

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

CURRENTS

Fall 2017 Vol. 33, No. 02

www.awchamburg.org



KEEPING FIT

President's Message

The math is a mess

- + My age is 40.
- + My knees are 80.
- + My spirit is 20.

= thoughts from a runner

I'm a runner; well, in my mind I am. I used to yell out to my parents and roommates, "I'm going for a run!" Now I yell, "I'm going jogging!" It's incredibly difficult to accept our bodies getting older. It's ok, but what is not ok is to stop. For our mind and body, we must keep going. Whether it is Pilates, yoga, swimming, dancing or just a good ol' walk. Keep moving! I'm starting to sound like Michelle Obama.

The Alster Fun Run/Walk reminded me of my past life of competitive running, and the speed I used to go. Honestly, my competitiveness had me thinking of training, keeping pace, and who to beat. Yes! I thought about whom to beat! Rick Yoneoka! Hahaha! But I quickly decided against this goal as he recently raced in a crazy, long bike race.

I applaud everyone who came out to the Alster! What's important is to get out of the house and do something. It's about moving in the right direction for humanity by supporting FAWCO.

As this is my last message in *Currents*, I would like to extend my gratitude to you. I gained some great friendships. And we were able to host some meaningful events. I'm so pleased to be surrounded by such strong women.

Thank you,
Marlane (Wingo) Nigbur



Editor's Message

Fall, a wonderful season, and what a great way to start it out with our first (and hopefully not last) FAWCO Fun Run/Walk around Hamburg's beautiful Alster. How do AWCH members keep fit? This is the theme we chose for the Fall issue of *Currents*, inspired by our truly successful fundraising event. I thank everyone for the tremendous response we received from our survey, and the many who contributed articles and their thoughts on this theme.

After a quiet summer, the AWCH members have been busy. In addition to an enjoyable Newcomers' Coffee, Halloween Party for the kids, and preparations for the annual Thanksgiving dinner and Holiday activities, the various groups have been busy reviewing films and art exhibitions, going to the ballet and opera, and just stichin' away. And what is fall without thoughts of a wine tour in the Alsace? We hope you enjoy this issue of *Currents*, made possible by so many loyal contributors, editors, and proofreaders.

Enjoy,
Carol Harbers

Currents Magazine

© 2017 American Women's Club of Hamburg e.V.
 Postfach 13 30 44, 20103 Hamburg
 Tel: (0176) 22 18 07 91
 Fax: (040) 5 59 48 60
 Website: <http://www.awchamburg.org>

Bank Information:

American Women's Club of Hamburg
 Sparda Bank Hamburg e.V.
 IBAN: DE75 2069 0500 0000 9117 71
 BIC: GENODEF1S11

Editor-in-Chief: Carol Harbers
 Layout Editors: Ulrike Cameron Henn
 Carol Harbers
 Copy Editors: Carol Battenfeld
 Patricia Frickey
 Jennifer Kearns-Willerich

Cover Photo: © ulrikecameronhenn.com

Fall 2017 Contributors: Carola A., Marinell Haegelin, Pat Frickey, Lyn Herr, Ulrike C. Henn, Teresa Perez Y Landazuri, Marion Lang, Laura Langford, Karen Eve Malinowski, Jenny Mather, Tracy Moede, Joanna O'Neil, Elizabeth Riefke, Shelly Schoeneshoefer, Birgit Schrupf, Ericka Seifried, Deborah Steinborn, Carol Strametz, Mary Wienke

Photography: Marinell Haegelin, Ulrike Cameron Henn, Teresa Perez y Landazuri, Karen Eva Malinowski, WangDi Schadendorf, Shelly Schoeneshoefer, Ericka Seifried, Anna Sizorina, Carol Strametz, Kathrin Y.

Proofreaders: Carol Battenfeld, Thelma Freedman, Pat Frickey, Mary Frances Ludolph, Birgit Schrupf, Carol Strametz, Rebecca Tan, Kathrin Y.

Webgineer: Cat Conner

The AWC Hamburg e.V. is not responsible for inconveniences and/or expenses incurred due to misinformation in *Currents*.

All rights reserved.

The articles contained herein are written by AWCH members about their individual experiences and opinions. Material printed in *Currents* does not necessarily reflect the opinions of the editors or the AWC Hamburg. The editors and the Board reserve the right to edit and/or reject articles for publication that do not reflect the positive spirit and overall goals of our organization.

AWCH Board of Directors 2017

President	Marlane N. pres@awchamburg.org
Vice President	Laura L. vpres@awchamburg.org
Treasurer	Monika M. treasurer@awchamburg.org
FAWCO Rep	Carol S. fawcorep@awchamburg.org
Membership	Petra R. membership@awchamburg.org
Secretary	Mary Frances L. secretary@awchamburg.org
Activities Chair	Rachelle B. activities@awchamburg.org
Currents	Carol H. currents-exec@awchamburg.org

Inside this Issue

LFR and FAWCO

Meet Our LFR and FAWCO Representatives..... 04
 Hope Beyond Displacement..... 06
 The FAWCO Development Grants..... 07
 The FAWCO Foundation 2018 Education Awards..... 08
 Alster Fun Run/Walk in Support of FAWCO..... 09

Keeping Fit

How do AWCH Members Stay Fit? 10
 I Like to Move It, Move It..... 11
 My Life Long Love Affair with Yoga 12
 Fitness and Fun? 12
 Call Me Jane Fonda 13
 3D Fitness 14
 Fit as a...Firegirl!..... 15

AWCH Members and Events

Halloween in the US Consulate..... 16
 Russia with Love, Book Club Report..... 17
 Newcomers' Coffee..... 17
 News from the Opera Club..... 18
 Danke, Danke, Danke..... 19
 Film Reviews 20

**In Hamburg
 Art in the City**

Alec Soth—Gathered Leaves 26
 Alice Neel—Painter of Modern Life 27
 The Birth of the Art Market 28
 Anita Rée: A Retrospective..... 29

Out and About

Forget Paris. Here's what's "Alsace-y and Chic"! 30



Meet Our LFR Representatives



Deborah Steinborn, Member of the LFR Board

Hi. I joined the AWCH this past January, although I have lived in Hamburg for well over a decade now. In my relatively short time as a member, I've been really fortunate to get to do great things through and with the club. I've seen some films with the film group, gotten an amazing Christmas-cookie recipe that I look forward to trying out soon, and helped to organize a series of events related to women's economic empowerment along with the U.S. Consulate of Hamburg in the months leading up to the G-20 Summit this past July.

Most recently, I was elected to the board of Hamburg's LFR, an independent umbrella association representing more than 60 women's groups and a total of 300,000 women in the city and surrounding areas. This means that the AWCH is officially represented on the board of the largest women's lobby in Hamburg.

My first project with the LFR board is coming up soon: conducting research on unconscious gender bias inherent in large construction projects ongoing in Hamburg, including but not limited to real-estate developments in the Hafencity. The LFR hopes to start a dialogue on this topic with the First Mayor of Hamburg, Olaf Scholz, later this fall.

The coming year will be an adventure. Next June, Hamburg will be the host city of the national conference of all LFR groups in Germany, and I look forward to helping plan and organize events related to this conference in conjunction with the AWCH.

If you have ideas on how to make Hamburg a more gender-equal city in any respect, please get in touch with me or one of the AWCH's delegates to the Landesfrauenrat, Joana O'Neil, Pat Nevers or Mary Francis Ludolph. It would be great to get even more international women living in Hamburg involved in working towards gender parity, a topic that truly does affect us all.

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. 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 Jo-shogun, and Terre des Femmes. The AWCH has been a member since 1986.



Joana O'Neil, AWCH Delegate to LFR

I am originally from San Marcos, Texas. I came to Hamburg in 1997 on a scholarship and somehow never left!

In September 2016 I became the AWCH delegate to the LFR. I am very pleased to have this duty because I have always been interested in women's issues. Being at the LFR is inspiring because you meet women from so many walks of life who have been activists for women's causes for decades. I'm also excited about the opportunity the LFR and AWCH have to network with one another.

The LFR approached me specifically to see if the AWCH was interested in a board position because they are impressed at how active and organized we are, so it's very exciting that Deborah will be on the LFR board! This is not the first time that the AWCH and LFR have had this connection, and I'm looking forward to see what happens.

Meet Two of Our FAWCO Representatives



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.



Tracy Moede, Vice President of Programs

Many of you know me, many of you have seen me at events, perhaps it is time to introduce myself and tell you what I have been up to recently and how it can benefit you!

I have been a member of the AWC Hamburg for just about 20 years, having joined when I moved to Hamburg from Kiel in 1998. I was involved in all the kid's activities at that time, the Easter party, Halloween and the Christmas party. As my girls got older, I took on more responsibilities such as collecting *Currents* from the printers, putting them in envelopes and posting them and handling the membership chair duties for four years. Then I found FAWCO. I attended the FAWCO conference in Vilnius, Lithuania in 2009 and have been active ever since.

I am currently the VP of Programs for the FAWCO Foundation. What is the Foundation? It is the philanthropic heart of FAWCO and has existed since 1967. Its main purpose is to offer education and development programs that improve the lives of women and children worldwide.

Since 1972 the Foundation has given over \$855,000 in Education Awards to members of FAWCO Clubs (of which you are one), their children and their grandchildren in their quest for knowledge and self-improvement. And since 1967, the Development Grant program has supported charitable projects championed by FAWCO clubs. Over \$472,500 has been given to 130 programs in 51 countries.

I administer these awards and grants and am a fountain of knowledge. So if you would like some money—awards and grants averaging \$4000 each year—for you, for your kids, for your grandkids, or for a charity organization that you have been supporting, please, please contact me!

Sammy Witt, FAWCO UN Youth Rep



United Nations (UN) Youth Reps attend Youth Assemblies and other youth-related conferences and meetings at the UN in New York, and blog about their experiences. The current UN Rep is Sammy, son of ACWH member Susan Stanley-Witt. Here is his first post on the UN Youth Rep blog on the FAWCO website.

August 7, 2017

As many of you probably already know, there are different women representing FAWCO at the United Nations in New York City and assorted cities in Europe. Additionally, there are also UN Youth Reps, who do not necessarily need to be female, just FAWCO affiliated. I, Samuel Witt, am the new FAWCO UN Youth Rep in New York City.

Originally from Hamburg, Germany, I was born to an American mother and a German father. I spent a year living in San Diego, California, going to San Diego High School and grew up surrounded by Americans. So far, I really did get the best of both worlds. I am currently nineteen years old and I have just finished my German Abitur, equivalent to a high school diploma. I am taking a gap year before studying at university. My plan, at the moment, is to study political science in Germany.

I take great interest in local and global politics, but so far I have only taken part in politics on the local level. This is an opportunity to 'betray the revolution' and go institutional. I want to experience what big politics looks like from the inside.

My mother, Susan Stanley-Witt, is a member of the American Women's Club (AWC) of Hamburg, Germany and a member of FAWCO. She has been a FAWCO member for many years now and when I found out about FAWCO UN Youth Reps and that that I had the opportunity to become one, I was immediately interested. Last summer I even attended the UN Youth Assembly here in New York City. I attended again this August. (You can read what I wrote about the 2016 Youth Assembly elsewhere on the website). Besides that conference, I will attend different weekly groups and meetings on subjects I take interest in. Women and Girls around the Globe will, of course, be my main focus.

I am looking forward to writing about my experiences at the UN on a weekly basis and hope that my beloved parents will not be my only readers.

– Sammy

Hope Beyond Displacement



Education—Empowering Women and Girls through Knowledge and Skills is the 2016-2019 Target Program of FAWCO. Within this program, the project *Hope Beyond Displacement*, an initiative of the Collateral Repair Project, was chosen as its primary target. Over the next two years, FAWCO will employ the energy and generosity of their members to promote its success.

More than one-third of school-aged Syrian children registered with the United Nations refugee agency in Jordan (over 80,000 out of 226,000 children) were not in formal education during the last school year. Refugees may not work in Jordan, contributing to the more than 86% of Syrian refugees living there in poverty. Displacement, loss of status and control over life choices, and the fact that most refugees are forbidden from working, all contribute to a sense of hopelessness and lack of empowerment, particularly for women. While displacement forces them to negotiate new and difficult roles, they are often hindered by their lack of confidence in their ability to affect change and commonly face increased risks due to harmful coping strategies they or their spouses may adopt, which often contribute to family violence.

The programs within *Hope Beyond Displacement* are designed to build better futures through education, vocational and leadership training for Syrian refugee women and girls in Jordan. They will address the pressing issues identified in close consultation with the women they serve:

- 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



Hope Beyond Displacement will provide tangible opportunities for advocacy and leadership. To ensure the sense of ownership and investment that are integral for the longevity, sustainability, and success of the project, community members will be involved at every stage.



Through fundraising activities of FAWCO Member Clubs, FAWCO hopes to contribute \$125,000 to this project. This amount will have a terrific impact—\$100 will send a girl to school. FAWCO clubs have already raised over \$30,000. AWCH will contribute over \$3500 this year and will continue to fundraise through 2018. To learn more about the Target Project and the Target Program visit the www.fawco.org/global-issues/target-program and keep up-to-date by subscribing to the Target Bulletin and following the blog Let's Get Schooled.



A 3-day site visit to the Target Project in Amman, Jordan plus a 5-day cultural tour through Jordan is planned for April 6–15, 2018. For more information see the Target Project Visit on the FAWCO website.

(Carol Strametz)

Sources: www.fawco.org/global-issues/target-program
www.collateralrepairproject.org

The FAWCO Foundation Development Grants



The Development Grant Fund is a dynamic program that financially assists projects that improve the human condition throughout the world and 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 assistance offered should be direct and have a sustainable goal.

FAWCO Member Clubs have been aiding worthy and reputable charitable projects throughout the world through The FAWCO Foundation for over 45 years. Some clubs are working “hands-on” with their projects, while others make donations of goods or financial contributions.

The grant categories are aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals. To view the 2018 slate of Development Grants visit <http://www.fawcofoundation.org/our-programs/development-grants-intro.html>. **The deadline for applying is January 27, 2018.**

This year AWCH will apply for the Development Grant in the category Environment: *Nurturing Our Planet* \$4500. This grant is for projects promoting the responsible use of the environment to provide for the basic needs of a family or a community.



The impetus for applying for this grant was an AWCH evening at Ulrike’s home “Paregon Khurd: Update on ‘Our’ Village”. Paregon Khurd was founded in 2011 with the help of the American Women’s Clubs of Hamburg, Cologne and Düsseldorf at the time of FAWCO’s Target Project Water (see Ulrike’s report in Currents, Sept–Oct 2013).



Robert D’ Costa, director of the Integral Tribal Watershed Development Programme (ITWDP) in desertified areas of western India gave a visual presentation of the watershed project and its amazing result of green and fertile land. The watershed project catches rainwater in especially dug deep furrows, allowing it to seep into the ground. This leads to eco restoration of the land and a replenishing of the groundwater in shallow aquifers, which can feed the open wells that are indigenous to India.

The AWCH will apply for the Environment Development Grant to build an open well 23 x 23 feet with a depth of 35 feet in a tribal hamlet in Hazarwadi, Mararashrta where a project of the ITWDP is being implemented on a 172-acre area. The Hazar-

wadi open well will supply drinking water and water for domestic use and irrigation purposes. Clean water for drinking and domestic use will lead to better health for the tribals and water for irrigation will allow a second crop per annum on 25–29 acres. The tribals will have a source of income through sales of the crop and will no longer have to rely on migrating to find work. Once they are settled the tribals will be given help to get a title to the land as well as caste certificates needed to send their children to school and to receive health care.

We hope that you will support this project and join us for a fundraiser that is being planned.

(Carol Strametz)

The FAWCO Foundation 2018 Education Awards

Created by and for FAWCO clubs, the Awards Program recognizes and honors the academic excellence and all-around achievement of FAWCO and FAUSA members and their children and grandchildren. FAWCO hopes to promote international understanding and goodwill by giving annual awards for study in the U.S. or abroad, at high school, undergraduate and graduate levels. Since the first award was given under the aegis of The Foundation in 1972, many hundreds of thousands of dollars have been given to hundreds of recipients. Every year the program is adjusted to funds available and to the changing needs of members and their children.

This year AWCH has proudly donated a one-time Member Award for FAUSA and FAWCO members in honor of our 60th Anniversary last year. As a member of AWCH in good standing, you are a member of FAWCO and you, your children, and grandchildren are eligible for an award. Recipients are chosen on the basis of merit. On the FAWCO Foundation website www.fawcofoundation.org you will find the application forms and "Tips for Writing a Successful Application" by AWCH member Tracy Moede. For more information contact Tracy or Carol S. at fawcorep@awchamburg.org.

Application deadline: January 27, 2018 !

Academic Awards for children of FAWCO and FAUSA members

Arts Award \$4,000

For undergraduate or graduate study in the history, theory and/or practice of the performing arts, visual arts, film and media arts, architecture or graphic arts.

Sciences Award \$4,000

Sponsored in part by AIWC Genoa, in memory of Frieda Bacigalupo Nataili

For undergraduate or graduate study of scientific subjects (e.g., biology, chemistry), mathematics, medicine, engineering, environmental studies, computer science, economics or business administration.

Humanities Awards \$4,000 each

Due to the generosity in sponsorship, there are two awards available that will be given to the two highest-ranked applicants:

Humanities Award: *Sponsored in part by AAWE Paris, in memory of Gertrude de Gallaix*
Caroline Newton Humanities Award

These awards are for undergraduate or graduate study in fields including, but not limited to, education, law, social studies, history and languages.

Cultural Award for children and grandchildren of FAWCO member

Dual Cultural Award \$4,000

Sponsored in part by the AWC Bern and Donna Erismann, in memory of Suzanne Erismann

This award may be used to attend a semester or year of American high school or an academic or structured educational summer program in the United States.

Member Awards for FAWCO and FAUSA members

FAUSA Skills Enhancement Award \$4,000

This award is for acquiring new skills or enhancing already existing ones and will allow a FAWCO or FAUSA member to become more capable, competent and confident by acquiring the skills to improve performance in any given field.

Women in STEM \$4,000

In honor of AWA Dubai's 21 years serving the International Community in Dubai

This award is for the study of STEM disciplines, including the study of chemistry, computer and information technology science, engineering, geosciences, life sciences, mathematical sciences, physics and astronomy.

AWC Hamburg Continuing Education Award \$4,000

Sponsored by the American Women's Club of Hamburg in honor of their 60th Anniversary

This award is for a FAWCO or FAUSA member to further their education at university or an equivalent level through courses, workshops, and certificate programs. Subjects can encompass all areas of interest—*inter alia*, journalism, writing, the arts, and philanthropy—excluding science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects.

Alster Fun Run/Walk in Support of FAWCO



The AWCH enjoyed a Fun Run/Walk around the Hamburg Alster connecting fitness, community, friendship and fund-raising. FAWCO is the sole beneficiary of the proceeds of over €1700. A total of 114 adults and children signed up for a 7K run or 5K walk. Before the start gun, US Consul General Rick Yoneoka gave a speech of motivation and congratulations to the AWCH event.

Thanks to everyone!

Carol Strametz,
AWCH Rep
to FAWCO



I think it's fair to say we organized this event having been inspired by Carol Strametz and Tracy Moede, to raise funds and awareness for the FAWCO organization.

The Fun Run/Walk idea came as we both live around the Alster and experience on a daily basis this very special place. You can explore the Alster on foot, share the paths with runners, cyclists and other people just out for a stroll. So we thought why not have a Fun Run/Walk around the Alster and bring our community together to enjoy this unique atmosphere for the benefit of a very worthy cause and support FAWCO.

We have both previously worked for over 20 years in a corporate environment and have experience in organizing projects, motivating teams, and leading ventures. Hence we really enjoyed this worthy challenge in a completely new environment.

The response to the event with 114 people registering was truly amazing and way beyond our expectations. We engaged the support from key members of AWCH/FAWCO to help make this possible and they were remarkable. The community, family, friends and work colleagues showed fantastic commitment combining fitness and fundraising. The day was so enjoyable. Everyone wore their FAWCO T-shirts which were provided when they signed up. The Fun Run/Walk combined with great motivational speeches, the raffle, the yummy baked goods and real American bagels, free boxes of Yogi Tea, drinks from Coca Cola and many more freebies. Last but not least the weather was beautiful.

Lyn Herr and Teresa Perez y Landazuri



Letter from
FAWCO Preseident,
Sallie Chaballier



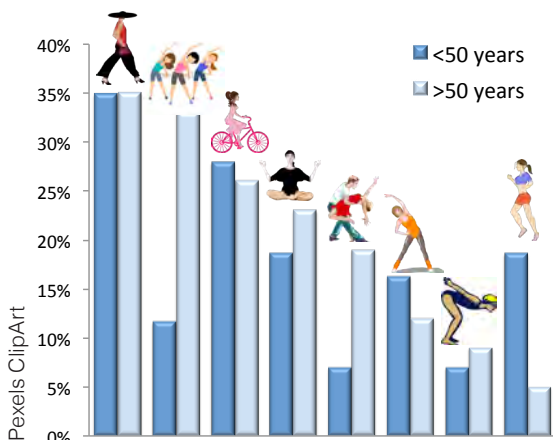
A Quick Survey: How Do AWCH Members Keep Fit?

by Carol Harbers

We asked the questions—you sent your answers! And how satisfying to get such a great response! My email account was overloaded. Tallying, plotting, correcting for age, and *voilà*—here are the results:

How do you stay physically fit?

Walking was the clear winner. Close to 40% of all survey participants, regardless of age, said walking was an activity that kept them fit. **Cycling** was another favorite sport enjoyed by all ages, with 30% of our members listing it as a favorite exercise.



What separates the “over 50’s” from the “under 50’s”? Whereas the former are more apt to get their exercise in a fitness class (e.g. aerobics) and/or from dancing, the “under 50’s” are out there running. Yoga and Pilates are popular in both age groups, whereas very few (circa 5%) listed swimming as a fitness activity—and even less put down rowing or horseback riding.



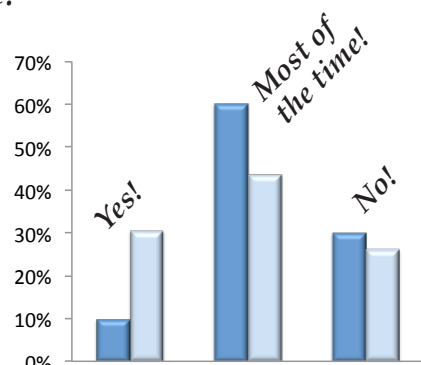
“For the past 20 years, running has been an important part of my life. It relaxes me and gives me a true sense of satisfaction. When my husband and I moved to Hamburg, we immediately fell in love with the Alster and knew we’d get a lot of mileage from strolling and jogging around it. Running the Alster is a key part of our regular exercise routine. We also enjoy going to the gym and taking Body Pump classes with friends.” Lyn H.



The Alster was often mentioned as a wonderful place to walk, run and cycle—but don’t forget other gems like the Volkspark, the Alsterwanderweg, and the Niendorfer Gehege. Another tip was along the Elbe, from Blankenese through Hirschpark and back. Walking tour books of Hamburg were recommended—or to keep track of your own tours with an App like that from Nike.

Do you do enough to stay fit?

Members of the younger generation (<50 years) clearly have less time (or are less disciplined?), with only 10% saying they feel they do enough exercise to stay fit. However, the majority in both groups “break their resolutions” and only get their exercise in “most of the time.”



The average member spends 4 to 6 hrs a week exercising, but 20% of the “>50” and 10% of the “<50” spends over 7 hrs a week keeping fit. That’s an hour a day! Keep it up.

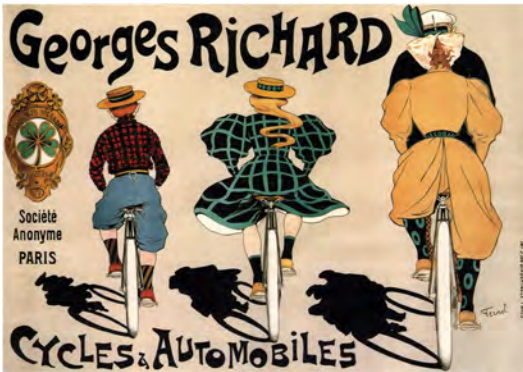
And advice to other members?

- “Walk with a friend!”
- “Get a dog!”
- “Join a sailing or rowing club!”
- “Go outside!”
- “Get off the coach!”
- “Go tap dancing!”
- “Try Fighting or ZUMBA classes!”

What are the pros and cons of keeping fit in Hamburg?

Let's start with the cons:

Clearly the weather was the biggest complaint (or excuse) why Hamburg was not so conducive to their exercise program. "Too wet," "bad weather" and "light deprivation" were common criticisms. Others noted the absence of mountains or "too flat" as a reason why their fitness program suffered. Several mentioned missing their friends back home with common fitness interests. Solution for many: Join a fitness center!



Artist: Fernand Fernel
Photo: Public Domain

And the pros:

An increase in everyday activity—due to "tons of walking" and "carrying loads"—was the most common explanation for Hamburg being great for keeping fit. "Bike trials outside your door." "Beautiful venues for getting fresh air, clearing your head, and enjoying life." "Flat, ideal for bicycling and leaving the car behind."

Oh yes, our beautiful Hamburg! Read on for more comments and contributions from AWCH members on "Keeping Fit."



Artist: Leonetto Cappiello
Photo: Sarah S.

"I find the mental benefits of sport and physical activity are endless, trying to stay healthy and yet enjoy life. I feel improved mood, overall more energy, better night's sleep and generally a more balanced lifestyle. Also as newly empty nesters here in a new city, my husband and I are discovering activities that we can participate in together, weight training classes, cycling, walking, trekking, I may even try running--we love adventure." Teresa PyL.

AWCH Member Recommendations

Studios in Hamburg

- HiCycle Fitness: great spinning studio in Eppendorf
- Mamvital: good postnatal workouts in Altona
- Studio für Körperbewusstsein: excellent Pilates team lead by Kornelia Ritterpusch (Grindel)
- Aspria Gym Club: fitness, tennis, pool and spa at two locations (Uhlenhorst and Alstertal)
- Studio Footprints—Thomas Marek: dance studio on Stressemannstr.
- Sportspass Fitness Centers: inexpensive and huge variety of offerings, five locations in Hamburg

Home workouts

- Favorite music CD for aerobics at home: "Prince and the New Power Generation"
- Favorite workout: Body Balance by Les Mills.
- Yogawithadriene.com: videos and on-line yoga training

Inspiration and Tips

- *The Miracle Morning* by Hal Elrod
- Daily calendars by Louise Hay

I Like to Move It, Move It!

by Tracy Moede

So, I'm a bit over weight. I think that is obvious to anyone who has ever met me. I battle everyday with what I should eat to maintain a healthy lifestyle and I am getting better at it after years and years of not making the best choices. What has helped not only my health, but also my sanity, has been the change I made in the fitness department.

I was a high school athlete and lettered in all three sports seasons for all 3 years. Then I went to college and studied hard and worked to pay tuition, leaving very little time for athletics. It wasn't until 15 years later that I decided to start moving again. I joined a fitness studio in Quickborn that had child care for my then 6-month-old. I have been going to that fitness studio two to three times a week for 18 years now and have taken a wide variety of classes: Zumba, Fighting Workout, Stretching, Aqua-Fitness, Aerobics, Qi-Gong and Step. In addition to doing that, I also do some weight lifting. I read an article once that said as women get older they need to work on maintaining their muscle strength, so I also I work some of that in to my routine as well as riding the stationary bike and walking on the treadmill. Because I work a lot at my computer, I sit for too much time in the afternoons. Around 4 pm I try to get out for a 35 to 45-minute walk in my town, listening to my favorite podcasts as I go.

So even if I don't look like I am in the best shape, I know my heart is, cardiovascularly speaking.

My Fitbit says I do an average of 9000 steps a day! and I feel GREAT – even if the scale doesn't show it!

My Lifelong Love Affair with Yoga

by Ulrike C. Henn



I was a confused, budding teenager, when Angela, a beautiful British ballet dancer came to our house for a visit. Angela's movements were soft and graceful, while I felt clumsy and fully aware of my body showing the first signs of being a woman underneath the *Babyspeck* (baby fat) that made me a prime victim of my older brother's mockery. Angela was everything I wanted to be. Not only was she beautiful, she intuitively sensed my pain. One afternoon she took me to a secluded spot in our garden and put a blanket on the ground. I was about to have

my first yoga lesson. With great empathy and patience she taught me how to do the Sun Salutation sequence, how to practice for the headstand, and how to meditate to calm my mind to avoid getting frustrated at my brother's teasing. During her stay that summer, she practiced with me almost every day. By the time she left, I was able to stand on my head—a thing my brother could and would never be able to do. Angela gave me one of the most meaningful presents in my life.

Yoga is the single most consistent factor in my life: I passed my *Abitur* math test by sneaking outside on the pretense of using the loo, but instead stood on my head to find the answers; when I was pregnant with my daughter Johanna, my husband joined me for prenatal yoga sessions; when Johanna was born, yoga got me back in shape and meditation helped me cope with sleepless nights, my young marriage and my growing business.

Wherever I live or travel to, the first thing I do is to enroll in a yoga class. This immediately makes me feel at home, helps me make friends and gives me a place to go. I have even found the perfect travel mat for yoga; it fits into my carry-on so I can practice wherever I go.

By the way, I recently researched Angela and found out that she has a yoga retreat in Greece. Just this minute I have contacted her and started making plans to visit one of her workshops one day soon.



Fitness and Fun?

by an AWCH Member

Hi there. I know I'm not really alone when I write this, and still I'd rather be anonymous. On a lot of days, just the word fitness can bring tears to my eyes. Especially considering that word in relation to myself. Fun is something else.

There is a lot to be said for the adventure of living abroad, but some of us are also happy enough to have an ocean between our pasts and ourselves. Fitness and body image is a part of that for me. Yep, I was the one who was always picked last for any gym class team. My mother sarcastically called me Grace when I wanted to do ballet. The whole family called me PWB, for Princess Wide Bottom, even during the two years of high school where I weighed about 40 kilos and had such low blood pressure I would faint at school.

These days, I can eat salads or chips (don't leave that bag near me if you really want any), vegetarian or *Hausmannskost*. I walk with friends, do yoga to feel mentally if not physically more flexible, and cheer

on my talented and coordinated kids. I love playing in the pool, tried SUP (stand up paddling) this summer, and do sometimes take my bike for shopping, if my list is not too long. I do still avoid putting organized sport and myself in the same sentence. (Ha!) I am not into competition.

But, I do not have to take P.E. anymore, and although there are plenty of adults who really enjoy the competitive aspect of sports, plenty more are relaxed. I am a good sport and always up for fun, whether it is a pretty walk, a round of Frisbee, or a demonstration of American Baseball. Emphasis on Fun. When the *Currents* Team asked us to write what we think about fitness, this is what was in my head. Maybe some others in AWCH can relate.

Call Me Jane Fonda!

by Karen Eve Malinowski



Getting yourself to hop off the couch and into the exercise routine can be a tough one, especially if your motivation is somewhere between nonexistent and limbo. For myself, I found that choosing cute leggings and a matching top inspires me better than any drill instructor could. I just can't wait to put on that flashy outfit when I get up in the morning.

But do not let the lack of stylish workout clothes be your excuse for not working out! A potato sack or even wearing nothing will do! Nevertheless, fashionable workout gear can be like wearing nice lingerie; it can immediately boost your confidence, without other people even knowing the reason!

I understand the difficulty in choosing between all the different workout outfits out there. However, the danger of looking more like Richard Simmons than the aimed for Raquel Welch is a serious one. But I do urge you to get a cute pair of running tights or yoga leggings, instead of baggy sweat pants. The stretchy material works wonders on your thighs. The absolute sport fashion this season is mesh with other sheer materials working in a patchwork symbiosis on your legs. Or, as I was made aware of at the Fun Run around the Alster, "Oh Karen, your leggings have air holes."

My own purple stretchy leggings function like spandex, with the immediate effect of tightening my body

shape, and toning my buttocks and legs. Together with the skin exposure through the mesh, I feel awesome. Or is it the straightjacket feeling? Lying on my yoga matt stretching, bending and planking my breath away, I feel hotter than the 80's Jane Fonda (minus the leg warmers). The key is: Not only feeling comfortable, but being comfortable enough to look at yourself in the mirror! If you dress like a slob you will feel like one. Or better: Fake it until you make it!

I personally like to get my exercise outfits either in the US or Spain. Stores like Old Navy and Athletica offer great colorful gear with nice patterns. Target also just launched its newest private label JoyLab, which also offers super stylish workout wear for plus sizes, too! Fun Fact: U.S. plus sizes put the "US" in "plus", so they are real women sizes. In Spain, OYSHO, an Inditex brand, is a dedicated retailer for cute and sexy athletic wear (available through the German online shop oysho.de). If you do not want to spend a fortune, check out H&M's athletic department; they offer a variety of colors and modern cuts. Lululemon, on the Poststraße in Hamburg, also has nice workout gear, but are pricier, with leggings starting at €100.



Regarding shoes: Exercise and yoga can be done barefoot. If you need shoes outdoors, I would turn my back on fashion and recommend going to a sports specialist, who can determine the best sports shoes for your walking posture. Here fashion doesn't count and healthy feet and bones are more important.

Now go on, put on those tights and "maniac" your flashdance away!



Yoga tights in trendy mesh-combination from OYSHO. Photos by Jess M.

Three-Dimensional Fitness

by Marion Lang



What is fitness? Most people picture a body with well-defined muscles along the line of the dictionary definition: the condition of being physically fit and healthy. Synonyms are good health, strength, robustness, vigor, athleticism, toughness, physical fitness, and muscularity. Magazines such as *Shape* and *Fitness* are full of perfectly shaped bodies with pure muscle and almost zero body fat. But, I ask you, is that really fitness?

As a physical therapist with certifications in holistic therapies, I believe that fitness is three dimensional (3D)—body, mind, and soul. Prior to arriving in Hamburg in June 2015, I adopted these principles as a naturopathic practitioner in an alternative medicine clinic in Texas. To me, optimum health and being 'fit' include not only the physical body but also the mind and soul.

Let's begin with the physical body. Everyone has a unique definition of being fit: for some, it's running a marathon; for others, a BMI under 21 (above 24.5 is considered unhealthy); and yet for others, it's when their daily activities are mastered without being exhausted at day's end. It's a balance between what you eat and how often you move.

We all subscribe to the concept of a well-balanced diet, but what does that mean? Recent research supports a whole-food, organic, green vegetable-based diet, with 'good' fats like avocados, nuts, and coconut oil. The article "Dietary Fats—The Good, the Bad and the Ugly" by Dr. Mercola explains how good fats support our brain, nervous system, skin, and cell membranes. Meat and dairy products?—in limited amounts and only organic—not mass production.

As for grains, eat only non-GMO (Genetically Modified Organisms) grains. The documentary video "Genetic Roulette—The Gamble of our Lives" by Jeffrey M. Smith has eye-opening information. Read the food labels and if you can't pronounce it, you probably shouldn't eat it. "If it does not rot or sprout—leave it out!"

Water intake is also important. Our body functions optimally when we give it good quality water to flush out toxins. Compare a puddle and a mountain stream: a puddle becomes stagnant and murky; a mountain stream flows and is crystal clear. Unfortunately, water is often contaminated with elements, e.g. nitrates, therefore drink only filtered water and avoid drinking from plastic bottles.

Next comes movement. According to Moshe Feldenkreis, movement is life. Without movement our bodies become stagnant and rigid. So how do we need to move? A good fitness program includes stretching as well as weight-bearing and cardiovascular exercise. Stretching keeps us flexible. Different from our ancestors, we sit in front of a computer with our shoulders hunched—only getting up for a cup of coffee. Our muscles and fasciae (the surrounding connective tissues) shorten, resulting in

decreased circulation and lymphatic stagnation. As a physical therapist, I work with clients on a daily basis where these issues are the underlying reasons for their complaints and pains.

Weight-bearing exercise is important for fasciae, which in turn promotes muscle toning and stimulates bone growth. Walking is one of many weight-bearing exercises. Cardiovascular exercise is also important. According to Dr. Al Sears, who developed the PACE (progressive accelerated cardiovascular exercise) program, the minimum 45 minutes, 3- to 4-times a week is no longer necessary. Interval training 2- to 3-times a week for 20 minutes is a great way to improve your cardiovascular health.

Our mind also support our 3D Fitness; our thoughts and feelings affect our physical bodies. If we are happy and have a positive outlook, our lives flow and we tend to feel better physically. Negativity, or 'complaints' are internalized; we become tired, sluggish, and may experience pain or suffering.

Stress is a significant factor contributing to our mental and physical health. Over 80% of doctor's visits are stress-related. Stress impacts our hormones and level of fitness. Unfortunately, we cannot all run off to a tropical island, but we can learn techniques to decrease stress and its impact on our bodies. Some of these techniques include deep breathing, meditation, exercise, and just having fun.

A fit soul is yet another element of 3D Fitness. The soul is a place where peace can be found when a person is following their life's purpose. When a person is unsettled, 'lost' or hurting, their soul is unfit. Healing your soul includes forgiving others as well yourself, learning to let go of the past and to move forward.

In conclusion, 3D Fitness is complete fitness. It's a process that doesn't happen overnight, but is possible with persistence. If you would like support in achieving 3D-Fitness, please feel free to contact me: Marion Lang, Heilpraktikerin für Physiotherapie info@physioandyou.de or Tel.: 0151 5766695



Fit as a.....Firegirl!

by Shelly Schoeneshoefter

Where are all the girls? The Freiwillige Jugend Feuerwehr (Volunteer Youth Fire Brigade) is celebrating its 60th anniversary this year—and they’re looking for new volunteers. Perhaps your children, boys and GIRLS, would like to join!

I was recently chatting with Jeremy, a boyhood friend of my son and who is now the leader of a group of ten-year-olds in the Freiwillige Jugend Feuerwehr. I’d heard about this group when my son Adrian was a little boy, but I didn’t really understand what they did. We didn’t have anything like this where I grew up in the States. Didn’t it mean checking out if you wanted to become a fireman someday? Not true! I was clearly wrong, so unfortunately my son missed out on a great opportunity. I hope that AWCH members with kids (boys and girls) around 10 years of age will give this idea some thought.

Several of Adrian’s classmates joined, and told me about all the great skills they’d learned over the years: discipline, mental fitness training, team skills, physical exercise, and ways of de-stressing against the ever-increasing pressures of daily life, while having lots of fun at the same time.

Jeremy, now 19, still dreams of being a firefighter—but it’s not so easy to become a professional.

Over the years, I’d watched him complete as many certificates as possible, and the first thing he did when he finished his *Abitur* was to apply for a position—and was stunned to be turned down. Not easily deterred, Jeremy has decided to aim for an apprenticeship in electronics and then re-apply, with the hopes of making his dreams come true.

He is currently guiding a troop of young kids who are having a blast. He said that over the years everything has stayed the same—with the exception that there are now no girls in the troop! Nine years ago there were lots of girls—and now there are none?

He said both of his sisters participated; one now wants to be part of an ambulance crew and the other plans to be a physical therapist.

So where are the girls? What are they doing? Who wouldn’t like to spray water or foam across a parking lot or learn lots of team-building skills and make new friends? The troop meets twice a week and any related costs are very small. It’s a good way for young girls to learn the many meanings of the expression “to be fit.”

For info go to: <http://www.feuerwehr-hamburg.de/die-freiwillige-feuerwehr/jugendarbeit/>



Halloween Party at the Consulate

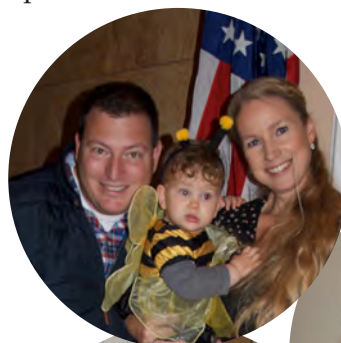
The AWCH Halloween Party tradition began in 2016. The newly arrived Yoneoka family asked what children do in Hamburg for Halloween. Rick loves Halloween and in the past, the Yoneokas have hosted Halloween festivities. He thought that the basement of the Consulate would be perfect, but he needed volunteers and more families with ties to the US. So six weeks later, the AWCH provided enthusiastic volunteers, including my teens Harriet and Gerhard. During this year's planning, I offered to bring all of 'my kids', including the ACCESS students I've been teaching since March (see box.) A truly stellar group, and I am grateful to be part of it. The ACCESS students have been taking part in many holiday celebrations, including Christmas, 4th of July, and Thanksgiving, but this was their first Halloween. You wouldn't have guessed that by the spooky haunted house they made in the Consulate basement, with either big-kid or little-kid scary rounds.



Who came? Nearly 60 costumed children (bumbees, princesses, knights, superheroes, aliens, fairies, monsters, and even Cleopatra) brought at least as many parents, most of whom were cool enough to both come in costume



and bring amazing and creepy food. There was time for visiting with members who hadn't been seen for awhile, new members and good friends. The children could eat pretzels dangling from a witch's broom (no hands!), have portraits taken, or play go fish, ring toss onto witches hats and pin the spider on the web.



The evening ended with a parade of costumes and goodie bags for all.

Special thanks to Laura L. for most of the goodie bag contents, including original candy corn! Several AWCH members were quite busy in the background, but Marlane N. coordinated us all like a professional team coach. Thank you, one and all.

Here's a ghost toast to not being scared to try and top this year!

(Mary Frances L.)

ACCESS is an international program of American culture and language, supported by the US State Department and administered in Hamburg through the Amerikazentrum. It is not remedial English support, but rather a two year voluntary program for 15 selected *Gymnasium* students. Four teachers have pooled their talents throughout the course—Wednesday afternoons, monthly Saturday outings and a week's summer camp each year.

Topics have included writing skills (creative and professional), career exploration, ethnic and gender awareness, constitutional debate, US history, politics, economics, school systems and exchange programs, environmental awareness, and the role of the military. There has been volunteer service and the performing of a play about the life of Rosa Parks, as well as lots of social activities, including basketball and baseball games, and holiday celebrations.



From Russia with Love News from the Book Club



When we were looking for our next book to read at the Book Club meeting in July, we turned our thoughts to the classics. We knew that we would have a couple of months and someone pointed out that John Neumeier’s new ballet this year was *Anna Karenina*. Never having read the Russian classics, I was game, besides I loved the performances from The School of the Hamburg Ballet last year. We agreed to read the book and did a quick schedule—almost unheard of within this group—deciding to go to the ballet in September and having the Book Club meeting a couple of days beforehand.

At the Book Club meeting, we discussed our skepticism of how a novel full of meticulous detail could be condensed into a ballet. We wondered how the various characters would be portrayed and what music would be used. We discussed the characters we liked, the ones we didn’t and just how the book was a metaphor for history. With our ideas in our heads, we took in the beauty of the Staatsoper and waited with baited breath for the show to begin.

Full of pomp and circumstance, politician Alexej Karenina commanded the stage with his beautiful and stoic wife Anna. We were transfixed and yes, the parallels to today’s politicians were not lost.

We were surprised by the music choice for Konstantin Lewin (not expecting that Cat Stevens / Yosef Islam would come into the mix!), but it actually fit. And we were all shaken by Anna’s near death in the hospital. Yes, I wanted to see the horses, but I loved the choices that were made. Don’t get me started on how beautiful the costumes were and yes, every one of the dancers.

It was a wonderful evening and no, the AWCH Book Club is not just about books.

(Laura L.)

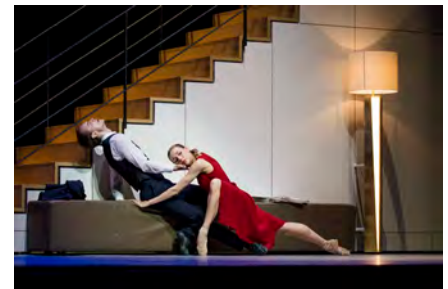
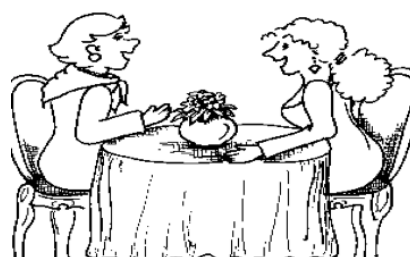


Photo credits: © Kiran West; Hamburger Ballet John Neumeier

Newcomers’ Coffee at the Home of Honorary President Kathrin Y.

A beautiful fall morning on the Alster as 15 new and potential members met with AWCH Board members and representatives from the various club groups at the lovely home of the Consular General. Kathrin Y. welcomed us, giving a short introduction to the importance of the AWCH and inviting everyone to introduce herself. The ice was broken and the morning went all too fast as experiences, careers, family, and hometowns

were exchanged. Oh—and did I mention the wonderful cakes and cookies, all handmade by Diane? As I write this, I think of that delicious lemon cake.....



But of course, I think especially of all the interesting women the AWCH brought together. So much talent!

Thank you, Kathrin and Diane! And, a big welcome, new members!

(Carol H.)

News from the Opera Club

Cavalleria rusticana / I Pagliacci

Pietro Mascagni / Ruggero Leoncavallo

In mid-October, the Opera Club concluded its latest series of meetings with an outing to see and hear these two short operas at the Staatsoper Hamburg. Here are a few reactions to the outstanding performances we experienced that evening.



Charis H.

This double-bill opera *Cav/Pag* was filled with love, jealousy, seduction, adultery and murder from the beginning to the end. Gripping and thrilling, it is an absolute must for opera goers and those appreciative of classical music. Thank you to Elizabeth R. for her enthusiasm and knowledge and sharing her love for the opera with us.

Anna S.

This was a lovely start to the Fall Season, with two different operas connected by the same setting, a provincial Italian city. A small square in front of the church hosted two heartbreaking stories of love, hatred, and jealousy. Passion and great music governed the evening. And personally, for me the Opera Group is more than just a visit to the theater. Our get-togethers in Elizabeth's home with behind the scenes stories, biographies, and other performances take us to a different level of perception, understanding, and enjoyment.



Lyn H.

The two operas were simply beautiful. The vocal performances were outstanding. I was especially moved by the character Nedda, the soprano in *Pagliacci*, who projected her passion and distress with such clarity.

Becky T.

When we discussed the two operas at Elizabeth's opera sessions (which are always more interesting and intelligent than any opera I've ever seen), I liked *Pagliacci* the best. That was my first impression, having little background and knowing nothing. After having seen both live at the Hamburg opera, I find I liked *Cavalleria* best. I liked the black costumes, especially the hats, and wondered where the costume organizer could get so many. I liked the slow, even development of the story, which was easy to comprehend, and the fact that it was the love-sick female who caused the chaos, and not, as usual and in *Pagliacci*, the love-sick man. I actually recognized an aria that we had discussed, a new achievement for me, since I'm more visual than auditory. I was impressed that the same setting could be used for both operas and still look different. I found that I like short operas—no need to sit through five hours of Wagner, when you can have a fun hour with other composers.



Carol B.

Grand Opera at its grandest! The two Italian opera favorites included perfect scenery to emulate a rustic Italian village centered around the church. A most exquisite coloratura soprano hit every high C with utmost grace and ease. Our box seats gave a perfect view of the stage, as well as of the orchestra and conductor. Elizabeth arranged a perfect evening for the opera group—and I was most pleased to be included!



WangDi S.

Thanks to Elizabeth’s meticulously prepared and presented workshop on the operas, I enjoyed an evening of musical drama from *Cav/Pag*. The cast and the staging were good, the music was gripping, and the experience of going out to operas with like-minded friends is truly valuable to me.

Teresa P. y L.

Mascagni said, “It was a pity I wrote *Cavalleria* first, for I was crowned before I was king.” For me this highlights the powerful impact that the one-act opera had at the time—and also on me. How wonderful to see two operas in one night. Both productions were done on practically the same set with a few

differences, which created a rather wonderful sense of continuity from the first opera to the other. The *verismo* (realism) in both operas worked—no history or myths, no royalty or gods, but real people in real situations. They also both painted vivid pictures of small southern Italian villages and the close-knit community life.

In *Cavalleria*, the highlights were the “Easter Hymn,” with the wonderful chorus and Santuzza’s voice rising higher and higher (showing her desperation and her religious devotion) and the beautiful orchestral “Intermezzo,” creating a feeling of great despair and tension, fearing a fatal conclusion. So beautiful.

In *Pagliacci*, a much less traditional production, the highlights were the tenor (the husband) and the soprano (the wife). Canio’s (Pagliaccio’s) voice was definitely on the large side, and his portrayal of the betrayed husband, both in and out of his costume, was utterly convincing. He was especially good in the finale. Nedda (Colombina), the wife, was also very convincing. Her soprano voice was especially well suited to Nedda, but she was equally wonderful portraying Colombina, showing both a charming stage presence and a beautiful voice.

The Opera Club will start up again in 2018 with Beethoven’s *Fidelio* as our next project.

(Elizabeth R.)

• Danke, Danke, Danke

- Lyn H. and Teresa P.yL. for organizing the very successful Fun Run/Walk to raise funds for FAWCO
- Tracy M. and Carol S. for inspiring and supporting Lyn’s and Teresa’s fundraiser efforts
- Abby and Conrad M., Tracy M. and her wonderful family, Kathrin and Lillian Y., WangDi S., Marlane N., Laura L., and Mary Frances L. for behind-the-scenes work at the event
- Stella K.R., Tracy M., Lillian Y., Suzana Z., and Susan S.-W. for delicious baked goods
- Jessica M. and Sandra S. for donating beautiful crafts and yummy jams to the raffle
- The Stich ‘n’ Bitch crew for making pompoms and much other support
- Josh P. and Morgan P. for the video documenting of the Fun Run/Walk
- Elise P.yL. for creating the Fun Run/Walk website
- Rick Y. for an outstanding motivational speech at the Fun Run/Walk
- Petra R, Cat C. and Mary Frances L. for the great work on updating Facebook, the AWCH Newsletter and blog in support of the Fun Run/Walk.
- All husbands/ partners and children who assisted in setting up and running the event
- Petra R. for creating wonderful tips on FaceBook and setting up Xing and LinkedIn accounts
- Cat C. and Petra R. for an outstanding job of updating the website and keeping up the membership directory
- Carol B. and Carol S. for another proofreading of *Hamburg in Your Pocket*
- Rachelle B. for hosting a Board Meeting
- Kathrin Y. for hosting the truly enjoyable Newcomers’ Coffee
- Elizabeth R. for sharing her love for opera and obtaining tickets
- Laura L. for organizing tickets for the ballet performance *Anna Karenina*
- Marlane N., Mary Frances L. and her ACCESS kids, and many, many others for a spooky Halloween Party
- Tracy M. and Carol S. for inviting Tricia Saur, FAWCO Target Program Chair, as a special speaker
- A special thank you to American Bagel Company, Coca Cola, Yogi Tea, and Gus and Ollie for sponsoring our Fun Run/Walk.

Film Reviews and more...



Maudie *****

Canada / Ireland 2016
Opening October 26, 2017

Directed by: Aisling Walsh
Writing credits: Sherry White
Principal actors: Sally Hawkins, Ethan Hawke, Kari Matchett, Gabrielle Rose, Zachary Bennett, Billy MacLellan, Marthe Bernard



Aisling Welsh's film *Maudie*, scripted by Sherry White, is inspired by the life of one of Canada's best-known folk artists, Maud Lewis (born Dowley), who lived in a small village in Nova Scotia (1903 – 1970).

Maud is crippled by juvenile rheumatoid arthritis and lives with her aunt who treats her like a child. The young woman in her 30s is longing for independence. On the spur of the moment she applies as household help for Everett, a local fish-peddler. He is a rough man but Maud is adamant to make his dilapidated wooden shack her new home.

When she finds some leftover paint, she starts decorating walls with birds and flowers. Soon every available surface shows a picture. Ill-tempered Everett lets her continue. After a while he even gives in to marriage. Maud turns out to be the stronger personality by helping Everett with organising his life. She

endures his insults, his moods and rude behaviour as she is fully aware that they need each other, that they are dependent on each other. Her painting style becomes widely known after a newspaper article and a television interview. She can hardly paint fast enough to satisfy the demand. Now it is Everett who sweeps the floor and peels the potatoes.

Sally Hawkins gives a remarkable performance of a woman who looks at life's opportunities with an open mind and a strong will. Ethan Hawke is the unpleasant, grumpy Everett. These two accomplished actors give an unsentimental but emotionally touching performance of an unlikely couple. Cinematographer Guy Godfree's majestic, windswept landscape reflects the isolation; his eye for detail adds depth. (Birgit Schrupf)

Die Unsichtbaren—

Wir wollen leben *****

Germany 2017
Opening October 26, 2017

Directed by: Claus Räfle
Writing credits: Claus Räfle, Alejandra López
Principal actors: Max Mauff, Alice Dwyer, Ruby O. Fee, Aaron Altaras, Florian Lukas, Andreas Schmidt, Laila Maria Witt, Rick Okon, Steffi Kühnert



In 1943, four Germans overturned the hand fate dealt them. They were young, still optimistic and hopeful despite the country being at war. Then on June 19, Hitler's propaganda Minister Goebbels' antisemitic decree is to purge the Reich's capital, Berlin, of all remaining Jews.

Survival becomes paramount. Nevertheless, Cioma Schönhaus (**Max Mauff**), Ruth Arndt (both 21) (**Ruby O. Fee**), Hanni Weisenberg (19) (**Alice Dwyer**) and Eugen Friede (16) (**Aaron Altaras**) stay in Berlin. Hiding in plain sight, as families are torn apart, friends and neighbors turn against one another, promises are broken, and a knock on the door often means death. Perhaps hardest is acting normal once the identifying yellow star is discarded. Still, the humane actions of some make all the difference.

Ten years ago while making a television documentary, director **Claus Räfle's** curiosity was roused. Legend was, a young Jewish woman with false papers worked at the infamous Salon Kitty brothel during its espionage ventures. Digging deeper, he and co-writer **Alejandra López** quickly hit pay dirt, learning circa 7,000 other Jews survived this way. After the war most left the country. Researchers at the Gedenkstätte Stille Helden in Berlin provided invaluable help with tracking people, historical authentication, and accuracy. First discussions began in 2009, whereby **Räfle** and **López** decided to focus on four survivors.

Although describing that awfulness, Cioma, Ruth, Hanni and Eugen are engaging; you deserve to hear their fascinating tales, which is the film's foundation, in their words. Moving back/forth between the protagonists and flashbacks, we learn how they stay one step ahead of capture, and about kindnesses from sympathizing Germans. The cast is first-rate, as is the crew: **Jörg Widmer**, camera; editors **Jörg Hausschild** and **Julia Oehring** add archival footage; **K.D. Gruber**, art direction; **Matthias Klein**, music; costumes **Ute Pfaffendorf** with **Henny Zimmer**, **Lena Lazzarotto's** make-up. Combining personal interviews, the cast's depictions and historic footage provides unique viewing. *Die Unsichtbaren* (the invisible) deserves subtitles in other languages to reach wider audi-

ences because we all understand, *Wir wollen leben* (We want to live.) 110 minutes (Marinell Haegelin)



Sommerhäuser ****
Germany 2017
Opening October 26, 2017

Directed by: Sonja Maria Kröner
Writing credits: Sonja Maria Kröner
Principal actors: Laura Tonke, Mavie Hörbiger, Thomas Loibl, Ursula Werner, Inge Maux, Günther Maria Halmer, Thomas Loibl

This chamber drama takes place during a sweltering hot July in 1976 in Bavaria, on the garden plot of a recently deceased family matriarch. Her family—three generations—has come to summer here like every year, each party occupying one of the 'low tech' wooden summer-cabins. (No TV, smartphones or video). It may be the last summer they spend here if they don't come to an agreement over Sophie's will. Tensions—harbored for years—surface under these circumstances, often resulting in acerbic and quite funny exchanges. A crime committed in the neighborhood, the perpetrator still on the loose, lends a constant and parallel 'undercurrent' of anxiety to the story. Unfazed by the adult's problems and concerns the children freely roam the property and neighborhood, the crime

merely deliciously disquieting. **Sonja Maria Kröner** won "Best Director" at the 2017 Munich Film Fest for this, her first feature film. It shows her to be a keen observer and an interesting storyteller. With the support of a great cast (casting **Ulrike Müller**), she created a realistic portrait of a family in (West-) Germany in the 1970s and tells a story, refreshingly, without tediously spelling everything out. (Carola A)

Django (Django—Ein Leben für die Musik) ***1/2
France 2017
Opening October 26, 2017
Directed by: Etienne Comar
Writing credits: Etienne Comar (screenplay), Alexis Salatko (novel & screenplay)
Principal actors: Reda Kateb, Cécile De France, Bea Palya, Esther Comar, Ulrich Brandhoff, Alex Brendemühl



Who was Django Reinhardt? The first time I heard the name Django was when **Tarantino's** film *Django Unchained* hit the scene. I wondered why a film would pick a similar name as I looked at the competition program at the 67th Berlinale. It wasn't until I saw the film and heard the music that I knew somewhere back in my subconscious that I had heard this music before and loved it. Django is one of those legends that peo-

ple in the music business know and find inspiring. His work has not only influenced Jazz, Blues, Pop styles but that of Country and Rock. I was surprised to hear that there are even Festivals in Europe and America dedicated to him. He clearly has a huge fan club out there, so why has it taken so long for the founder of the Gypsy-Jazz-Swing Style to make it to the screen? One possibility is that there was not much written about him. It has been only about the last 15 years that people have started to give him the recognition he deserves by writing books and articles. Some of his pieces have been lost, including the complete version of the Requiem written during WW2 in which he dedicated the music to all the lost Roma victims. So it's clearly hard to get a complete vision of this genius and that, unfortunately, is felt in the film directed by **Etienne Comar**. The other possibility has clearly to do with his Roma background. Even today there is a persisting prejudice against these people. There have been a number of attempts to send them out of France, even when France is their home.

Comar has made a bold move to create a film that address a neglected history and Django (**Reda Kateb**) is a perfect messenger. Comar's film takes place in 1943 where Django is being scrutinized by the Nazi regime. During his youth he lost two of his fingers but that did not stop him from playing the guitar. Instead he created a new modified style. Django had everything against him. He was a three-figure degenerate misfit who could emotionally set an audience on fire in the clubs. He naturally lands on the list and has to go into hiding. He is caught between two fronts and is lucky that so many people put out the effort to try to save him. The characters are shallow, the story is vague, but the film is rich in color and in music. If esthetics is all you need then this is a film worth seeing. 1h 57 minutes (Shelly Schoeneshoef)

Lady Macbeth*** / ****1/2
United Kingdom / 2016
Opening November 2, 2017

Directed by: William Oldroyd
Writing credits: Nikolai Leskov (based on Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk), Alice Birch
Principal actors: Florence Pugh, Cosmo Jarvis, Naomi Ackie, Paul Hilton

Review 1:

How can you love a child killer? Murderess Katherine is portrayed so beautifully by Florence Pugh that one could forgive her anything. Sold off as a bride to an indifferent rich man twice her age, Katherine soon finds herself left alone in a lovely house surrounded by servants and the endless countryside of 19th century England. Interrupting abuse of her housemaid Anna (**Ackie**) by a group of her manservants, Katherine is intrigued by their ringleader Sebastian (**Jarvis**). Her fascination is matched by Sebastian's lust for her and the two are soon carnally copulating day and night to the silent condemnation of the rest of the household. When Katherine's father-in-law returns from London, she seems surprised but not dismayed that he knows all. What happens next is completely unexpected. It seems Katherine will do whatever it takes to have her man. Although there was little chem-

istry between Katherine and Sebastian, perhaps that was not unintentional. As Katherine brilliantly morphs from downtrodden young wife to bold mistress of her own desires, she totally dominates the story leaving Sebastian and everyone else in her dust. Entertainment for girls' night out, eye candy included. (Mary Wienke)

Review 2:

Fellow Russian Nikolai Leskov's 1865 novella, *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District*, was first published in Fyodor Dostoyevsky's magazine *Epoch*. After reading, **Alice Birch** thought it would make a good film adaptation; director **William Oldroyd** impressively brings Birch's screenplay to life with dramatic fervor in his debut feature. Giving good ol' 19th century English morality a twist, Oldroyd's austere treatment employs vigorous camera work (**Ari Wegner**) and high-quality sound design bookended by minimal music (**Dan Jones**). Atmospheric landscapes magnify Victorian England's class differences and lifestyles.

The modicum of dialogue a stellar cast delivers has resonating impact. The young bought bride (**Pugh's** commanding performance is mesmerizing) is not immune from negative currents pulsating through the country estate. Like father (**Fairbank**), like son – the embittered groom's (**Hilton**) commands are to be obeyed. In this hushed oppressive atmosphere, Katherine's only contact is with Anna (**Ackie**). When both men are called away, Katherine freely roams the estate. However, encountering the louche newly hired groom (**Jarvis**) viscerally ignites Katherine. Blithely disregarding her surroundings, and with laser-focused intent she flexes some class-entitlement muscle to achieve her objective. Agnes (**Rosheuvel**) and Teddy's (**Palmer**) arrival tempers her ill-intentioned actions... for a while. By entwining the Victorian-period mindset toward women



with his protagonist's antithetical characteristics, Nikolai's title choice for his tragedy à la Shakespeare is understandable. *Lady Macbeth's* rich, detailed visual storytelling is reminiscent of Alfred Hitchcock's. Pugh and Jarvis' powerful performances depicting the characters' nuanced, spiraling involvement clearly justify and clarify their characters' rationale for audiences. 89 minutes (Marnell Haegelin)

Suburbicon ****

USA/UK 2017

Opening November 9, 2017

Directed by: George Clooney
 Writing Credits: George Clooney;
 Grant Heslov; Coen Brothers
 Principal actors: Julianne Moore;
 Matt Damon; Noah Jupe; Tony
 Espinosa



When the troops came home after World War II, an experiment began to provide them and their families with homes in new suburbs. The movie *Suburbicon* is set in one such community in the 1950s, when life was good and everybody was happy. Something always comes along to burst the bubble doesn't it? In this movie not one but two bubbles are well and truly burst.

Rose Lodge and her sister Maggie (both played by **Julianne Moore**) are sitting in the back yard of the Lodge home. Maggie tells Rose's son Nicky (**Jupe**) to introduce

himself to the new kid on the block. Nicky is reluctant to do so but children in the fifties always did as they were told so he picks up his baseball glove and ambles across the yard to meet Andy (**Espinosa**.) A slow and steady friendship begins to develop between the boys.

Not long after, while the Lodge Family and Maggie are quietly eating dinner and minding their own business, a shocking event occurs. This event provides the basis for the movie's main theme. The equally shocking events that happen to Andy Meyer's family provide the secondary theme and these events build up to a disturbing finale. Unfortunately, though these seem clumsy and exaggerated in the movie, recent events in the USA show that they are closer to the truth than we would wish.

The **Coen** brothers' particular brand of black humour is instantly recognisable in this quirky tale of the Lodge family's self-imposed downward spiral and eventual comeuppance. Their behaviour causes their downfall but quite the opposite happens to the passive Meyers who try to get on with life despite all the hurdles put in their way. Can people really be so awful? Yes, unfortunately they can.

Mr. Clooney's wicked sense of humour and love of the absurd is complimented by his fellow scriptwriters. His movie is always gripping despite the clumsiness of trying to merge the two plots. He uses the two likeable little boys to bring these themes together but with only limited success. Nicky and Andy are the voice of reason and the face of morality. Nicky's solemn little personage clothed in cowboy and Indians pyjamas (which match his wallpaper) is unforgettable, as is Andy's resigned stoicism. **Julianne Moore** plays the perfect fifties suburban housewife and **Matt Damon's** performance as hypocrite Gardner Lodge is delightfully chilling.

Suburbicon is an elegant, well-

paced movie, which despite its flaws is certainly worth seeing. (Jenny Mather)

The Big Sick *****

USA 2017

Opening November 16, 2017

Directed by: Michael Showalter
 Writing credits: Kumail Nanjiani,
 Emily V. Gordon
 Principal actors: Kumail Nanjiani,
 Zoe Kazan, Holly Hunter,
 Ray Romano



The Big Sick, despite its quirky title, heralds the return of the light-hearted romcom. The romance takes place in Chicago between Pakistan-born aspiring comedian **Kumail Nanjiani** (who plays himself) and American grad student Emily Gardner (**Zoe Kazan**). All the pitfalls of a cross-cultural romance are portrayed, including the relentless matchmaking mission of Kumail's devout Muslim family. The comedy, both endearing and wryly topical becomes more subdued when Emily gets sick. That is when Kumail is confronted with Emily's parents (**Holly Hunter** and **Ray Romano**) who are not convinced he is Mr. Right. Emily's father Terry just can't help himself asking Kumail what his "stance" on 9/11 is. The comedian in Kumail can't resist an ironic quip...whoops.

Kumail Nanjiani (known as the character Dinesh in the sitcom *Silicon Valley*) wrote the screen-

play along with his wife **Emily V. Gordon** based loosely on their own love story. **Judd Apatow** (*Bridesmaids*) produced the movie, which premiered at Sundance in January. Those of you who have tired of watching *When Harry Met Sally* for the umpteenth time, here is a new romcom to fall in love with. (Pat Frickey)

Battle of the Sexes ****1/2
UK | USA 2017
Opening November 23, 2017



Directed by: Jonathan Dayton, Valerie Faris

Writing credits: Simon Beaufoy
Principal actors: Emma Stone, Andrea Riseborough, Steve Carell, Elisabeth Shue, Natalie Morales, Jessica McNamee

Tennis buffs around the world know Bobby Riggs and Billie Jean King's prowess on the court. An exhibition match is announced when Bobby (55-years old) is doing well, while Billie's (29-years old) game is off. But, backtracking a (few) year earlier, Billie and eight spirited like-minded players disagree with Jack Kramer's (**Bill Pullman**) inequality regarding prize money amounts in favor of male professional tennis players. The *Original 9* take unprecedented defensive lobs when pushed to hit on a new game plan.

Directors **Valerie Faris** and **Jona-**

than Dayton (*Little Miss Sunshine*, 2006) skillfully recreate a major American turning point with impeccable intuit for timing, and detail. **Simon Beaufoy** scripts a behind-the-scenes conflicted, tense sports drama. **Emma Stone** and **Steve Carell**'s performances reincarnate Billie Jean and Bobby onscreen. **Stone**/King is determined, gutsy, dedicated, resolute, while off court sexual awakenings challenges her core persona; **Austin Stowell**'s measured depiction as Billie's husband is notable. **Carell**/Riggs delivers another masterful, spellbinding biographical portrayal of prominent, sometimes flawed individual(s): *Foxcatcher*, 2014; *Freeheld*, *The Big Short*, 2015; **Carell** also appeared in *Little Miss Sunshine*. **Sarah Silverman** as Gladys Heldman, *World Tennis* magazine's founder, and **Alan Cumming** as King's fashion designer and close friend, Ted Tinning, are super.

Linus Sandgren's camerawork is awesome, **Pamela Martin**'s editing astute shifting between parallel timelines and blending in archival footage, and **Judy Becker**'s 1970's production design spot-on. The *Battle of the Sexes* exhibition match on September 20, 1973, when feminism was unconventional, was held at a packed Houston (Texas) Astrodome and televised to an audience of 90 million; now everyone knows them. Riggs was an opportunist promoter, whereas King accepted the spectacle more concerned with advancing women's rights by changing public opinion. Consequently, as the match begins onscreen, we join the fans in the Astrodome, rooting and completely drawn into the serve-and-volley action on court. 124 minutes (Marinell Haegelin)

Human Flow ***1/2
USA 2017
Opening November 16, 2017

Directed by: Ai Weiwei
Writing credits: Ai Weiwei
Principal actors: Documentary with Ai Weiwei



Chinese artist **Ai Weiwei** moved from making art objects out of old Chinese pots plastered with Coca Cola labels to an exhibition room filled with millions of sunflower seeds. Now he has spent the last year travelling around the world to document the migration of people. He takes us on an overwhelming and excruciating journey across the landscape to take a closer look at the refugee crisis. This one-year global project covers 23 countries using several different camera techniques including drones, his mobile phone and wide use of lens and filters. His imagery poetically portrays something beautiful in its coloring, but upon a closer look leaves you with a startlingly raw feeling of despair. Images of people swept up in sandstorms or clinging for their life vests as they head out to sea gives the viewer a helpless sensation, making us feel either compassion or numbness or even denial. Poignant statements from leaders of host countries (such as Lebanon and Jordan) try to explain their position in this Human Flow, and why this is happening and what future awaits us.

Ai Weiwei plays an active role, helping people off boats, marching from place to place, and telling the desperate stories of the refugees, so that they can regain their respect. He tries to portray a wider view of what is happening

than given in the media. Fantastic photographic images document the perils of the human race heading towards disaster. Weiwei dares the audience to get close up to these displaced people so that we can understand their plight as well as discovers something much greater. This is not just a refugee crisis but a human crisis. It is not a mirror we want to face. Why would these people just pack up and leave to make a journey of uncertainty? They face fences, lose their possessions, loved ones and their respect in the community. What has become of us? He feels that we have lost our base values and are faced with problems such as overpopulation and lack of resources. His film has many incredible jewels hidden amidst this vast flow of footage. The film is, unfortunately, just too long. While the audience is attempting to absorb all the visual information, they struggle to see the final message. This film has been nominated for several awards that are well deserved, but I would like to see a re-edited version that would emphasize the message. 2h 20 minutes (Shelly Schoeneshoefer)

**Madame (Madame—
Nicht die feine Art) ******
France 2015
Opening November 30, 2017
Directed by: Amanda Sthers
Writing credits: Amanda Sthers
Principal actors: Toni Collette,
Harvey Keitel, Rossy de Palma,
Michael Smiley, Tom Hughes,
Violaine Gillibert, Stanislas Merhar, Sue Cann

Some films are worth seeing for the simple pleasures of relaxing, and enjoyment. Oftentimes, those are also films that the layers of implications only become clear later. Just as some people have no idea how good they have it until



there is "a bitter pill" to swallow. Anne, Bob, and their children are spread out in *grand-père's* Parisian house while Bob completes a business transaction. Doing what she does best, entertaining, the socialite is consternated to realize her evening dinner party. Short on time, Anne recruits her devoted maid, overriding Maria's objections: "All women can lie... it's in the smile." Meanwhile, Bob confides in Steven, warning not to tell his step-mom, whose patience with Steven is thin at best. Later, keeping an eye on Maria gets harder for Anne as the night wears on, which distracts Anne

from self-interests. Seated next to a Brit, Maria inadvertently forgets her strict orders; David is completely charmed. In the ensuing days, Anne's tactics take unprecedented directions, just as Bob and Steven undertake their own directions.

Amanda Sthers' screenplay subtext is deliciously *subtil*, just as her direction is formidable; she understands and respects each actor's particular *modus operandi*. The delightful cast are *fantastique*: **Keitel**, the husband with a worrisome problem, and **Collette** as the control-freak, cagey wife are the yearning and learning couple trying to patch up a marriage; **Hughes** as the wiser than his years son; **de Palma** as the passionate maid with old-fashioned values; **Smiley** as the academic dandy; **Merhar** as the purveyor of additions to his collection, and trophy wife, Gillibert; **Cann**, as the comely teacher being taught, and supporting actors that support with verve. Cinematographer **Régis Blondeau** makes the most of showing off unfamiliar areas of Paris, as **Nicolas Chau-deurges** snips with aplomb.

Madame is *enchanté*, with a wicked twist at the end. To paraphrase an old maxim: Just who cut off her nose to spite her face? Amanda Sthers' cleverly *discrete* ending sequence makes that obvious, and liberating. 92 minutes (Marinell Haegelin)

The 25th Filmfest Hamburg (FFHH)

This year's film festival was a great attraction for club members, since many of the 131 films were in English or had English subtitles. Nine club members attended as accredited festival journalists. These journalists saw 86 films in 160 sittings throughout the 10 days. An absolute top favorite was *Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri*, which will come mainstream to Hamburg on January 25, 2018. Another top favorite was *The Rider*, which won the Art Cinema Award Best Film. Curious for more? Watch for the special issue of *Currents*, which will feature our impressions of the Filmfest Hamburg. (Becky T.)



Art in the City

Alec Soth—Gathered Leaves

Haus der Photographie
Deichtorhallen
Through January 17, 2018

by Ulrike C. Henn

"Photography's closest cousin is poetry because of the way it sparks your imagination and leaves gaps for the viewer to fill in." This quote comes from American photographer Alec Soth, who is called "the greatest living photographer of America's social and geographical landscape" (*The Telegraph*) and "the most important visual chronicler of the US at work today" (*The Guardian*). This current exhibition of his work features four characteristic photo series by the artist.

In the series *Sleeping by the Mississippi*, 2004, Soth uses the eponymous river as a metaphor for wandering, a carefree going with the flow. Alec Soth was born in 1969 and still lives in Minneapolis, not far from the Mississippi River that was immortalized by Mark Twain in the *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. The series is a mix of portraits, landscapes and documentary shots, including a portrait of *Bonnie*, a minister's wife who proudly holds a precious framed photograph showing the blue sky with an



Alec Soth, Charles, Vasa, Minnesota, USA, 2002
© Alec Soth / MAGNUM Photos

angel-shaped cloud; a matter-of-fact photo of Charles Lindbergh's boyhood bed; a winter landscape with a greenish, dreamy cabin from which a clothesline with red laundry extends into nowhere; a photo of a rundown sickroom in Green Island, Iowa; a landscape image of an old raft stranded at the banks of the river in Missouri; and Johnny Cash's boyhood home in Arkansas. Some 50 photographs are woven together in a narrative to tell the story of life near and on the Mississippi.



Alec Soth, Dance N Style, Sandusky, Ohio, USA, 2012
© Alec Soth / MAGNUM Photos

The series of black-and-white photos *Looking for Love*, from 1996, give insight into Soth's beginnings as a photographer. One photo shows a cold winter scene with a house behind an embankment on which a billboard is placed. The billboard holds a personal ad of a man looking for "love and a friend", listing the wished-for qualities in a woman. Other photos were taken in bars or on dance floors or at a psychic fair. The images all radiate a sweet, solemn melancholy, an almost painful longing, and at times allow us to see the humor of the situation.

Each of Alec Soth's photographs is a testimony to his great technical skills and his outstanding compassion and empathy for his subjects.

Alice Neel—Painter of Modern Life

Hall of Contemporary Art, Deichtorhallen
Through January 11, 2018

by Ulrike C. Henn

“I could have been a great psychiatrist but it is more fun being an artist,” American painter Alice Neel (1900-1984) once said in an interview. The artist saw Abstract Expressionism, Conceptual Art and Pop Art come and go, without deferring from her very own style of painting stark, astute portraits. With psychological acuity she depicts the sitters in front of her. Her paintings are figurative and show an expressionistic use of line and color. Critics labeled her work outdated; however, as it is often the case, her work had strong influence on her contemporaries.



*Pregnant Julie and Algis, 1967. Öl auf Leinwand
Photo: Malcolm Varon, New York © Estate of Alice Neel*

on August 31, 1970.

One of Neel’s most famous portraits is that of Andy Warhol. In 1968, the radical feminist writer Valerie Solanas shot Warhol, who almost did not survive. After the incident Warhol asked Neel to paint him. There he sits, his pinkish-green upper body naked, sagging breasts, large scars across his stomach with a corset he had to wear clearly visible. His head is turned slightly away and his eyes are closed. The portrait shows none of his trademarks, like the white wig or the sunglasses. We see a vulnerable human being that has become victim of his own public persona, but not his poise.



*Nancy and the Twins (5 Months), 1971
Öl auf Leinwand. Photo: Malcolm Varon
© Estate of Alice Neel*

Alice Neel’s personal life was marked by dramatic ups and downs. Her marriage with a rich Cuban industrialist did not last. Her first daughter died, her ex took the second daughter. Several chaotic relationships followed. She brought up her two sons as a single mother, with great difficulties to make ends meet. But no matter what, she did not give up painting.

Alice Neel found her subjects in her immediate New York neighborhood: in Greenwich Village, Spanish Harlem and on the Upper West Side. She painted her children, her lovers, her next-door neighbors, intellectuals, art critics, poets and fellow artists alike. She had a deep interest in people, their vulnerability, and the depth of human nature. Her strong concern for the poor, underprivileged and disadvantaged made her sympathize with Communism. Because of that Neel was interviewed by the FBI in the mid-fifty’s. In 1963 she had her first exhibit at the Graham Gallery in New York. Alice Neel’s portrait of feminist Kate Millet appeared on the cover of *Time Magazine*



*Jackie Curtis and Rita Red, 1970, Öl auf Leinwand. The Cleveland Museum of Art, Leonard C. Hanna, Jr. Fund 2009.345
© The Estate of Alice Neel*

Alice Neel started to paint *Self-Portrait, 1980* in 1970. It is a good example of how radical and un-sparing she painted what she saw. In this picture she sits on a white and blue striped lounge chair, wearing only her glasses, in one hand she holds a brush, in the other a piece of cloth. She has white hair, breasts and stomach sagging; all signs any woman would want to hide especially when getting older. As one critic wrote: “Neel breaks a cardinal rule in Western art, wearing the evidence of her eighty years without shame and as a truly radical artist, at the very top of her game.”

In 1974 the Whitney Museum of American Art organized her first retrospective exhibit, which finally gained her public recognition and the acceptance into the American Academy of Arts and Letters. As art critic Peter Schjeldahl wrote in *The New Yorker*: “Outlasting insult and condescension, a woman among competitive men, and a figurative artist in times agog for abstraction, she triumphed.”

The Birth of the Art Market: Rembrandt, Ruisdael, van Goyen and the Artists of the Dutch Golden Age

Bucerius Kunst Forum
www.buceriuskunstforum.de
Through January 7, 2018

by Ulrike C. Henn



Rembrandt H. van Rijn (Werkstatt) (1606-1669): *Willem Burchgraeff* (Detail), 1633, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Foto: Hans-Peter Klut

“I can’t paint the way they want me to paint and they know that, too,” complained Rembrandt about the changing demands of the flourishing art market in Antwerp. Once a rising star, his career is a good example of the brevity and fluctuations of the art market.

Up to the seventeenth century, artists were their own agents. During the Golden Age in the Netherlands, this began to change, with art dealers playing a more important role as intermediaries between artists and buyers.

When Rembrandt moved from Leiden to Antwerp in 1631, he invested the huge sum of 1000 guilders (about US \$550 today) in the enterprise of art dealer Uylenburgh and became his chief painter. It was here that the artist perfected the history paintings for which he would become renowned.

The Netherlands at that time had a gross national income of 200 million guilders—a little over \$100 million today—and the majority of people were well-educated, tolerant of various religious beliefs, and affluent enough to own and buy art. This turned out to be a fortunate situation for the artists who had lost their traditional buyers (only a few aristocratic families still remained and the stern Calvinist churches contained little or no decoration, ergo no commissions could be expected). For the first time, the wealthy middle-class could afford oil paintings; thus, the artists repositioned themselves, painting

for an anonymous market, finding their customers and getting feedback on the streets or in the taverns. Once it became clear that the new clientele preferred subjects they could relate to and afford, the artists adjusted their paintings to satisfy demand: they specialized in bawdy everyday scenes, rural vistas, and cows and horses, all painted on small canvases. Jan Steen’s genre paintings, for example, are marked by their refined execution and the extravagant depiction of his figures. Despite this, they sold for relatively small sums, with an average of 12 to 15 guilders apiece (about \$6–\$10 today.)

A wide range of prices emerged, from inexpensive mass products to exclusive historical depictions. Some artists found their own buyers, whereas cheap paintings were sold at fairs or were raffled off in lotteries. In addition to the distribution channels



Jan Miense Molenaer (1610-1668): *Jugendliche Musikanten und ein tanzender Zwerg*, um 1630–1635, SÖR Rusche Sammlung Oelde/ Berlin, Foto © SÖR Rusche Sammlung Oelde/ Berlin

helping to popularize art, the number of professional painters grew substantially in the first half of the seventeenth century and the method of painting changed, streamlining the production.

The exhibit is arranged according to different themes and styles. A most amusing section is Still Life Painting with Game, where works by Jan Weenix—who wanted to distinguish his paint-



Gerard de Lairesse (1640-1711): *Schlafende Bacchantin*, 1680, Kunsthalle Bremen – Der Kunstverein in Bremen, Foto © Artothek

Anita Rée: A Retrospective

Hamburger Kunsthalle
 www.hamburger-kunsthalle.de/en
 Through February 4, 2018

by Karen Eve Malinowski

This retrospective of Hamburg native Anita Rée’s work features some 200 pieces, from early sketches and colorful paintings to striking self-portraits. Despite being lauded during her own lifetime in the 1920s, the artist’s fame was tempered by the difficult political situation in Germany emerging in the 1930s and by her early death in 1933.

Rée’s work largely reflects the artist’s struggle with identity. Her mother’s Venezuelan roots lent the young *Hamburgerin* an exotic look. Despite her Jewish heritage, she was raised as a Protestant. She felt stymied by society’s norms and expectations of women at the time. Circulating in Hamburg’s illustrious circles but having the subjective perception of being an exotic bystander at the same time, she longed recognition. Later, as an emerging artist, Rée found herself torn between the Modernist and classic genres.



Selbstbildnis, 1930, Öl auf Leinwand,
 © Hamburger Kunsthalle / bpk
 Foto: Elke Walford



Affenschrank, 1932
 Weichholzschränk, bemalt,
 Privatbesitz, Foto: Christoph Irrgang



Rée’s fascination with the exotic may therefore have derived from her perception of herself. The works in “Familiar Strangers”, such as “Semi-Nude Before a Prickly Pear Cactus” (“*Halbakt vor Feigenkaktus*”) and “Teresina”, feature bright, bold colors.

Growing up in a well-off, educated household, Rée enjoyed privileged opportunities to indulge in her passion for art. The exhibition gives an insight into the development of her technique and motifs.

Teresina, 1922–1925, Öl auf Leinwand
 © Hamburger Kunsthalle / bpk
 Foto: Elke Walford

The Birth of the Art Market, con’t.

ings from the still life hunting paintings of the well-known artist van Aelst—feature dead rabbits, which he always rendered in the same pose. Seeing different kinds and sizes of these still lifes with the same sort of dead rabbit is rather hilarious.

This is the first exhibit curated by Franz Wilhelm Kaiser, the new director of the Bucerius Kunst Forum. He says: “The show points to some similarities of the art market today and the one of the 17th Century in the Netherlands.” When buyers’ tastes gravitated toward the international Baroque style, Rembrandt remained true to his own style—and in the end died a poor man.

AWCH Upcoming Events

- November 18 Thanksgiving Celebration
4:00 p.m. DESY, Notkestraße 85, Bldg. 9a
- December 12 Holiday Party
6:00 p.m. Literaturhaus, Schwanenwik 38
- December 13 Cookie Exchange
10:00 a.m. Home of Honorary President
Kathrin Y.

For details and registration see the AWCH website:
www.awchamburg.org

Forget Paris. Here's what's also "Alsace-y and Chic"!

by Ericka B. Seifried

(phone rings) Hello. Of course, I remember you mentioned needing a retreat! For 2 weeks? Great! Where to? Oh.... Paris (sigh...). No, sounds great...really.

Sound familiar? Your friend finally wrangles enough time away from work and family to join you on a much needed getaway. Only problem is she's always wanted to visit France—the Louvre, the Seine, haute couture boutiques, and Notre Dame. The only other problem is you've been ump-teen times to Gay Paree, and you, being an avid traveler, know that France has a great deal more to offer than just April in Paris.

The long and winding road

About 30 minutes outside of Strasbourg, begins the Alsace Wine Route (Route des Vins d'Alsace). The Route, a sprawling 75-mile chain encompassing over 100 tiny wine-making communities stretching from its northernmost point in Marlenheim to the southern tip of Thann, is home to more than ten varietals of mainly white wines. Known for its crisp and delightful white wines, this region is a veritable playground for wine connoisseurs. At the tastings organized in the producers' cellars, I learned about the hidden popularity of Alsatian wines (they make up about 30% of total French white wine sales), the difference between a Muscat and a Gewürztraminer, and how to pair white wines with more than poultry and fish.

The Route is divided into two sections—Haute Rhine and Bas Rhine, the high and low Rhine regions. To cover the wide expanse, it is advisable to rent a car. What's great is that each city is more charming than the next with other sights to see in between, so it's convenient to leave the car at the hotel or guest house (*auberge*). There are great ruins, castles (Schloss Haut Koenigsburg), 16th Century



churches, locations marking legends of unrequited love, charming squares and hundreds of vineyards and tasting rooms (*Weinstube*) for sampling the different vintages. Visitors opt to rent bikes and make day trips to link the cities (many are only a few miles apart) and leave their cars at major mid-points along the route. And don't worry about having to double up on your spinning classes, Alsace is not as hilly or spread out as, say, Tuscany. Also the climate, which mimics Germany is temperate during the high season between May and late October. Each city is a window to the past, but some of my favorites are Obernai, Riquewihr, Ribeauville, Bergheim, Equisheim, Mulhouse (auto and railway museums), and Colmar (birthplace of Bartholdi, the sculptor who created the Statue of Liberty.)



The Alsatian culinary scene

With such an array of scrumptious things to eat and drink, it is hard to go wrong anywhere in Alsace—the French region with the most Michelin stars. That said, reading menus can be confusing, because they are written in both French and Ger-



man, and sometimes Alsatian. The local cuisine has a distinct French flair punctuated by the free use of pork like their German neighbors. The most unique dish is arguably *Bäckoffe*—a succulent casserole made with meat, potatoes, onions, vegetables, and spices. Many restaurants make their own sausages and pate de foie gras (and I don't usually eat liver, but in France it is irresistibly delectable). A popular favorite is the *tarte flambee*, or *Flammküchen*, which is a thin pizza-like dough baked (usually in a wood-burning oven) with *crème fraîche*, onions, and bacon. *Choucroute garnie* is a sophisticated version of traditional sauerkraut accented with sausages, salted meats, and potatoes. The list goes on: I've found what works is trying something new at each meal. I love the rabbit with prune sauce. For dessert (and there are plenty to choose from), be sure to sample the famous *Kugelhopf*—much like a bundt cake, this delicious pastry is a dense coffee cake sweetened with almonds and raisins then dusted with powdered sugar. Or try my favorite, rhubarb cake with meringue (*baiser*)!

Alsace is a fantastic and economical way to visit two cultures at once. The great shopping and history of Strasbourg mixes with the regional flair along the Wine Route. It is easy to say why Alsace is not just for the Alsatians.

Practical Guide

Getting from A to B

EasyJet flies from Hamburg to the EuroAirport (Basel-Mulhouse-Freiburg), from where Strasbourg is only a one-and-half hour drive.

Alternatively, the Deutsche Bahn offers services from Hamburg to Strasbourg. The trip will last from 6 to 7 hours.

Those who love the open road and are interested in seeing all points in between should consider driving.

Where to rest your head in Strasbourg

For the romantics, try the charming Hotel Suisse (www.hotel-suisse.com), near the cathedral. A small establishment with 55 rooms; 2-person occupancy starts at about €90. Another option is the Hotel Beaucour (www.romantikhoteles.com) in the heart of the old city and just steps from the Ill River. This 49-room romantic retreat has 3 suites and all rooms boast whirlpool-tubs.

The ultra-chic traveler looking for modern design should book at the four-star Hotel Regent Petite France (www.regent-hotels.com), nestled between the waterways in the city's medieval village. Prices for double rooms begin at €265.

Some would rather spend their money on wine and souvenirs. Hotels in every price range can be found within walking distance of many of the city's main attractions. The Ibis and Novotel are reliable accommodations.

Alsatian Grape Varieties

Sylvaner: Refreshing, light, with a delicate flavor, easy to enjoy. Pairs great with seafood, pork and salads.

Pinot Blanc: Combining freshness and flexibility, well rounded, it is a happy medium in the range of Alsatian wines and is harmonized with a crowd of dishes like cold or hot starters, poultry, fish.

Riesling: Acknowledged as one of the finest white wines in the world, the Riesling is dry, delicately fruity with an elegant bouquet of floral or mineral notes. The Riesling is the gastronomic wine *par excellence*, perfect with fish, shellfish and seafood but also white meats and of course the famous Alsatian sauerkraut.

Muscat d'Alsace: This Muscat is dry and different from the other sweet Muscats of southern France. It is inimitable fruity and its both dry and aromatic character make it a marvelous aperitif. It is also recommended with asparagus.

Tokay Pinot Gris: This powerful and round wine is rich and full-bodied with complex flavours and a long finish. It often advantageously replaces a red wine with white meats and game.

Gewürztraminer: Worldwide known for its exceptional aromatic characteristics with fruity, floral or spiced notes. Its structure is powerful and round. Gewurztraminer is ideal as an aperitif, but also with exotic foods (Asian, Indian), cheeses and desserts. It often ages well.

Pinot Noir: It is the only Alsatian variety of grapes producing either red or rosé wine, characteristically fruity with hints of cherry. It can easily be aged in oak casks. It harmonizes with poultry, white meat, game and cheese.

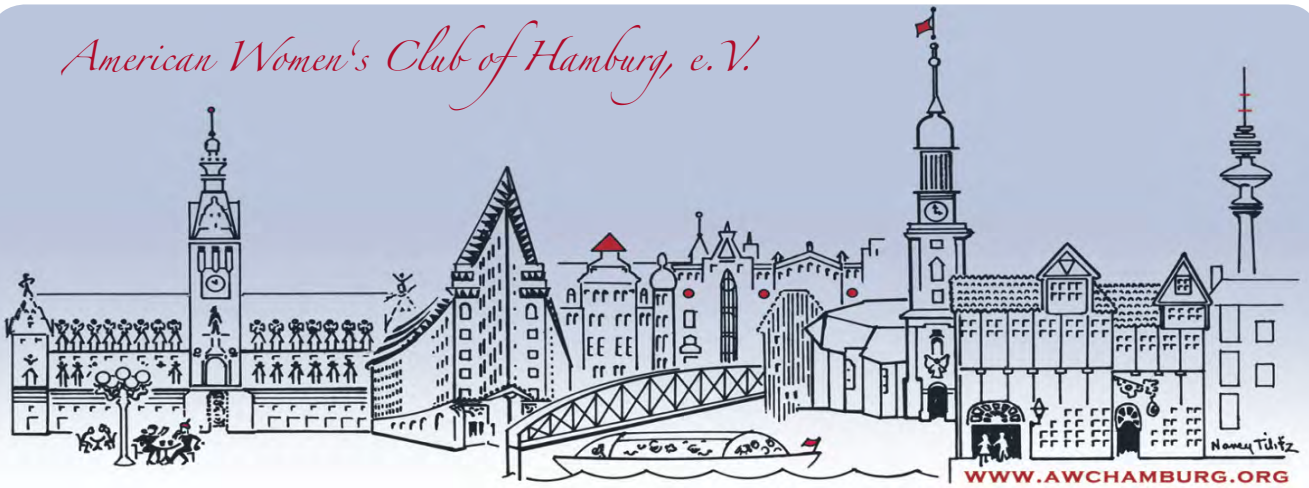
Crémant d'Alsace (type of sparkling wine like champagne): Delicate and lively, sparkling wine made according to the traditional method, as in Champagne, from mainly Pinot Blanc, but also Pinot Gris, Pinot Noir, Chardonnay. The less common rosé is made from Pinot Noir.



Resources:
www.visit-alsace.com;
www.terroir-france.com/wine/alsace_region
www.otstrasbourg.fr/en/; www.vinsalsace.com

Edited and reprinted from an article in *Odyssey Coleur*.

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



Everyone was a winner at the Alster Fun Run/Walk!!!

