lecture to lash out at this stupid, presumptuous little nobody who dares to interrupt him. The students are shocked at the behavior, not of Neïla, but of Mazard. They complain to the head office. Mazard is called in and faced with dismissal. He can redeem himself if he agrees to coach Neïla privately in order to prepare her for a rhetoric competition, where arguing one's point of view is judged. This is good practice for a law student.

Naturally, we can almost guess the ending, which gives us time to sit back and enjoy the words, the "rhetoric," not only in preparation for and during the actual competitions, but especially between Professor Mazard and his student as they battle out their differences. Daniel Auteuil is an established French actor since over 40 years, winner of many awards. He compares this film to a modern-day *Pygmalion*. Camélia Jordana began her career as a singer. Director Yvan Attal began with acting then turned to directing. He said that the life of Neïla, reminded him of his own life: growing up poor with the chance to make something of himself. He enjoyed filming at the university where he had over 700 extras. Auteuil, Jordana, and Attal all have some family background in French Algeria. It's important to understand the language of the film, whether original French or German subtitles or something else, since the text carries the whole action. (Becky Tan)

Overboard ***
 USA 2018
 Opening June 14, 2018

Directed by: Rob Greenberg
 Writing credits: Leslie Dixon and Bob Fisher
 Principal actors: Anna Faris, Eva Longoria, Eugenio Derbez

Kate (**Anna Faris**) is a stressed-out single mother of three girls, who's working multiple menial jobs while studying to become a nurse. She's

hired to clean the carpets on a yacht owned by a rich Mexican playboy, Leonardo (**Eugenio Derbez**), and ends up getting into a fight with him. In a petty huff, the child-like Leonardo refuses to pay Kate. When he accidentally falls off the yacht and washes up on the shores of Kate's Oregon town with amnesia, her best friend Theresa (**Eva Longoria**) encourages Kate to "claim" Leonardo at the hospital, bring him back to her house under the guise that they're married, and get revenge on the heir by making him earn money to pay Kate's bills. She ropes her three daughters and some friends into



the charade and off they go! Far-fetched? You betcha! Sound familiar? Sure does! This is a re-make of the 1987 movie by the same name, which starred Goldie Hawn as a spoiled heiress and Kurt Russell as the poor chump she cheats, who then tricks her into caring for his children when she falls off her yacht.

The re-make has reversed the gender roles and has introduced an interesting new layer in the fact that Leonardo, an incredibly wealthy Mexican who hob-nobs with an international jet-set, becomes part of a community of blue-collar Spanish-speaking American workers who embrace him as one of their own while

mocking his inexperience. Leonardo, who's never lifted a finger in his life, works on a construction crew, learns to cook meals for and take care of Kate and her daughters, and evolves into a decent human being

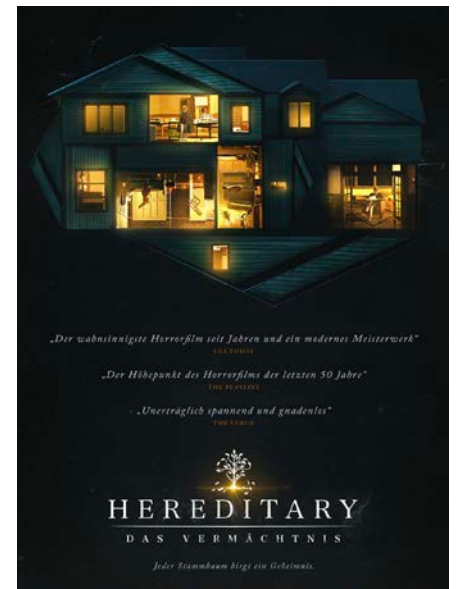
Overboard is a light-hearted movie with charming and funny moments, but it requires an almost delusional suspension of disbelief to find Leonardo's transformation anything other than ludicrous. And I found myself wondering, what kind of parent would rope her young, fatherless daughters into going along with this hair-brained scheme, which verges on abject cruelty—both for Leonardo and for the kids. But this is a fluffy romantic comedy with a predictable narrative arc and there's no room in this movie for questioning any of the character's actions. If you're in the mood for some silly summer fun, go along for this ridiculous but amusingly sweet ride. (Diana Perry Schnelle)

Hereditary *****
2018 USA
Opening date: June 14, 2018

Directed by: Ari Aster
Writing credits: Ari Aster
Principal actors: Toni Collet, Gabriel Byrne, Alex Wolff, Milly Shapiro, Ann Dowd

Don't eat the nut cake! I suspiciously accepted the piece of cake that they handed out before the film but couldn't resist the temptation and before I knew it I had fallen victim to one of the cryptic messages that lay deep within this script. Director/screen writer **Ari Aster** has created a diabolic supernatural horror masterpiece, which reminds us of films like *Carrie*, *The Omen* and *Rosemary's Baby*. With throbbing melancholic music and underlining symbolism such as a bird's head, red eyes, secret scriptures hidden in the wallpaper, naked figures in the distance as well as a strange wooden house on stilts, the tone

is set very quickly, which helps to build up the drama around the Graham family.



From the beginning it is clear that Annie not only suffers from depression but has a difficult relationship with her mother. The matriarchally figure Ellen has passed away leaving her daughter Annie a legacy that has made her fearful, even more depressed and grinding with repulsion as strange things begin to happen. For years Annie has hidden from her mother and the secrets about their family tree and has busied herself creating miniature autobiographical theater sets. Her family consists of four. Peter (**Alex Wolff**) is a teenage boy who listens to music, attends school and smokes pot. His sister Charlie is a strangely odd girl who makes clucking sounds that haunt us throughout the film brilliantly played by **Milly Shapiro**. The last is Annie's husband Steve (**Gabriel Byrne**) who plays a minor role. It seems that Ellen has powers that can reach out beyond the grave and in a short time Annie realizes she has to put a stop to the bizarre events that will destroy her family.

The mood of the film reminds us of David's Lowery's *A Ghost Story* since the timing is very slow paced yet strangely off-center and very dark. The film debuted

at Sundance and made it to mainstream in a wink of a blink. So if you want a good night's sleep tonight, I would advise you not eat the nut cake! (Shelly Schoeneshoefer)

Halaleluja—Iren Sind Menschlich! (Halal Daddy) ***
Germany | Ireland 2017
Opening June 21, 2018

Directed by: Conor
McDermottroe
Writing credits: Conor McDermottroe, Mark O'Halloran
Principal actors: Sarah Bolger, Colm Meaney, David Kross, Art Malik, Nikesh Patel, Deirdre O'Kane



Living with Doreen (**Deirdre O'Kane**) and Jamal (**Paul Tylak**) in Sligo, Raghdan (**Nikesh Patel**) is mad about Maeve (**Sarah Bolger**). Maeve has delivered pizzas since two years when dad was laid off; when invited, dinner with the Logan's is awkward for Raghdan. His best friends and cohorts, Neville (**Jerry Iwu**) and Derek (**Stephen Cromwell**), are low-maintenance and easy-going, although occasionally their lackadaisical ways gets Ragh in trouble. Case in point, misinterpreting Maeve and Jasper's (**David Kross**) involvement. Doreen runs interference when Amir (**Art Malik**) turns up to offer his son

a business proposition. Hiring a local as manager, Martin (**Colm Meaney**) takes on staff from "the elite of Sligo's unemployed," just as his bungling social gaffes are overlooked. On balance, everything seems to be coming together nicely, when Amir and Raghdan lock horns. Doreen gives Raghdan some helpful homespun advice. Ultimately, Raghdan's course of action has an impact with far-reaching consequences.

Director **Conor McDermottroe**, and co-writer with **Mark O'Halloran** have rendered a light, easy-to-watch film. Meaney is quite good portraying an old-school Irishman struggling to adapt to the changing social ethnicities environment, while at the same time dealing with personal setbacks. Contrasting that are the father and son portrayals by Malik and Patel with their characters antithetical viewpoints. Production values are solid, accompanied by **Matthias Weber's** enjoyable music. There are a few moral points lightly mixed in the fabric of *Halal Daddy*, yet the emphasis is to send away contented, relaxed audiences. And, no animals were harmed in its making. 95 minutes (Marinell Haegelin)

Am Strand (On Chesil Beach) ***
UK 2017
Opening June 21, 2018

Directed by: Dominik Cooke
Writing credits: Ian McEwan
Principal actors: Saoirse Ronan, Billy Howle, Anne-Marie Duff, Emily Watson, Mark Donald

Over dinner en-suite, Florence (**Saoirse Ronan**) and Edward (**Billy Howle**) struggle to converse. Words, phrases, and sentences trigger flashbacks to their serendipitous meeting, individual backgrounds, and then return to Dorset, England on their wedding night. It is 1962, with pre-liberation's societal dictums. As they grapple on the bed, more obvious is the

magnitude of an emotional and maturity gulf.



Sailing, tennis, and classical music figure in the Ponting's suffocating, orderly home life rectitude. Florence and Ruth's (**Bebe Cave**) closeness offsets demanding class-conscience parents (**Emily Watson**, **Samuel West**). Whereas, dad (**Adrian Scarborough**), the twins (**Anna Burgess**, **Mia Burgess**) and Edward accept that the Mayhew's relaxed household spins around artistic yet worrisome Marjorie (**Anne-Marie Duff**). Edward and Florence's differences compel exploration, encourage admiration, and nurture love. Conversely, common denominators inherent in the sans-intimacy era instead fuels frustration, resentments, and embarrassment.

Dominik Cooke directs **Ian McEwan's** screenplay based on McEwan's same-titled bestselling novel. Some books, though, do not lend themselves to the lack of intimacy of the big screen. Incongruity results from pacing that is not simply the editor's (**Nick Fenton**) responsibility. Three-fourths of the film's focus is while at the seaside hotel on Chesil Beach—one quick scene hints at fatherly misconduct, then jumps forward 13-years to a few sketchy scenes that become patchier at the end in 2007. The

cast is sound: Ronan and Howe add believability to somewhat fragmentary dialogue scenes; Duff and Watson as the mums command their scenes. From the get-go, music (**Dan Jones**) and cinematography (**Sean Bobbitt**) is a charming asset. Foresight is much more significant in hindsight, which makes this “bouncy and merry” film easy-to-watch. 110 minutes (Marinell Haegelin)

The Rider *****

USA 2017

Opening June 21, 2017

Directed by: Chloè Zhao

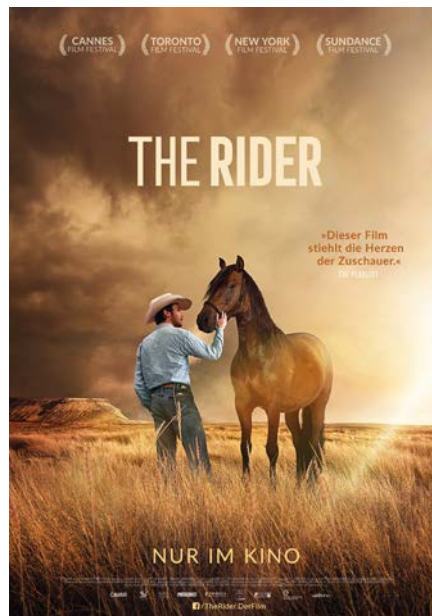
Writing credits: Chloè Zhao

Principal actors: Brady Jandreau, Tim Jandreau, Lilly Jandreau

Brady Blackburn (**Brady Jandreau**) suffers a severe head injury while performing in a rodeo. A horse with such a serious injury would be shot; a human being is forced to continue. With the support of his father Wayne (**Tim Jandreau**) Brady slowly recovers. Financial straits force him to take on a job at a supermarket and his father sells his favorite horse, Gus. However, “God gives each person a purpose; and the cowboy’s is to ride.” Brady returns to the meadow, where he begins to train a wild horse named Apollo, an art which is fascinating to watch.

Three members of the Jandreau family agreed to star in *The Rider*. Naturally, they were especially suited for this film, because in real life they breed horses in South Dakota where Chinese director **Chloè Zhao** filmed. Brady Jandreau is not only very good-looking in a cowboy hat, but also an excellent actor, who should come back for more. His sister, Lilly Jandreau and friend Lane Scott also play themselves. Much of the story is biographical, e.g., somewhat based on a real rodeo accident suffered by Brady Jandreau during his young career as a rodeo rider. The South

Dakota scenery and the horses are beautiful and it is no surprise that *The Rider* won the Art Cinema Award at the 2017 Cannes Film Festival. (Becky Tan)



(another opinion)

The Rider ****1/2

Writer-director **Chloè Zhao** has an uncanny understanding of the American West and its inhabitants, and nature’s indiscriminate temperament. In her second feature film, personal tragedy is putty in her hands as the untrained cast portray themselves before **Joshua James Richards’** camera under her fluid assured guidance. *The Rider* is dedicated to those individuals that “live their lives 8-seconds at a time.”

Brady’s (**Brady Jandreau**) rodeo dream is shattered, together with a key bodily component, in an accident. Reeling, and recuperating with his skull bandaged, Wayne (**Tim Jandreau**) exasperatedly says to his son, “You’re as stubborn as your brother” when common sense talk falls on deaf ears. Friends maintain status quo, while Lily (**Lilly Jandreau**) straddles puberty, and being independent of, yet concern for her brother. Only the shared camaraderie with Lane (**Lane Scott**) at the hospital eases, yet pinpoints Brady’s

dilemma. Until, Apollo offers a bigger and healthier challenge. Zhao inherently recognizes a good story, plus has the shrewdness to stick close to actualities. Her trademark—to date—is tight budgets, shooting on location, light dialogue delivered mostly by real-life protagonists with a supporting cast of friends, family and townfolk: “We’re capturing truth - because truth is the only thing we can afford.” She met Brady Jandreau learning to ride a horse while filming her award winning debut feature in South Dakota, USA. Brady’s life appealed to her sense of storytelling; Brady’s accident inadvertently became this film’s plot.

Spectacular vistas and revealing close-ups are fluidly caught by Richards’s cinematography, just as **Alex O’Flinn’s** editing is predominantly shrewd and measuredly adding **Nathan Halpern’s** mood-tempered-by-action music is noteworthy. A native of Beijing, China, Ms. Zhao is surprisingly attuned to the pulse of Americana. *The Rider* won the Art Cinema Award when it screened at Filmfest Hamburg, Germany in 2017; award winning *Songs My Brothers Taught Me* screened there in 2015. Both films premiered at the Cannes Film Festival. Already in pre-production is a historical Western about the U.S.’s first black Deputy Marshall; it will be intriguing to see how Zhao develops this angle, and its result. 104 minutes (Marinell Haegelin)

Allein unter Schwestern (Hotel de grote L, Hotel the big L) ***

The Netherlands 2017

Opening June 21, 2018

Directed by: Ineke Houtman

Writing credits: Sjoerd Kuyper

Principal actors: Julian Ras, Abbey Hoes, Bente Fokkens, Jorge Gonzales

Kos (**Julian Ras**) is 13 and he, along with his three sisters, must

take over management of the family hotel when their father has a heart attack and ends up in the hospital. Four siblings who were often exasperated at each other's sense of need or independence, must suddenly work together to save the family business which is on the brink of bankruptcy. They owe eight hundred euros for an open grocery bill, several trays full of food fall on the floor, and the white tablecloths turn pink in the laundry. How about a party to celebrate a beauty pageant? That should earn some cash.



I was lucky to see *Hotel the Big L* at the 2017 Michel Children's Film Festival in Hamburg. I sat in an audience of German kids who watched the film in Dutch with a reader speaking German over a loudspeaker. Afterwards there was active Q & A. The big attraction was **Jorge Gonzales**, a naturalized German, originally from Cuba, who appears on television shows and is a fashion model. As always, he was a sensation in the middle of the festival office area: tall in a white shirt and silver pants, sexy in a gay way. Gonzales plays a guest role as a beauty contest judge; he was happy to talk to the young participants in the audience along with director **Ineke Hautman**, who said that the story was based on a similar true story and the

moral of the story is: be yourself. Much fun for the whole family. (Becky Tan)

Love, Simon **
USA 2018
Opening June 28, 2018

Directed by: Greg Berlanti

Writing credits: Isaac Aptaker, Elizabeth Berger
Principal actors: Nick Robinson, Katherine Langford, Alexandra Shipp, Jorge Lendeborg, Keiynan Lonsdale

This double-whammy coming-of-age and coming-out flick has three things going for it: great music, droll humor, and a believable "teen" cast. Simon's (**Nick Robinson**) life is normal in every way, says he. At home, kid sis' (**Talitha Bateman**) hobby is indulged by great parents (**Jennifer Garner**, **Josh Duhamel**), plus Beaver the cute pooch benefits. At high school, he has three best friends (**Katherine Langford**, **Jorge Lendeborg**, **Alexandra Shipp**). Everything is good as senior year begins, except for "a huge-ass secret". When a post pops-up on the school's online bulletin board, Simon "seizes the day" with a counter-offer to Blue, whoever that may be. Preoccupied, Simon's slipup is Martin's (**Logan Miller**) springboard. But when the hormones and trepidations collide, Simon finds a voice with a far wider-reaching effect than anyone dreamed.

Greg Berlanti directs **Isaac Aptaker** and **Elizabeth Berger's** screenplay that is based loosely on **Becky Albertalli's** 2015 young adult novel, *Simon vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda*. The spunky cast delivers laugh-out-loud one-liners and earnest dialogue with aplomb. **Tony Hale** as the vice principal, and **Natasha Rothwell** as the drama teacher deserve a special mention. **Rob Simonsen's** music wraps around **John Guleserian's** cinematography



and **Harry Jierjian's** editing. Berlanti chooses a saccharine coating for rather heavy subject matter – an alternate universe that is squeaky clean, affluent, accommodating. Over-the-top scenes include the Ferris wheel rendezvous, whereas a poignantly nice scene is between dad and son toward the end. Many young adult novels tackle issues honestly, which is not the feeling here. Maybe that was the point... considering current political upheavals. Still, wait for the DVD. 110 minutes (Marinell Haegelin)

Elias das kleine Rettungsboot
(Elias og Storegaps Hemmelighet)

Norway 2017
Opening June 28, 2018

Directed by: Simel Alsvik, William Ashurst
Writing credits: Simen Alsvik, Karsten Fullu
Principal actors: animation spoken by Tobias Kreel and others

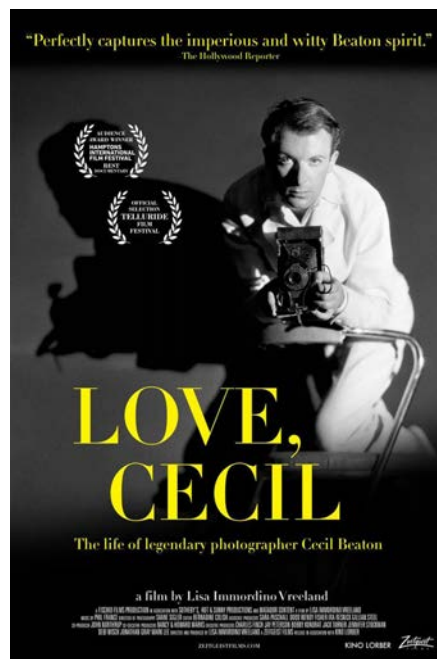
Elias (**Tobias Kreel**) is a small rescue boat, always on call to tug to safety larger boats which have struck rocks or stranded on the beach or lost control in storms. Otherwise, he putts around the coast with his boat friends Mini and Flitzi. The cheerful sea gulls

Flipp and Flatter sit on Blinkli the lighthouse and give advice as the boats plan activities and decorations for the Northern Lights Festival. One day Elias heroically rescues a freighter named Waghals. This brave deed attracts the attention of Kristina, the ferry, who awards him with a more responsible job in the Big Harbor. He is amazed at the huge container ships; three girly boats follow him around; he discovers illegal smuggling which leads him to his most dangerous intervention. But most of all, he realizes how lonely he is without his friends. Naturally, the moral of the story is: Learn to judge what is really important.



The first Elias children's books by **Alf Knutsen** came out 1999 in Norway. This was followed by television series in 2005, 2008, and 2015. Netflix bought the series and showed it in English. Two longer films were made for Norwegian television. The original author Knutsen has been involved with all of these productions. Now we have the first full-length (73-minute) film to show in German cinemas. All of the boats are personified with no real people anywhere. I was impressed that the animators could take something as simple as a floating soap dish, add a chimney and make it come alive.

There are 11 songs put together by composer **Gaute Storaas**, and musicians **Marcus & Martinus** and **Ravi**. (Becky Tan)



Love, Cecil *****

USA 2017

Opening on July 12, 2018

Directed by: Lisa Immordino Vreeland

Writing credits: documentary

Principal actors: documentary with Cecil Beaton, Leslie Caron, Rupert Everett, David Hockney, Isaac Mizrahi

Sir Cecil Beaton was born 1904 in England, one of four children. The film documents his life practically from beginning to end with emphasis on his school days and then rise into a successful career as photographer and artist. He never had any use for "boring" school, failing tests, not reading books, but still gaining acceptance into Cambridge, where he also skipped classes and concentrated on the school theater. His private life was also a kind of theater as he enjoyed dressing up, often flamboyantly, reflective of his homosexual tendencies. "Life

was a stage." In 1929 he made his way to New York City where he became a fashion photographer for VOGUE magazine for which he "created a mood of magic shadow as reflected in German expressionist cinema." This career ended suddenly due to an unfortunate event and he returned to Great Britain to reside in a countryside villa. In 1939 he got an assignment to photograph Queen Elizabeth II, which set him up photographing the entire royal family, as well as British war locations. He associated with Greta Garbo, Marilyn Monroe, Orson Wells, Audrey Hepburn, Judy Garland, Grace Kelly, Ingrid Bergman, Leslie Caron, Mick Jagger, Andy Warhol, and many more. He won Academy Awards for costume and art design for Gigi and My Fair Lady. He was knighted in 1972 and died in 1980.

This is one of the best documentaries I've seen in many months. Not only do we follow Sir Cecil's career, but learn about his family: his sisters Nancy and Baba and his brother Reginald whom he outlived, as well as his relationship to his father. The film succeeds because of the huge source of information, not only from the 150 diaries which he wrote and turned into eight books, but also 7000 photos. Rupert Everett's continuous commentary in English gives the impression that Beaton is there beside us, reviewing his life firsthand. You can't get more believable than that. There is much to learn, no matter if you are a knowledgeable Sir Cecil fan or have just become aware of his existence through this film – a film one can easily see more than once. (Becky Tan)

Tips for Day or Weekend Trips

by Jordan Beck Wagner

As the summer season approaches, day trips from Hamburg are endless. Whether you're craving a small town, castle, bustling city, beach, or island, there are an abundance of options within a few hours of Hamburg. Here are some of the best day trips or weekend trips to take this summer!

Altes Land

One of my favorite late-summer activities, the Altes Land region is the perfect place to take children (and adults!) apple picking. A short 30-minute car ride or an ambitious bike ride from Hamburg, the journey takes you through the adorable villages of Lower Saxony. As one of the largest fruit-growing areas in all of Europe, there is always an abundance of fresh fruit available for picking or purchase.



Rügen

While I'm a huge fan of Sylt (don't worry, it's an honorable mention in this article), stray away from the tourist masses and head to the island of Rügen. About three hours away from Hamburg, it has quite good public transportation options, including an ICE train. Between the traditional beach architecture and towns of the early 20th century, the famous chalk cliffs in Caspar David Friedrich's paintings, and Hitler's infamous Prora resort, the island offers an abundance of outdoor activities for the entire family!



Lübeck

An easy 40-minute train ride or a short car ride from central Hamburg, Lübeck is a charming city with a beautiful Altstadt. As a founding member of the Hanseatic League, it used to be one of the most important cities in all of Europe. While it declined in importance around the 16th century, must-see places in the Altstadt include the Rathaus, Marienkirche, and Lübecker Dom. Make sure to pick up Lübeck's world-famous marzipan and stroll around the harbor area.



Lüneburg

With the quaintest and most adorable streets, Lüneburg is a delightful town right outside of Hamburg. With a full-paying HVV AB ticket, you're able to reach Lüneburg for free on the weekends via regional trains. Initially rich due to its salt deposits, the town is now known for its cobblestone streets and hidden passageways. Make sure to walk around the harbor area, especially at night!



Honorable Mentions

One of my favorite parts about living in Hamburg is that there is always too much to do, see, and visit. While I couldn't list all of my favorite day and weekend trips from Hamburg, honorable mentions include:

- Schwerin—known for its fairy-tale castle turned seat of Parliament. Make sure to stroll around the beautiful gardens. Don't skip Schwerin's Altstadt and Schweriner Dom!
- The island of Sylt—a place I have nicknamed the Hamptons of Germany for its glamour and ritz
- Timmendorfer Strand—a lovely beach on the Baltic Sea less than an hour away from Hamburg by regional train
- The island of Fehmarn—the location of Jimi Hendrix's final concert
- Bremen—a fairy-tale city with medieval streets in the Schnoor district
- Kiel—the site of Kieler Woche, one of the largest sailing festivals in the world. Make sure to stop by John's Burgers for the best hamburgers in all of Germany!
- Stade and Heide—small, adorable towns right outside of Hamburg proper.



Travel Tips

The best part about Germany is all the public transportation options! While sometimes it is easier to take a car for convenience or lack of time, most of the above places can all be reached by local or long-distance trains. If traveling during the weekend in just one of the states, consider purchasing a Länder Ticket. Although it is only valid for regional trains, the price of the ticket for most states is 23 Euros and an additional 4 Euros per person (up to five people). Hamburg is usually included in the ticket of neighboring states (e.g., a Länder Ticket for Mecklenburg-Vorpommern includes all of Hamburg). If you tend to travel more and want to use the high-speed trains, consider investing in a Bahn25 card for a 25% discount on all train fares. If you're more of a spontaneous long-distance traveler, I'd recommend upgrading to the Bahn50 card for 25% off all Sparpreis tickets and 50% off Flexpreis tickets. Happy traveling!

American Women's Club of Hamburg

