

AWCH CURRENTS

FEATURING

THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES

NEW AWCH CLUBS

ENVIRONMENTALLY MINDFUL
& MAHJONG

SPECIAL THEME

THE GOOD FIGHT



THE AMERICAN WOMENS CLUB OF HAMBURG, e. V.

January - March 2020 - Vol. 36, No. 1

www.awchamburg.org

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As I begin my year as president, please allow me to say thank you for placing your trust in me and giving me the opportunity to work with you, a truly inspirational group of wise, funny, interesting, curious, and empowering women. My desire to serve this club comes primarily from YOU, the women of the AWCH, who constantly share their time, talents, ideas, and passion in building a club we are all proud of. In 2017, my family and I found ourselves in a new and totally foreign environment exactly 5,630 miles from our sunny home in Burbank, CA. It was so unfamiliar to me, and I was very unsure, unhappy, and honestly scared in my new city. Thankfully, I found the AWCH. Through the club, I have gained new life-long friends with these things in common: love for all things American, strength, compassion, and the eagerness to take care of each other. This is the essence of the AWCH, and I felt immediately at home.

As we gathered at the AGM in January, we said goodbye to the old board, elected a new board, and had our annual Silent Auction. Board service is probably one of the toughest volunteer roles of all, and I would like to acknowledge that the 2019 board performed with such dedication and tenacity that the club's achievements

would not have been possible without them all. There are not enough words to recognize and appreciate our super women: Carol S., Shelly S., Tracy M., Jordan B.W., Holly T., Anne-Marie S., Carol H., and Christine R.

International Women's Day is March 8th, and the theme this year is An Equal World is an Enabled World. Individually we can improve

and celebrate women's achievements, and collectively we can help create a gender-equal world. March is also Women's History Month, and the 2020 theme is Valiant Women of the Vote. The theme honors *"the brave women who fought to win suffrage rights for women, and for the women who continue to fight for the voting rights of others."* I believe that we were not "given" the right to vote per se, but rather that women fought and died for the right, and we must always remember that.

Before I forget, I am especially proud of the success of our (hopefully annual) play-reading on V-Day 2020 of *The Vagina Monologues* on February 14th. Tickets were sold out way before the deadline, yummy baked goods were provided by our team of fantastic volunteers and, to top it off, we got a standing ovation! I'd like to extend my never-ending gratitude to my partner-in-crime Jennifer L. for being the powerhouse that she is and helping me make the event a reality. V-Day is a global activist movement to end violence toward women and girls, and we collected over €850 for our own charity, the 5. Hamburger Frauenhaus. Mark your calendars, as I plan on having another play-reading the weekend of V-day 2021 on February 12–14. More about V-day here: www.vday.org

As I look forward to getting to know you better and seeing you at the many exciting events we have planned for 2020, I am proud of the AWCH and know that this is a sisterhood, united in our purpose to put our best selves forward and make a meaningful difference in our lives and the community.

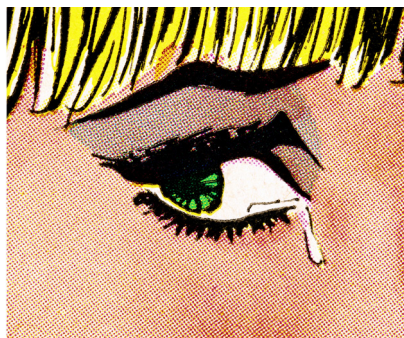
If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to me anytime at pres@awchamburg.org. Until next time, be kind to yourself and others.

"Spread love everywhere you go, let no one ever come to you without leaving happier." – Mother Teresa

Sincerely
Julia R.
 AWCH President
 March 2020



Photo of Staatsoper Hamburg by Michael Behrens, see p. 24 for more on the Opera Club.



Anne Collier (1970), *Woman Crying (Comic)*, #8, 2019, C-print, 126 x 150 cm, see p. 30 for full citation and more of David Hockney's work.



Photo from World Wildlife Fund, see p. 26 for more on our Environmentally Mindful club.

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EDITORIAL

In honor of Women's History Month, the *Currents* team has decided to focus our spring edition on the theme *The Good Fight: What does a Rebellious Woman Mean to you?* We reflect on the milestones of women's achievements across the past three centuries and dedicate this issue to the strong women who fought and died defending our rights.

As you will notice upon reading the magazine, we have a brand new layout and our 2020 editions will focus on the importance of environmental sustainability. A shout out to Shelly S. who provided dozens of photos and a big thank you to all the writers and meticulous proofreaders who dedicated their time crafting the content of the magazine. I want to thank Carol H. for her years of hard work on *Currents*. This magazine would not be possible without her hundreds of hours of work and commitment to providing our club members the best stories and highlights of life in Hamburg.

I look forward to working along side Mason Jane M., who is a gifted writer and editor, as well as our growing list of contributors, writers, proofreaders and photographers. Please enjoy the spring edition of *Currents: The Good Fight*.

Regards
Beatrice K.

Editor-in-Chief
March 2020

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Fall /Winter 2019

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Photo of Women's March 2017 from Pickpik

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Carol H., Beatrice K., Mason Jane M., Jenny M., Irmgard, Carol S., Sara N., and Becky T.

20 Annual 20 General Meeting: WE CAN BE PROUD!

The flurry of activity that proceeds our Annual General Meeting (AGM) is always noteworthy. Whether it is preparing the agenda, getting the PowerPoint presentation to work, finding photos of the activities, checking who has paid their dues, balancing the budget, making sure there is coffee and sugar, or soliciting items for the Silent Auction—there is always much to do. But then it happens. And it's always impressive.

On January 26th, our 2019 president, Carol S., opened the meeting by welcoming the 42 attending members. She reviewed the many administrative activities that the 2019 board had carried out, including updating the AWCH archive, reviewing our insurance policies and activity guidelines, and initiating steps toward improving our internal and external com-

ing tours (e.g., Little Jerusalem, Ohlsdorf Cemetery), art exhibitions (e.g., Generation Wealth, Street Art), and fund-raising events (e.g., Dumpling-making, Silent Auction). Another highlight was the panel discussion "Visionary Women" hosted together with the Amerikazentrum for Women's History Month. We also tried something new: our Club-O-Rama, organized by Membership Chair Holly T., was a unique platform for new and potential members to explore the social, cultural, and educational opportunities that our various groups offer. In her 2019 budget report Treasurer Tracy M. emphasized that a large proportion of the membership dues goes toward supporting the annual events. This year we were also able to add three new groups (Women's Circle, Theater Group, and Get Up & Move), revive an older



munications—the final step of which will be a new website. After a short review of our different groups and our board-appointed positions, Carol S. warmly thanked our members for their unwavering commitment and support in keeping the club diverse and strong.

The strengths of our club were reflected over and over again in the presentations given by the board members. One aspect we can certainly be proud of is the broad and extensive platform of activities we host, which allows our members to connect and get involved. Activity Chair Anne-Marie S. reported that, in addition to the over 100 regular meet-ups and activities organized by the individual special-interest groups, AWCH offered close to 50 events in 2019. This included our annual holiday events, (e.g., Fourth of July, Thanksgiving) but also a number of special walk-

group (German Conversation), and saw the tentative start-up of several others (Environmentally Mindful, Mahjong, and Choir).

Our second strength is our philanthropic arm, enabling our members to "make a difference." The Philanthropic Collective was introduced in 2019 to coordinate and strengthen our fundraising events and activities. Treasurer Tracy M. reported that over €3,770 was raised last year for various philanthropic projects. At the AGM in 2018 we chose the Fifth Hamburg Women's Shelter to be our local charity. This has been quite rewarding, as our members donated clothes (from "Sip and Swap"), participated in the *Laufen Gegen Gewalt* run (and not just by running!), and bought raffle tickets to raise that "extra" money for the shelter, much appreciated during the holiday season. Our FAWCO Rep. Christine R. reported that

our contributions to charitable projects goes beyond fundraisers, and includes sewing squares for the FAWCO Friendship Quilt, writing award grants for development and education, and participating in FAWCO conferences.

In the vein of giving, those attending the AGM were asked to vote for one of three short-listed projects nominated for the FAWCO Target Program Health 2020-2022. Brigitte B.-R. introduced the three projects, all located in Africa. The project S.A.F.E. (Safe Alternatives for Female Genital Mutilation Elimination) received the most votes and will be AWCH's nomination. Results of FAWCO-wide voting will be announced in March.

Before moving on to the election of the new officers, the attendees voted to increase membership dues from €39 to €45, effective January 1st, 2021. This modest €6 increase after an interval of seven years will help AWCH continue to serve its members and give them value.

After a round of applause for the 2019 board members, who were each recognized individually by Nomination Chair Holly T., the new slate of officers was presented. All nominees were voted into office and accepted their positions (see below.)

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m. But before going home, AWCH members turned their attention to the results of the Silent Auction, gathering the treasures they had acquired. Thank you to all who participated!

by Carol H.



Photos from Shelly S.

20 NEW AWCH 20 BOARD MEMBERS

I'm very excited for the new board, and I look forward with great pleasure to working with such exceptional women who have already been busy planting the seeds of new ideas for 2020. They are as follows: myself as president, Carol H. as vice-president, Susan B. as treasurer, Sara N. as secretary, Holly T. (remaining) as membership chair, Jordan B.W. as communications chair, Ann G.T. as activities chair, Andrea M. and Jessica M. as events co-chairs, and Christine R. (remaining) as FAWCO

representative. We also have board-appointed positions: Cat C. as webmaster and data-protection officer, Joanna O'M. and Carol H. as Landesfrauenrat representatives, Beatrice K. & Mason Jane M. as *Currents* co—editors, and Charis H. and myself as Hamburger Helpers coordinators. Thank you all for your willingness and dedication to serve our members for the next year.

by Julia R.

A KINDERGARTEN FOR TRIBAL CHILDREN IN RURAL INDIA

Over 265 million children worldwide are not attending school, and 22% of them are of primary-school age (www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment). “A quality education has the power to transform societies in a single generation, provide children with the protection they need from the hazards of poverty, labor exploitation, and disease, and give them the knowledge, skills, and confidence to reach their full potential.”

(Audrey Hepburn)

To help children gain access to public education in rural India, the AWCH applied for a FAWCO Foundation Development Grant for the project “A Kindergarten for Tribal Children in Rural India.” This project, under the direction of the non-governmental organization (NGO) Nandanvan Trust (Integrated Tribal and Watershed Development Programme, ITWDP) was awarded the 2020 AW Surrey Hope through Education grant of \$5000. This grant will finance construction of a kindergarten that will contain a classroom, kitchen, and sanitation facilities. School is free in India but children must first possess a basic foundation in learning skills, habits, and initiative – all made possible through kindergarten.

The Nandanvan Trust has successfully used watershed development (“catching the rain”) in desertified areas of



Maharashtra, India, to replenish groundwater, to increase agricultural production, and to improve the lives of tribal inhabitants, amongst the poorest people of India. To ensure the sustainability of this socio-economic advancement, it is essential that the children, especially the girls, of these communities receive an education. The necessary foundation for future education will be provided, bringing sustainability to new socio-economic growth. The kindergarten will be located in Hazarwadi and will serve its inhabitants as well as two neighboring hamlets with a total of, at present, 48 tribal families and 38 children.

Robert d’Costa, director of the Nandanvan Trust, is our contact, and he has kept us up-to-date. Construction commenced on December 5th, 2019, and the building was almost completed as of February 29th. It has been inspiring to follow the development



Photos from Carol S.

of this project, from the first fleeting idea about a kindergarten at Robert’s presentation of the Open Well Project (also in Hazarwadi, also financed by a foundation grant) at my home in 2018, to the sketch of the government-approved plan, to the excellent grant application that Carol H. wrote, to the announcement of the award in Edinburgh, to the beginning of construction, and now towards the end of it.

We are expecting a visit from Robert sometime this spring and hope you will join us to learn more about this project and the work of Nandanvan. It would be wonderful if AWCH could continue its long relationship with Nandanvan, fundraise for small projects, and find another project that is worthy of a FAWCO Foundation Development Grant.

by Carol S.

AWCH PHILANTHROPIC COLLECTIVE

A Collective is a group that shares a common interest, issue, or objective.

The AWCH Philanthropic Collective is planning for 2020 and is looking for people who share an interest in giving. If you have time, skills or ideas. A little or a lot. It all matters!

Let us know how you would be interested in contributing. Or just let us know to keep you in mind in 2020.

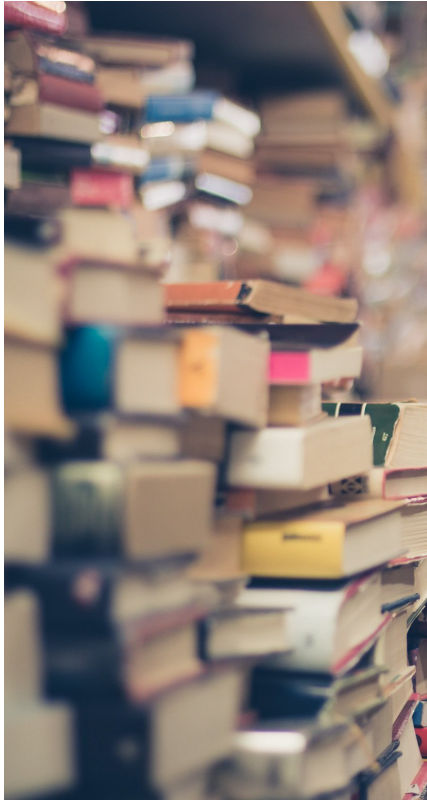
Email me: Christine R. fawcorep@awchamburg.org.

Areas of Interest for Example:

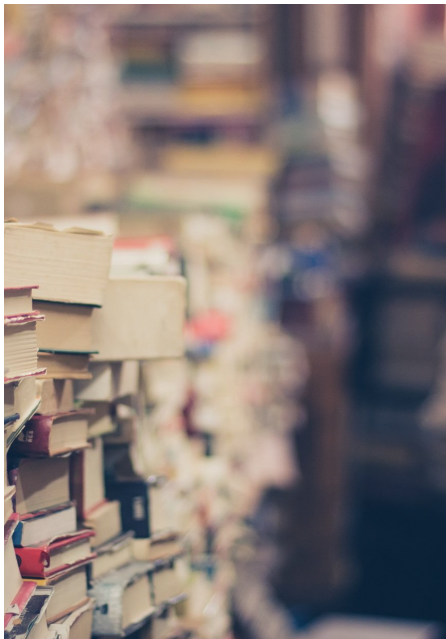
- *FAWCO Target Project
- *Fundraising
- *Community Service Days
- *5th Hamburg Women’s Shelter
- *Environmental Concerns

A Winter Book Exchange

They came like leaves in the wind. At first it was a few bags, then bigger bags, and then boxes of books arrived at my doorstep as though they had finally made it to their destination. Before long even my dog knew that some big event was going to happen inside our house, and he wanted to be a part of it, too.



So there I was, opening bags and boxes, sifting through piles of used books and trying to categorize them by either subject or author or perhaps by the size of the book? It was difficult, because each time I picked up a book, I thought I remembered reading it. It was one of my favorite moments, just unpacking and looking at each cover of the many books. I could feel my own history rising up before me, asking me when I had read this book or where I was then and who I had discussed it with. I also noted how many copies there were of certain books and often, funnily enough, I had read both of them, so I definitely needed to find them good homes.



So I was very excited when the day finally arrived, and many of the members of the AWCH as well as other English-speaking friends came, ate food, laughed and spoke about the many choices that were available for the taking. There were around 45 women and one man who arrived and not only took books home for themselves, friends, and family members, but also made a generous donation of €380 to help fight violence against women. All proceeds were donated to our local charity group, the Frauenhaus. The day started at 11:00 and ended at 11:00 that night, and I was so happy to have Diana S., Jennifer L., and Mary Francis L. to help me throughout the day, as well as to take the leftover books to other charities for donation. The most important experience of the day was the wonderful group of people coming together to share their many experiences in life as they described their love of these many books. Many had wonderful advice on which books to choose, ending in not only a profitable day but a fulfilling one as well.



Photos from Shelly S. and Pixaby

by Shelly S.



Promoting Well Being & Healthy Lives for Women and Girls



SILENT AUCTION

The Silent Auction & Lucky Dip held at our AGM in January 2020 raised funds for the FAWCO Target Project. Thank you to all those who donated items and those of you who bid on those items. We raised over €1800 and this will be added to the money already raised in 2019, for which we were awarded a Quartz Donor medalion. Let's watch our Donor Status rise in 2020.

EXPAT TAX WORKSHOP

One of the benefits of being a FAWCO Member Club is the ability to take advantage of Club Workshops sponsored by FAWCO. In February we did just that and held two workshops on U.S. Expat Taxes. The 32 attendees benefited from Natalie G.'s vast knowledge and experience in U.S. Taxes. Natalie, who comes from the FAWCO club AWA Vienna, is an IRS Certified tax advisor and founder of MyExpat Taxes, the creator of award-winning tax software focused on expat tax challenges and solutions. www.myexpattaxes.com/

A big thank you to Shelly S. for hosting Natalie during her stay in Hamburg!



TARGET PROJECT

The Target Project will be announced mid-March by FAWCO. AWCH will hold its own launch on April 7th, 10:00–13:00, combining it with a Women's Circle. Please join us for this unique opportunity to see where our donations are going! Joining us will be Anna S. and Sophie P. Many of you already know AWCH member Anna, a psychologist and couples' therapist, who has been providing a wonderful Women's Circle series on stress and what that means in our lives. Sophie is a new member and an integrated health coach; she will be providing support to help you feel your best through individualized food and lifestyle changes that meet your unique needs and health goals.

Any questions contact Christine R., fawcorep@awchamburg.org



Photo from Christine R.

The Landesfrauenrat Hamburg (LFR), or Hamburg Women's Council, lobbies for women's political and socioeconomic rights. It is the largest women's alliance in Hamburg representing 60 women's clubs. The AWCH has been a member since 1986.



Women's Voices in Hamburg Politics

A big win for equality in Hamburg!

For many years, the Landesfrauenrat has been advocating for the Hamburg Senate to commit to implementing gender budgeting. Gender budgeting is a tool to ensure that public funds will benefit women and men equally. It is one of five main goals in the LFR's #HamburgJetztGleich program. On December 3, 2019, the Hamburg Senate passed a resolution implementing gender budgeting for Hamburg's entire budget, over 30 billion dollars. The decision came after the city conducted a study that tested the tool in four departments. Gender budgeting is already

in use in Berlin and Freiburg.

With this decision, Hamburg is in line with the United Nations sustainability goals. The U.N. also sees gender budgeting as a powerful tool for promoting true equality for both men and women. Initial changes after such an analysis will likely channel badly needed resources to women and girls, but this tool points out surprising instances of inequality for men as well.

Some see another big win for equality in the results of Hamburg's local elections on February 23rd. Voters have many different motiva-

tions, but it is interesting to note that the two parties with the highest gains were Die Linke and Die Grüne, both of which are expressly parity, i.e., requiring German political parties to have an equal number of male and female candidates. Parity is also a goal in the #HamburgJetztGleich program. Katharina Fegebank of Die Grüne, newly re-elected as Deputy Mayor and Senator for Science, Research, and Equality, has been a big advocate of gender budgeting and a speaker at Landesfrauenrat meetings.

by Joana M.-O.

LFR is Moving!



Many AWCH members are familiar with LFR's office and seminar rooms, tucked away in a courtyard (Sauerberghof) off of Grindelallee in the university quarters. Not only does the board hold their monthly meetings here, but it has been the venue for the Women's Circle, the book club, tax seminars, and many other AWCH events.

But no more. Well, actually yes. They are moving, but only downstairs and to the left. The LFR staff looks forward to welcoming us again (starting mid-March) in

their larger and newly renovated rooms. As we all know, new space often requires new furniture—and thus members of the 2019 and 2020 AWCH Board personally donated money to finance 1 meter of 10 meters of new shelving needed to store LFR's excellent archive of women's literature. We wish them all the best in their new rooms!

by Carol H.

Photo from Carol H.

1 BILLION RISING Revolution 2020 SOLIDARITY

VALENTINE'S

Day of Love for Some,
Day of Pain for Others

What is The Vagina Monologues?

In 1994, a play called "The Vagina Monologues" (TVM), written by playwright and activist Eve Ensler, broke ground, offering to the world a piece of art like nothing it had seen before. After every performance, Ensler found women waiting to share their own stories of survival, leading her to see that The Vagina Monologues could be more than a moving work of art on violence; she divined that the performances could be a mechanism for moving people to act to end violence. *TVM* is made up of various personal monologues, which are adapted each year to current issues affecting women and girls.

What is V-Day?

On Valentine's Day, 1998, Eve, with a group of women in New York City, established V-Day. Set up as a 501(c)(3) and originally staffed by volunteers, the organization's seed money came from a star-studded, sold-out benefit performance at the Hammerstein Ballroom

in New York, a show that raised \$250,000 in a single evening.

V-Day's mission is simple. It demands that violence against women and girls must end. To do this, once a year, in February, Eve allows groups around the world to produce a performance of the play, as well as other works created by V-Day, and use the proceeds for local individual projects and programs that work to end violence against women and girls, often shelters and rape crisis centers.

Attacking the Silence.

The truth is shocking: **ACCORDING TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ONE OF EVERY THREE WOMEN ON THE PLANET WILL BE PHYSICALLY OR SEXUALLY ABUSED IN HER LIFETIME.**

Although sources of violence may seem diverse, women's responses sound tragically similar. Besides the pain and strength you will hear in their survival stories, the themes that resound across cultures and geographies are of the indifference of authorities, the familial instinct of denial, and the lack of

WWW.VDAY.ORG

“PROBABLY THE MOST IMPORTANT PIECE OF POLITICAL THEATER OF THE LAST DECADE.” - THE NEW YORK TIMES

public outrage about the violence that millions of women experience every day.

V-Day was born of the belief that until these themes are addressed, these violations named and taken up by whole communities as an unacceptable desecration of human dignity, the violence will continue.

In eighteen years, the V-Day movement has raised over \$100 million.

What is One Billion Rising?

The LFR has been supporting the ONE BILLION RISING campaign since its inception in 2012. It is the largest mass action to end violence against women in human history. The campaign, which launched on Valentine’s Day 2012, began as a call to action based on the staggering statistic that one in three women on the planet will be beaten or raped during her lifetime. With the world population at seven billion, this adds up to more than ONE BILLION WOMEN AND GIRLS. One Billion Rising grew out of V-Day, a global movement to end violence against women and girls, founded by Eva Ensler. It is now a global, autonomous movement of self-determined activists and local communities, in

which women take to the streets and dance against the pain inflicted on women, adapting the dance and their chants to their unique cultures. This year several AWCH members joined the other LFR club members to demonstrate.

by Julia R. and Carol H.



“We are loud, we are many, we dance and demonstrate against violence against girls and women, and for justice and solidarity.”

— Heike Rubb, 2020 Organizer,
(Mädchentreff) Schanzenviertel e.V.



Photo from Carol H.

The 'V' in V-Day stands for Victory, Valentine, and Vagina.

THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES

BY EVE ENSLER

Produced and Directed by:
Jennifer Lane & Julia Rodriguez-Buis

IT ALL STARTED WITH A WHATSAPP MESSAGE TO JULIA FROM ME

Sun, January 5

"Hey Julia, just a quick question, why aren't you promoting TVM over at AWCH? You are a member, it is about women, and the proceeds go to our selected charity. I noticed it wasn't in the newsletter, which is a pity."

Well, little had I known that she had already started the ball rolling. Julia prepared for the Board Meeting the following week and said lightheartedly in regards to paperwork, budget, location, actresses, etc., "I didn't have much to present to the board, besides my concept".

Once the Board agreed to be "on-board," the logistics of securing a venue was her second challenge. Remember, Julia has only lived in Germany for two years and while she has acclimated quite well, the language barriers, German mannerism, and trying to put on a play reading about VAGINAS was quite an endeavor.

Julia received suggestions on venues and in turn, sent out 15 emails to inquire about space for a "play reading" called The Vagina Monologues. Feeling discouraged after receiving only three replies, I became involved. I related to the struggles of being a foreigner, and the joy of being part of a cause bigger than myself. Mainly, I was inspired by Julia's positive energy and drive. That evening I checked out the location at Centro Sociale, and to my surprise, a space was available on February 14. Now for those of you who

believe in Karma, I was having a moment of feeling "this is supposed to happen." Our first hurdle was behind us, now we only had one month to plan the event where we did not have any actresses, a budget or any means of publicity! This is where magic was made.

Julia posted an "audition notice" on the Girl Gone International Facebook page, and received 10 replies. Next, she emailed "sides" (a portion of one of the monologues) to the actresses and asked them to self-tape their auditions and send them back at the end of the day. It was a typical Hollywood-audition-crunch time scenario. This was exciting for her as she reminisced about sending in her own audition tapes when she was back in LA where sometimes, she had to video auditions from her car! In the end, she cast an amazing group of 11 strong women who were ready to volunteer their time to the global V—Day cause. Important to mention this was only two days after getting the okay for the venue.

The days that followed were a whirlwind consumed with planning rehearsals, organizing the online tickets, and taking care of the financial side. Julia had the idea of posting a private Facebook fundraiser where friends and family from the US generously donated to the cause.

Our insecurities weren't getting the best of us, but after the first week, we had only sold about 15 tickets. We remained positive and thought no matter how many we sold, we were doing it for the greater cause and as a learning experience. One could say, we PER-SISTED. We boosted the heck out of the TVM event by talking to our friends about Vaginas and doing good for others, motivating them on the significance of this piece, and most importantly, talking about how we can help end violence against women and girls worldwide. Two weeks after beginning this journey, Julia and I met at the printers to pick up our flyers on January 27 and unbeknownst to us, TVM SOLD OUT that day!

Julia wore MANY hats for TVM, including that of: Director, Producer, Casting Director, Marketing & Publicity Director, Stage Manager, Sound & Lighting Technician and Green Room Supervisor. And this is the reason I am writing about TVM, but also honoring Women's History Month in March "The Good Fight: What does a rebellious woman mean to you?" Julia Rodriguez-Buis, you are what a rebellious woman means to me. The event was a huge success and we raised over 850€ for the 5. Hamburger Frauenhaus.

SAVE THE DATE for TVM event February 12–14, 2021.

THE WOMEN

Mathilde Berry - Nicole Sanz Crane - Fiona Gordon - Jennifer Lane -
Cece Jabarine-Marshall - Jackie Masei - Sophie Meissner - Heidi Philipson -
Christine Riney - Julia Rodriguez-Buis - Courtney Sherwin - Drashti Vasant



I laughed, I cried, I was moved! What a wonderful performance of an incredibly thought provoking work. Bravo!”

Michelle Pucci

“Thought—provoking, hilarious, moving, priceless!”

Ann Schulz, friend of Jennifer.

“Although the show made me sad for women at times, it also reminded me how happy I am to BE a woman.”

Andrea M.

„A truly beautiful, strong, moving performance by a group of amazing women! If you missed it this year make a note to yourself to watch out for another performance in February 2021!“

Naomi

“It was a touching, but at the same time a delicately funny Production. Although I’ve seen “The Vagina Monologues” twice before, I was so very moved by the great performance of these women.”

Julia Rath

“Emotional, inspiring, wildly entertaining, professional and thought—provoking!!! Very talented ladies and made up happy to have a vagina too!!!”

Emma Bernstein

Articulately written, performed with wit, intelligence and passion. **The Vagina Monologues** has you laughing one minute, then confronts you the next. **A must see for every man and woman. You might just learn something about yourself.”**

Jess

THE GOOD FIGHT:

OUR WOMEN *Rebellious*



1776

Abigail Adams writes to husband and Founding Father John Adams, "remember the ladies and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors"

1869

Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton found National Woman Suffrage Association



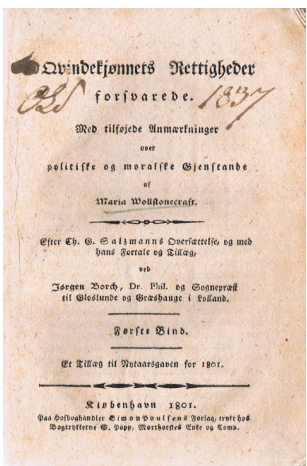
1917

Jeanette Rankin of Montana is elected to Congress as a member of the House of Representatives



1792

Mary Wollstonecraft publishes *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*



1851

Former slave, Sojourner Truth, delivers famous speech "Ain't I a woman?" to the Women's Rights Convention in Ohio



1848

Seneca Falls Convention held in New York. 68 women and 32 men sign the Declaration of Sentiments, which sparks decades of activism

1916

Margaret Sanger opens first birth control clinic in Brooklyn, which is deemed illegal

You Don't Have to Be a Film Buyer on EVERYONE IN THE WORLD

BIRTH CONTROL

MARGARET SANGER

SELLER TO CLEAN UP A QUICK PROFIT ON THIS WILL WANT TO BE IT

SANGER'S MILLION MILLIONS

BIRTH CONTROL

1981

Sandra Day O'Connor swears into the Supreme Court; she serves for 24 years



1932

Amelia Earhart becomes first woman and second pilot to fly solo nonstop across the Atlantic

1972

Title IX signed by President Nixon—"No person...on the basis of sex, should be excluded from participation in...any educational program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance"

2016

Hilary Clinton becomes first female presidential candidate of a large party political party



1920

Ratification of 19th Amendment to U.S. Constitution declaring equal voting rights among all citizens.



1963

JFK signs Equal Pay Act, prohibiting sex-based wage discrimination

2013

U.S. military removes ban against women serving in combat positions

1983

Sally Ride becomes first American woman in space



Photos from Wiki Commons, Flickr, and Unsplash

1955

Rosa Parks refuses to give up seat on a bus. Her arrest kickstarts the Civil Rights Movement



1973

Roe v. Wade. Supreme Court declares the Constitution protects women's legal rights to abortion

“[I]f we revert to history, we shall find that ourselves have neither been the most be

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT, MOTHER OF REBELS

As we celebrate a century of voting rights for American women, there's a natural inclination to reflect on the women who got this particular ball rolling: Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, of the Seneca Falls Convention of 1848, come first to mind. But the first-wave feminists had a revered role model of their own in Mary Wollstonecraft, a British author of the revolutionary *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman: with Strictures on Political and Moral Subjects*; Susan B. Anthony even serialized the book in her suffrage newspaper and hung Wollstonecraft's portrait on her wall. Published in 1792 to some acclaim and much outrage, this brilliant, highly-influential work is as relevant today as it ever was – which is both a testament to Wollstonecraft's enduring vision, and an indictment of how far we still have to go to realize it.

While *Vindication* covers many points, its central thesis was that humanity's greatest gift is the ability to reason, and that women possess it as fully as men do. All women lacked was education. Education reform was, therefore, Wollstonecraft's rallying cry, which put her book in competition with some other popular proposals on the subject. She took special aim at these, none of which called for female equality, and which she was certain would increase female servitude and misery.

I attribute [these problems] to a false system of education, gathered from the books written on this subject by men, who, considering females rather as women than human creatures, have been more anxious to make them alluring mistresses than affectionate wives and rational mothers.

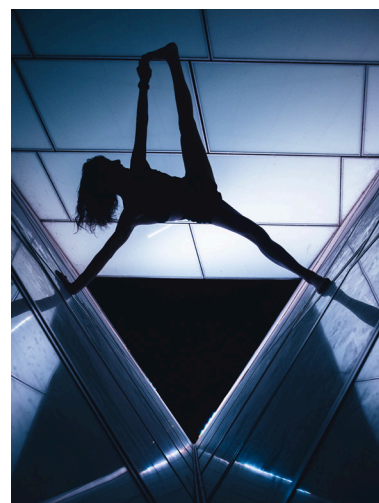
A Vindication of the Rights of Woman came on the heels of another work, *A Vindication of the Rights of Men*, which Wollstonecraft published in 1790. The first work was a furious rebuttal to Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the French Revolution*; Burke felt that in-

herited positions and wealth were the backbone of a strong society. After arguing eloquently that religious and civil liberties were, in fact, men's birthright, Wollstonecraft produced her second *Vindication* to add women to her thesis.

I do not wish them [women] to have power over men; but over themselves.

She also took the thesis further. These were more than rights, she argued: they were duties. Raising girls to be mindless playthings would result in a morally bankrupt society, devoted only to materialism and social posturing. A society based upon reason and justice would have to begin at home, in the structure of the family, and that would entail a profound change in the relationship between men and women. Only a sound upbringing of both the sexes could secure that.

Vindication was popular within liberal intellectual circles, but otherwise its reception was, not surprisingly, very negative. After her death, her well-meaning husband attempted to redeem her image by publishing a memoir that only made matters worse. She became known primarily as the radical who bore an illegitimate child, and when that child grew up and committed suicide, Wollstonecraft's attackers blamed her ideals for poisoning the girl's mind. When her second daughter, Mary, whom she died giving birth to, grew up to elope with Percy Shelley and write the dark and horrifying *Frankenstein*, Wollstonecraft's ideals were again blamed for creating (almost literally!) a monster.



by Mason Jane M.

that the women who have distinguished
beautiful nor the most gentle of their sex.”

#MENTOO I have been watching women fighting for their rights over many years, clear up to the present time culminating in #MeToo. I personally never had a problem or disadvantage because of being a woman. Being female never prevented me from following my goals for education, work, recognition, relationships. I never once suffered any sexual harassment (too ugly?).

Recently the club's film group presented me with an honorary Oscar at the Oscar Party. I was very grateful for their generosity, but also because I had never won an Oscar at any of our annual parties. There I was: holding an Oscar in my hand. That meant I was clutching a naked man around his bare butt and private parts. Oops! Why have men never risen against this sexism via a statue? Do they consider it a reference to Greek sculpture? How would women deal with being a naked statue, being "touched" by men?

This led me to consider the topic of men's rights in general. I come from a family of strong females, including my grandmother, my mother, my sisters, sisters-in-law, daughter, a niece, daughter-in-law, and granddaughters. I always made family decisions, controlled the family money, travelled at will, worked professionally according to my own expectations. All the women in my family have done so, and continue to do so, as well.

The most important men in my life: father, husband, brothers, son, and a nephew, follow the lead of their women, doing whatever is required of them. They work faithfully in their jobs and turn over the money to the head of the family: the woman. My father went to work every day, until he died of exhaustion at age 52 (my mother lived until she was 90). My husband went to work every day, gave me the bank account, and asked me if I was "happy." Now, young men today have ever more responsibility taking care of children. Who takes off a day of work, when the daughter is ill and cannot go to kindergarten? My nephew does, not his wife.

Perhaps now women can use their newly won rights to help men become their equals.

by Becky T.



MATERNITY LEAVE I have been similarly discriminated against by my employer at the time, a Public Notary. This was 60 years ago but it still incenses me. I was 6 months pregnant and my maternity leave was due in 3 months. When I applied for leave my employer flatly refused to pay for maternity leave. Instead I was fired a month later. He told me I could sue him but he would win the case.

His argument: he had been intending to reduce his work load for some time, this was known by his friends and colleagues and was stated in his letter of dismissal. This was 1953, I chickened out and did not offer a "good fight" but it still grates me.

by Heidi K.

Rebellious Women Across Generations

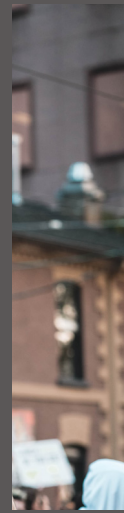
I was raised in New Zealand by a politically aware and politically active mother.

National elections were marked by weeks of volunteering for the Labour party (her father had been a Member of Parliament). I remember the excitement of campaigners gathering in our living room, door-knocking with her on Election Day, and the highs and lows of Election nights.

My mother became more involved in the women's rights movement after my parents divorced and she went back to university. She became a qualified social worker, ran a domestic violence shelter, and was a community organizer for 'Women Against Pornography'.

As a teenager, friends and I would skip out of our inner-city high school to march for women's rights, and to save native forests in the South Island. Protest and left-wing politics were part of my DNA. I vividly remember our first elected female Prime Minister, Helen Clark, representing the Labour party, coming to power in 1999, despite horrific treatment in the media about her looks and voice.

And so, with that background, it felt very challenging when, years later, I found myself raising my children in Singapore. There are many ways to describe the political system in Singapore—whatever it is, is not a democracy with which most are familiar. The government has an authoritarian, paternalistic rule. There are no protests in Singapore. The only concession the government will make is this: an organization can apply for a permit to hold a rally in



one specific park in the city that has a 'Speakers Corner'. If approved, only Singaporean citizens are allowed to attend and ID will be checked. No foreigners allowed. Signboards need to be pre-approved.

One of the largest gatherings every year is 'Pink Dot' —a movement to support LGBTQ+ rights. We had to watch Pink Dot through 'Facebook Live', wearing our pink t-shirts and teaching our children that everyone should have the freedom to love whomever they want. Despite the large support for Pink Dot, same sex relationships are still not recognized by the government.

That was the extent of our protests in Singapore. I felt powerless and even somehow complicit. I ran a women's space and community that had many

non—Singaporean members. I had to make sure my online content and event topics stayed within acceptable boundaries.

In the summer of 2018, we moved to Hamburg and in September I very proudly took my daughter to our first 'Fridays for Future' protest. We marched from St. Pauli downtown, with a handmade signboard. The feeling of walking the streets with my daughter—of sharing this history of protest—brought tears to my eyes for much of the walk, and made me realize what a privilege it was to grow up taking this right for granted.

Now we have German politics, and an extensive history to learn about. We still have the isolation of being non-German citizens and a language barrier that (slowly) grows less over time. We can't vote in elections but we can do our best to stay informed. Compared to Singapore, Hamburg feels awake and full of voices. It feels like a place in which I can teach my daughter to have a voice too.

And in New Zealand, we have another smart, articulate, female Prime Minister from the Labour Party, — Jacinda Ardern, —who will be looking to stay in power come Election Day in September 2020. I've firmly kept a hold of my voting rights, despite almost two decades abroad, and I will be doing all I can to help from here, and teaching my daughter all about it.

by Michaela A.

Friday, January 20th, 2017: the 45th President of the United States is sworn into office and where am I? Sitting in macroeconomics at Loyola University in Baltimore, 45 minutes away from D.C.

Saturday January 21st, 2017: 500,000 women and men gather in D.C. for the largest women's rights demonstration in United States history and where am I? Sitting in my dorm doing my macroeconomics homework.

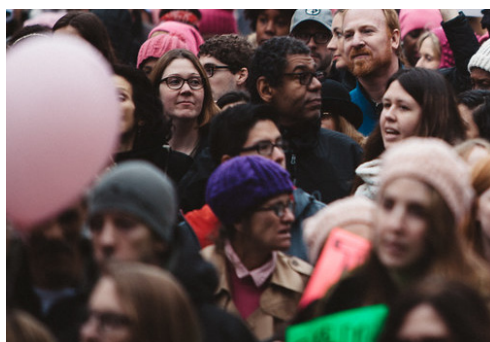
What did I learn from missing these back-to-back historic events? I learned that I still remember both events, and that I recall nothing from that particular macro lecture. Regardless of who was elected or whether I wanted to protest or celebrate, I realize now that I should

have been there, in the moment, taking part in The Good Fight.

When I heard that a third of the Loyola student body were attending the inauguration and The March on

Washington, I thought, "oh, I have homework, and it's too late to buy train tickets," but underneath my excuses lay the real reason: I didn't want to be involved with activism. The Monday after the march,

I saw hundreds of pictures on Facebook of my friends protesting. But they were not just fighting for their rights and scrutinizing the system; they were celebrating. They were celebrating women, supporting all types of causes, and meeting new people who shared



variations of their beliefs. Men and women created amazing and satirical posters on a range of topics concerning women's rights. I was especially drawn to the crafters of the pop-culture posters, who intertwined their comedy with major rights issues.

I realized that going to a march doesn't have to define you as "political," in that being present at a

demonstration automatically labels you as having "these certain views." Instead, anyone can express their beliefs in any way they see fit. Last fall I began attending Fridays for Future and spotted similarities to what occurred in Washington: performances, crying, hugging, and hundreds of "There's no Planet B" posters.

The Good Fight is not over, and it will not be suppressed into silence.

Humans are activists, whether they want to be or not, and there is a small part of each of us that wants to fight for our true beliefs. Moving to Germany gave me a second chance to jump into activism, and I hope women continue The Good Fight for any cause close to their hearts.

by Beatrice K.

Is the Good Fight Over?

Beethoven's LEONORA

H
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E

In September 1939, King George VI of England declared war on Germany: “In this grave hour, perhaps the most fateful in our history, for the second time in the lives of most of us, we are at war.” This pivotal moment was signified by the dark beginning of the second movement from Beethoven’s *Seventh Symphony* as the soundtrack in the Oscar winning film *The King’s Speech*.

On December 25, 1989, the late conductor Leonard Bernstein performed Beethoven’s *Ninth Symphony* in Berlin to help celebrate the historical moment of democracy and freedom after the fall of the Berlin Wall that finally brought East and West Germany together.

Born in Bonn in December 1770 during the German Enlightenment (1650-1800) and having witnessed the French Revolution, Ludwig van Beethoven was famous for artistically incorporating in his music some of the central ideals from both movements, namely liberty and justice, as well as inner human emotions. Therefore, it is little coincidence that some of Beethoven’s highly esteemed compositions are timeless for their political resonance and heroic spirit. In addition to his most recognizable and admired symphonies, Beethoven’s only opera *Fidelio* is also among “one of the supreme cultural expressions of fundamental human values—freedom and opposition to tyranny—that resonate in every society” (Chris PATTON, 2014). **The opera essentially concerns an exceptionally courageous woman up against the abuse of power.**

Based on the libretto by Joseph Sonnleithner, Beethoven completed the music score for *Fidelio* in 1805. The opera’s

basic plot centers on Leonora, who is determined to rescue her husband, a political prisoner held in a dungeon. She disguises herself as a young man named Fidelio to get a job as the jailer’s assistant. When Leonora finally descends into the dungeon, the governor is about to kill her husband.

“STAND BACK!”

LEONORA SHOUTS, PULLS A PISTOL ON HIM AND DEMANDS:

“YOU MUST FIRST PIERCE MY HEART.

I HAVE SWORN THAT YOU SHALL DIE FOR YOUR MURDERING WAY.”

SHOCKED AND BEWILDERED, THE GOVERNOR WONDERS WHETHER HE SHOULD FEAR A WOMAN. LEONORA’S ANSWER IS UNEQUIVOCAL:

“ONE MORE WORD—AND YOU’LL BE DEAD!”

Although operas are mostly enjoyed for their music, characters and plots are integral to this art form. Opera evolved over time not only in the style of its music, but also in the content of its librettos to contemplate, evoke or influence political, social and cultural values of the time. One element in opera, especially in many well-known repertoires from the 18th and 19th centuries, remains however rather constant: female characters are often mistrusted, abandoned, or stabbed, always in the name of love. Needless to say, many more die of a broken heart.

Amid numerous operatic tragedies concluding with female characters fallen silent, voluntarily or by force, it is unique and poignant that Leonora, Beethoven’s heroine, steadfastly holds on to the belief that “True devotion knows no fear, virtue triumphs here over evil”. She takes fate in her own hands, undaunted by danger and tyranny to free her husband. Musically, Beethoven transcends the story into an operatic triumph of prevailing human courage and strength, of liberation from tyranny, of celebration of faithful love. His music amplifies Fidelio’s immense appeal on every human’s aspiration for justice and liberty.

In the introduction* to the *Fidelio* Premiere at Hamburg Staatsoper in January 2018, conductor Kent Nagano pointed out that Mozart’s music is for the heart; but Beethoven, a more complex classical composer, was a philosopher, an idealist. His music was written not for the church or royalty but for the people. Therefore, most often Beethoven’s music contributes significant moral force to important occasions. *Fidelio* was the first opera performed in Berlin in September 1945 right after World War II had ended. In honour of Women’s History Month in March 2020, the year of Beethoven’s 250th anniversary, *Fidelio* is a fitting celebration of his courageous heroine**.

*Many thanks to Becky Tan for her fastidious note taking during the introduction.

**Royal Opera House in London will live stream its new production *Fidelio* in cinemas around the world on March 17, 2020

by WangDi S.
with Elizabeth R.

what does **REBELLIOUS** a WOMAN mean to you?

“This type of woman rebels against the norms or expectations of a society.

A woman needs inner strength and conviction to follow this, perhaps, lonely path. Or perhaps she is at a point of desperation. Traveling this path she will be verbally or physically attacked, and criticized by men as well as women. It is a struggle to be ‘different’. Even if I don’t always agree with women who rebel, for whatever reason, I admire them.”

Susan S.W.

“A woman who chooses to embody and live by her own values and beliefs regardless of her surrounding societal influences.

Jezelle R.

“Someone who slashes through the tight holds of conventional society.”

Beatrice K.

“A rebellious woman fights and puts what she values above comfort. She will put herself in uncomfortable positions, even with the people she loves, in order to stand up for what she believes in.”

callie H.

“A rebellious woman is a wild woman; a woman who is not contained by societies constraints, who has ideas and is trying to expand her boundaries to reach a satisfaction of freedom which she desires. She speaks out and does her best to make her voice be heard in the crowd despite all criticism. I believe we all have to claim our wild rebellious woman in order for each of us to stand solid on our ground.”

Shelly S.



THE CLUBS WITH

GET UP & MOVE
PRESENTS

Our Walking Groups



SPRING IS HERE AND THE TIME IS RIGHT TO GET OUT THOSE WALKING OR JOGGING SHOES AND JOIN ONE OF OUR WALKING GROUPS.

Dust off those roller skates, or is bicycle your thing? Maybe you want to start a power—walking group in your area. Contact Christine getup@awchamburg.org with your ideas and let's Get Up & Move!

Poppenbüttel Group walkers head out on Fridays at 10am, heading down to the Alsterwanderweg with their kids and pooches in tow! More details on the AWCH calendar.

Alton Group walks every Friday. No matter the weather, you will find at least a few members taking to the parks around Altona. If the weather is 5+ and clear-ish, you will find a few more! Our WhatsApp Group keeps you in the loop.

Blankenese Group walks every Tuesday, rain or shine! Pups are welcome. When the weather gets warmer, we will walk from Hirschpark to Falkensteiner Ufer through the Treppenviertel. Blankenese Walking Groups mascots are Bear and Pepper.



THIN OUR CLUB

Stitch 'n' Bitch

“2020 SURE LOOKS TO BE ANOTHER EVENTFUL YEAR IN OUR SMALL CRAFTY REALM OF THE AWCH.”

Our Stitch 'n' Bitch group has been especially busy these past 6 months finishing many beautiful handmade projects, contributing to the FAWCO Friendship Quilt, and donating many more heart pillows and drainage bottle bags to aid in breast cancer patients recovery. And 2020 looks sure to be another eventful year in our small crafty realm of the AWCH.

Early in 2019, we found a permanent meeting room with full kitchen facilities at the Joshua Gemeinde church in Altona. Each member pays 3 per session she attends, which goes directly to the church. Considering the cost to rent a space this size, this is an extremely small price to pay and has not discouraged our members from attending. On the contrary, the number of members attending Stitch 'n' Bitch every other Tuesday has actually increased, and we are thrilled to have many new faces joining us in the last 12

months! We now have the room to accommodate a larger group and those who have animal allergies.

In October, the From the Heart Pillow Project held a working bee for the first time at the church and we produced over 50 pillows and close to 60 drainage bottle bags. An amazing effort by all who offered their time. These were promptly donated to the ever-grateful Helios Mariahilf hospital in Harburg.

Shortly before Christmas SnB moved temporarily to Studio 42 in Altona, due to renovations at the church. This arrangement will continue for the time being, until we are able to survey what awaits us at the church after renovations are complete. A big thanks to Shelley G. for welcoming us to her Studio every other Tuesday.

Our plans for the first half of 2020 are to continue to meet in a friendly *Runde* and share our

crafting hobbies, plates of nibbles, and wine. We are all looking forward to another wonderful year of making and creating together, while we eat, laugh, and support each other through all the trials and tribulations of living abroad.

We are open to all members and encourage any of you who would like to join us for one day, or on a regular basis to come see what it's all about! Don't think you're crafty? Why not come learn a new craft from one of the many talented regulars or simply bring a project you need time and space to complete? This could include making a photo book on your laptop, a recipe folder or some cathartic colouring in. You won't find any judgement here.

by Tracy M. and Jess M.

Hamburger Helpers

The Hamburger Helpers in Blankenese have started the year on a positive note with our walking group. We have also initiated a birthday list for the newsletter every two weeks and sent out a birthday wish to congratulate members on their special day.

by Charis H.

OPERA Club



Photo from Elizabeth R.

BACKSTAGE EXPERIENCES AT A GUIDED TOUR OF



Foto von Hamburgische Staatsoper, Zuschauerraum Bühne von Niklas Marc Heinecke

THE STAATSOPER HAMBURG

After having spent many lovely evenings sitting in the plush red velvet seats of the Staatsoper Hamburg, it was high time for the Opera Club to finally take a look behind the scenes. Our recent group outing to a Guided Tour of the Staatsoper provided us with a most intriguing insider view of this wonderful theater.

Our guide, a lawyer for the opera who got bitten by the theater bug at a very early stage of her career, provided us with a most interesting point of view

as she proved to be the ideal bridge between the performers and the organization's structural background. She led us into the familiar audience area and then up onto the stage as technicians juggled sets, raised and lowered platforms, and constructed background scenery; meanwhile the orchestra pit was shifted up and down until it got to just the right position. These are certainly perspectives that one does not see every day at the opera house.

We also explored the labyrinthine structure of the rooms, workshops, and offices under, over, and behind the opera, an experience which left most of us spatially disoriented, but consistently fascinated. Our overview of the workings of the theater included a visit to the wig department and prop room, along with glimpses of the ballet practice room and much more. The details of this highly structured environment left us with no doubt as to the



Photo from Michael Behrens from Flickr

extreme creativity and dedication, not to mention organization, that go into producing each and every opera and ballet we have the privilege of experiencing at the Staatsoper.

Our group's next visit to the opera house will be at a performance of Bellini's "Norma," as we finish out our first project of 2020. After our peek backstage at the Sta-

atsoper's props and preparations, this next outing should be a richer experience than ever. We are grateful to have had this opportunity for the backstage tour and highly recommend it to all Hamburg fans of opera, ballet, and theater.

by Elizabeth R.

Mahjong

A WALL OF TILES CAN BE FUN!

When I was in third grade, one of my girlfriends invited us over to play a game. I didn't know the game but was curious to check it out. The game comes from a far-away place that sounded exotic to someone living in the middle of America. Mahjong originated in China and the oldest written record of the game dates back to the 1880's; although it is said to be far older than that. But since then, it has spread out across the borders of many countries and has become so popular that people have made their own rules depending on where the players are. There is a Japanese, a Hong Kong, and even a New York style. What I remember

from my childhood was the four of us making walls with beautiful tile pieces containing different patterns. I mostly remember beautiful flowers, birds, and dragons but not much else.

It is not surprising that our own AWCH had two groups emerge, each with it's own style of Mahjong. One is Japanese Mahjong which members can play at Ulrike's house

every Wednesday. The other is a Hong Kong style Mahjong, which is coordinated by Stella K. and meets once a month in the evening at different member's house, and alongside it, is a potluck dinner. Please contact Stella K. if you are interested. For a new adventure into meeting more people in our club and doing something a little different, come join us for a couple of games of Mahjong. The groups are very patient with newcomers to the game.

(Please look at the AWCH calendar for details as well as the directory for contact information.)

by Shelly S.



Take part in the new AWCH Club **ENVIRONMENTALLY MINDFUL**

We all know we must take action to save our environment. But what does that mean to each of us in our everyday lives and how can we make a difference?

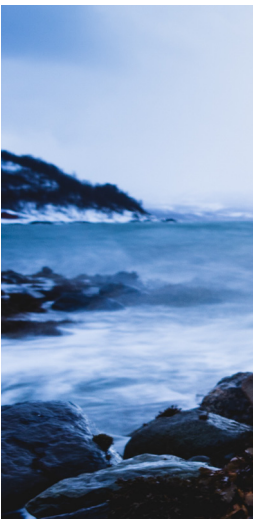
The new AWCH Environmentally Mindful team was created to help answer these questions. The team will produce Guidelines for the AWCH to use during our ventures, organize events, suggest actions that we can take in our daily lives, and help us all understand how we can make a difference as individuals, and as an AWCH community.

Do you have any sustainable living ideas you'd like to share? Email your Environmentally Mindful Team at environment@awchamburg.org.

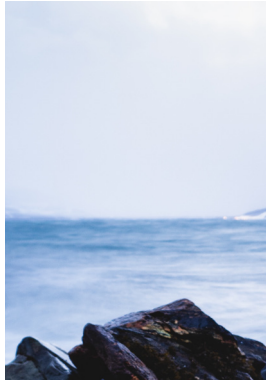
2020: THE YEAR THAT COUNTS

In 2020, world leaders will come together during key global conferences and forums to set the environmental agenda for the next decade and beyond. Crucial political decisions will be made on climate action, nature, and sustainable development—decisions that will directly affect the fate of humanity and our planet for years to come.

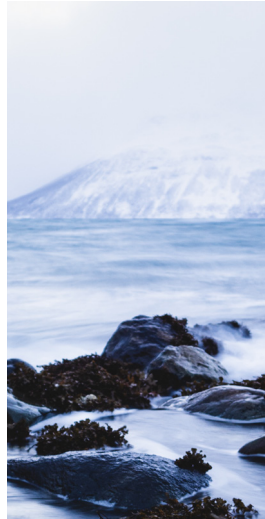
WHAT ENVIRONMENTALLY MINDFUL MEANS TO OUR TEAM



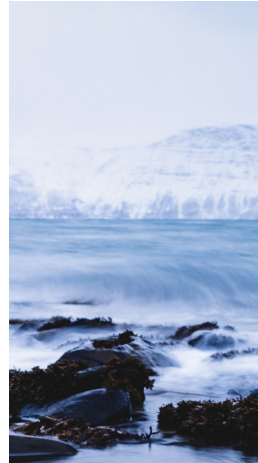
Taking an active part in my daily decisions and understanding how they impact the environment. Being mindful means you can be fully aware of your actions and take steps to change your behavior in a way that is positive for you and our world."
- **Christine R.**



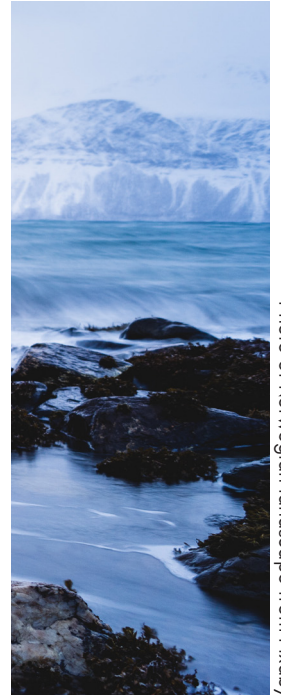
"We and our environment are co-dependent to be mutually beneficial. To be environmentally mindful for me means to be aware of the impact of my personal choices on the environment, and share my learning and experiences in this area with the members of AWCH."
- **WangDi S.**



"I believe we need to be environmentally mindful to challenge ourselves and those around us in taking that extra step to just 'do the right thing'. There are so many small things we can do to have a cleaner, greener impact on our home, community and city. Let's be the leaders!"
- **Shanan R.**



"Strive for change and remain mindful. Together, we will create a bright future for ourselves and our planet. Reducing our waste and incorporating sustainable practices into our daily lives will help keep our oceans blue and our icebergs frozen."
- **Beatrice K.**



"I believe that being environmentally mindful helps us feel connected to our own behavior, and understand the impact we all have on the environment and the future of our planet."
- **Julia R-B**

Photo of Norwegian landscape from Pixdby

UPCOMING ACTIONS:

EARTH HOUR



Started by WWF

and partners as a symbolic lights-out event in Sydney in 2007, Earth Hour is now one of the world's largest grassroots movements for the environment and engages millions of people in more than 180 countries and territories, to switch off their lights to show support for our planet.

Today, Earth Hour aims to spark global conversations on protecting nature not only to combat the climate crisis, but to ensure our own health, happiness, prosperity and even survival.

SATURDAY MARCH 28



What you can do:

Switch off your lights for an HOUR!

Make your voice heard and sign the "Voice for the Planet" pledge. The Voice petition will be presented during key global conferences in 2020. Live more sustainably: change what you eat and buy, change to clean energy, ask the business you buy from to change, explore and restore Nature locally.

20:30–21:30



With your support,

we can speak up and show world leaders and other decision-makers around the globe that nature matters and urgent action must be taken to reverse nature loss.

Measure your impact: What's your ecological footprint? Find out here: www.footprintcalculator.org

EARTH DAY

Earth Day was a unified response to an environment in crisis — oil spills, smog, rivers so polluted they literally caught fire. On April 22, 1970, 20 million Americans took to the streets, college campuses and hundreds of cities to protest environmental ignorance and demand a new way forward for our planet.

The first Earth Day launched a wave of action, including the passage of landmark environmental laws in the United States. The Clean Air, Clean Water and Endangered Species Acts were created in response to the first Earth Day, as well as the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Many countries soon adopted similar laws.

Earth Day continues to hold major international significance: In 2016, the United Nations chose Earth Day as the day when the historic Paris Agreement on climate change was signed into force.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22

What can I do for Earth Day?

The world needs YOU—and YOUR ACTIONS—for Earth Day 2020. There's so much YOU can do to help protect and restore OUR planet. Our planet has taken care of us for more than 200,000 years. Are YOU willing to take care of the planet for the next 30 days?

A 30-Day Challenge

of simple things you can do to create a more sustainable future for our planet. www.tinyurl.com/wz3ysry. Encourage your friends, family & colleagues to join you in the Challenge!

EARTHDAY.ORG

Local Cleanups

Look out for your Hamburg Helpers messages about Raumnt Auf Hamburg. A clean up of Hamburg is from March 20–29th www.hamburg-raeumt-auf.de

Join your local clean up team!



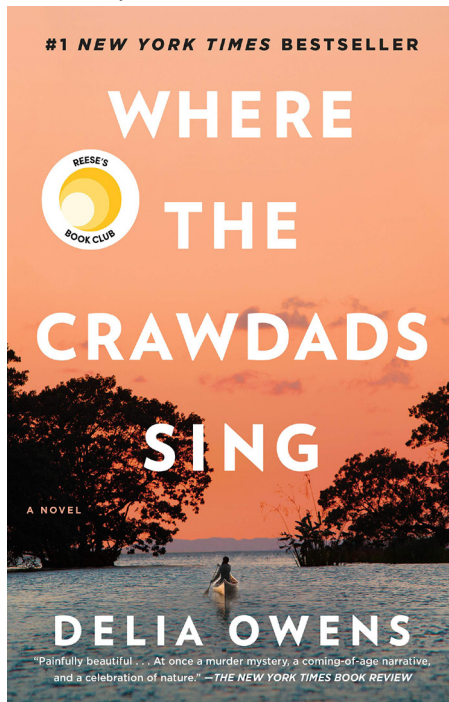
BOOK REVIEWS

from our
Book Club

Where the Crawdads Sing

Written by Delia Owens

Reviewed by Tine H.



The Book Club decided to read *Where the Crawdads Sing*, first published in 2018 which has proved to be quite a phenomenon among book buyers. It has remained high on the bestseller lists and as of January 2020 it still tops the NYT bestseller list (so far 71 weeks on the list!). Reese Witherspoon has secured the film rights. So—we wanted to get on board and see what all the fuss is about.

The story is a murder mystery set in two time zones - the trial in the late 1960s, and all that happened previously leading up to the trial. The story begins in the early 1950s in a fictional North Carolina coastal town where

young Kya lives with her dysfunctional family in the marsh. The elder siblings, and also the mother, leave and young Kya is left with her deeply alcoholic father—until he also disappears.

Kya learns at a very early age to fend for herself, and life in the marsh is all she knows. She has limited contact with the surrounding world, but does have a few friends in the nearby town. Fast forward, and Kya is a stunning young woman, still living by herself in the marsh, and with not one but two love interests, one of whom is murdered.

Author Delia Owens is a zoologist and uses great detail to describe the marsh and the animal life in it. As we discussed the book and our impressions, it was soon clear that most of us found this coming of age-book almost trivial, to a point where the characters and plot were implausible. In addition, we found the prose somewhat lacking, except the descriptions of the marsh. We are a tough group to please, and with a biologist among us, it was pointed out that there were some inaccuracies in those descriptions as well. But we mostly all agreed that we were happy to have read the book so that we could chime in with our opinions together with millions of other readers.

"Maybe a book for young teenagers...? The premise is unrealistic, and the prose is at times unbearable."

- Tine Hestbaek

"*Where the Crawdads Sing* is an easy read romantic mystery that may leave you wishing for more depth on the romance and the mystery."

- Anne-Marie Suriano

"Where the book lacks in plot 'believability', it makes up for in it's accurate description of the coastal Carolinas!"

- Pafget Lütgerath

Next Book Club Meeting:

Wed. April 15, 19:00

No Visible Bruises: What We Don't Know about Domestic Violence Can Kill Us

by Rachel Louise Snyder

A Long Petal of the Sea

Written by Isabel Allende

Reviewed by Michaela Anchrn

Our February Book Club selection was *A Long Petal of the Sea*, the latest release from acclaimed Chilean author Isabel Allende.

The novel is an epic tale that follows two characters, Victor and Roser, as they flee the Spanish Civil War and travel as refugees to Chile, to start a new life. Allende based the story on historical events narrated to her by family, and by a real-life Victor. The novel is a move away from the magical realism style she is more known for, and sits firmly in the realm of historical fiction, covering political events in Europe and South America from 1939 till 1994. Within this context she tells a story of love and commitment, survival, war, and politics.

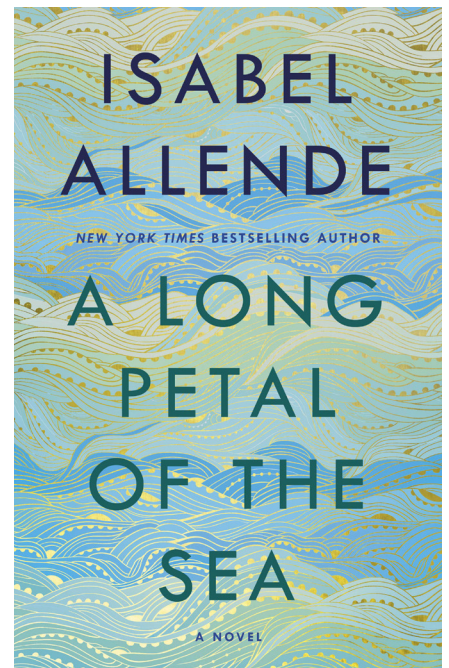
Our Book Club unanimously liked the novel, though some more than others. We all enjoyed learning more about the Spanish Civil War and refugee movement across the French border, as well

as the depiction of the stratified society and volatile politics of Chile.

Allende stutters at times with her magnificent story telling—in trying to tell such an epic saga and cover so many years she is forced to fast forward and summarize at times. These parts can feel frustrating to the reader, next to the more finely detailed and engrossing scenes, and left some of us wanting a bigger book so we could get more of the detail, especially of the later decades.

There is a tidiness to Allende's story telling – all loose ends are tucked away eventually – that could be taken as too tidy, too trite at the end. But this is Allende's style, she is a storyteller, and we can feel her warmth towards her characters all the way to the end.

The story felt particularly pertinent (and perhaps purposely so) in the way it depicted the richness that immigration can add to a country, and I think we all, as expatriates, immigrants or part of cross-cultural families, could empathize with the characters' yearnings for 'home', particularly well.



"I loved the homage to the poetry of Pablo Neruda from the title describing Chile to the lines beautifully introducing each chapter."

- Carol Strametz

"The characters' lives highlighted that we as humans have an enormous capacity to adapt and grow, depending on the situation that we find ourselves."

- Christine Riney





David Hockney, *A Closer Grand Canyon*, 1998, oil on canvas, 205.5 x 744.2 cm, Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebaek, Denmark. Exhibition view photo by Ulrich Perrey

Whether an act of *Torschlusspanik* or the inauguration of a new era of cultural co-operation, a show organized with London's Tate Museum opened on Brexit Day, Jan. 31, at the Bucerius Kunst Forum: the first major exhibition in Germany of the work of David Hockney. Currently the second most expensive living painter in the world, Hockney is, next to Banksy, probably the most famous contemporary British artist.

Spanning 60 years of the artist's work, the show is arranged chronologically. However, it begins with a premiere of the Tate's most recent acquisition. A gift to the museum from the artist, *In the Studio, December 2017* is a stock-taking response to the large retrospective of Hockney's life's work at the Tate in 2017, as well as to a mammoth Taschen coffee table book on Hockney's art from 2016. The latter, so large that it comes with its own colorful Hockney table, appears in the foreground of the picture and can be ordered in the Bucerius shop for €2500. The monumental "photographic drawing" of Hockney standing in his Los Angeles studio was created by "digitally stitching" together 3000 manipulated photos. It is a good example of Hock-

ney's ever-creative "painting" with the aid of mechanical devices, for example, lithographs created with xerox and fax technology. Hockney's innovative iPad and iPhone paintings unfortunately are not part of this show.

The multiple perspectives, along with the shaped canvases depicted on the studio walls reflect Hockney's efforts since the 1980s to develop new ways of making his viewers feel as if they were exploring a flat painted scene in 3-dimensions with the pictorial space seeming to extend out and encompass them. A large section of the exhibition is devoted to Hockney's exuberant but somewhat academic experimentation with this "moving focus" in large lithographs, a room-divider screen, and the monumental *A Closer Grand Canyon* of 1998—a composite of multiple painted views in blazing reds, yellows and pinks unfolds to give the viewer a sense of teetering at the edge of the "world's

biggest hole" in Hockney's words.

Influenced by Picasso's Cubism in this pursuit, Hockney's art became as abstract as it will ever be. It is his astute combination of figuration and abstraction, however, for which the classically trained painter is best known. Much of his work reflects the experience of being gay in the 20th century, beginning with images like *Doll Boy* of 1960/61 from the Hamburg Kunsthalle, where the painter evokes the oozing walls and coded graffiti in London Underground toilets or "tea rooms" where—at the time still illegal—homosexual encounters took place. His *Rake's Progress* etching cycle based on Hogarth, humorously records the artist's initial bedazzlement and subsequent slide to debauchery in 1961 on his first trip to New York. Lured next to Los Angeles by its flourishing gay community, Hockney created iconic images of the city's "sexy culture, vibrant sunshine, modernist buildings and many pools." He portrayed pop culture literati, to which he himself belonged, on huge canvases that placed the viewer in a triangular relationship with the work. We are lucky to be able to see an extraordinary one of these now in Hamburg—the marriage portrait of *Mr. and Mrs. Clark and Percy*, 1970–71 is the most popular work at the Tate and almost never loaned to other museums.

by Holly T.



DEICHTORHALLEN EXHIBITS *QUADRO AND NOW! PAINTING IN GERMANY TODAY*

www.deichtorhallen.de/ausstellungen

Exhibition: Now until May 17

The Deichtorhallen were jammed on a rainy night at the recent opening of new exhibits on contemporary German painting. Dr. Dirk Luckow, general director of Deichtorhallen Hamburg and curator of the exhibits, welcomed visitors to explore the exhibitions *Now! Painting in Germany Today* and *Quadro*, both of which run until May 17.

The Deichtorhallen (Hall for Contemporary Art) exhibits major contemporary art and photography projects. Each is conceived in collaboration with the artists and is often in itself a spectacular total work of art. With around 3,800 square meters of space, the Hall for Contempo-

rary Art offers the largest single exhibition space for contemporary art in Europe.

Now! Painting In Germany Today is a collaboration with art museums in Bonn, Wiesbaden and Chemnitz that endeavors to determine the current status of the medium of painting. The exhibit consists of 150 works by nearly 200 artists in a cross-section of works produced in Germany by young artists who the museums see as the next generation of important painters. The first of its kind since German reunification, this exhibition seeks to provide as comprehensive an overview as possible of contemporary painting in Germany. As it does, it examines the relevance of the genre.

Concurrent with but independent of *Now! Painting in Germany Today*, the Deichtorhallen present the *QUADRO* project. Featuring works by women painters Kerstin Brätsch, Kati Heck, Stefanie Heinze and Laura Link, the exhi-

bition may be read as a response to the Deichtorhallen's previous show *The Early Years of the Old Masters*, which featured works created early in the careers of titans Georg Baselitz, Anselm Kiefer, Sigmar Polke and Gerhard Richter. These men's contributions to post-war German painting can now be compared with the work of contemporary women painters. The *QUADRO* women's paintings feature striking figurative, neo-surrealist and experimental images that encourage viewers to consider the formulas and symbols that artists are using in 2020.

by Brenda B.



Ina Gerken, *Untitled (After Laugther)*, 2019. Acryl und Japanpapier auf Polyesterleinwand. 180 x 150 cm. Courtesy der Künstlerin. Foto: A. R.

IN THE SHADOW OF VENUS AT MUSEUM AM ROTHERBAUM

markk-hamburg.de/in-the-shadow-of-venus

Exhibition: Now until June 28



Lisa Reihana, detail in *Pursuit of Venus [infected]*, 2015–17, Ultra HD video, colour, 7.1 sound, 64 min. Image courtesy of the artist and New Zealand at Venice. With support of Creative New Zealand and NZ at Venice Patrons and Partners.

The Aotearoa / New Zealand artist Lisa Reihana has quickly risen to becoming a star in the international art scene. Her work focuses on the impact of colonialism in the Pacific, challenging us with her new works by looking closer at the past, evaluating it with a new perspective. This work is in the form of an incredibly large contemporary art video depicting scenes of a colonial history of the Pacific region, integrating historical facts with a new twist. Having taken 11 years to complete, it is on a highly technical level with a 64—minute Ultra HD video. The projection of *in Pursuit of Venus (infected)* is 2.5 meters high and over 10 meters long, with 1,500 digital layers consisting of more than 3 trillion pixels.

work, in 2014 she received an Arts Laureate Award from the Arts Foundation of New Zealand. In 2016, she was nominated for the biennial Walters Prize for *in Pursuit of Venus (infected)* and represented New Zealand in the 2017 Venice Biennale. Her artwork has been exhibited in museums around the world, and now in Hamburg until June 28.

This video instillation represents a communication between Europeans and indigenous peoples of Oceania. Past misinterpretation and exploitation are confronted, challenging the viewer to want to understand what is happening in these scenes. Reihana's discovery of original French wallpaper, depicting three

As a non-technical person, I was in awe of her work. Many of the actors in this project were people she met along the way. One of the most interesting aspects was how people became involved in the project, reflecting today's cultural communities. Recognized for many years for her

expeditions to the area between 1768 and 1779, covered dining room walls across Europe and America, and this sparked her imagination. She wanted to give the colonial period new definition.

Alongside her installation are art objects collected from a German expedition from the early 1900s. Many objects represented were used by women, such as for weaving or jewelry. Other pieces on display are carved wooden figurines that were incorrectly labelled for over a century. These misinterpreted objects are now correctly described, including their importance to the community at the time. I was surprised to find out that Germany's colonial history in Oceania had a larger impact than previously acknowledged. Germany possessed the largest amount of Oceania artifacts in Europe, possibly due to its control over the regions of Samoa, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Palau, The Federal States of Micronesia, Nauru, the Marshall Islands and the Mariana islands until the end of WW1. This exhibition is in Hamburg only through June 28; I encourage you to go. It is definitely worth a visit to MARKK!

by Shelly S.



Anne Collier (1970), *Woman Crying (Comic)*, #8, 2019, C-print, 126 x 150 cm, Courtesy of the artist, Anton Kern Gallery, New York; Galerie Neu, Berlin; Gladstone Gallery, Brussels; and The Modern Institute / Toby Webster Ltd., Glaslow

The exhibition *Trauern von Verlust und Veränderung (Mourning—on Loss and Change)* confronts the way we experience loss, how we grieve and the way it affects each of us. The diversity of the topic and the way it is dealt with is reflected through contemporary international artworks over two floors at the Hamburg Kunsthalle. *Trauern* is the third exhibition to deal with taboo and borderline issues, and was curated by Dr Brigitte Koelle.

A collaboration of 30 international artists from 15 countries present their cultural, social and political approaches on the topic of mourning, loss, and change. Every depiction varies, as does the medium used: paintings, illustration, sculptures, videos, photographs, installations, slide projections, and sound.

MOURNING—ON LOSS AND CHANGE

www.hamburger-kunsthalle.de/mourning

Exhibition: Now until June 14

The exhibition ranges from the miniature coffins of Kud-joe Affutu from Ghana, to Andy Warhol's iconic portrait "Jackie" (1964). The Japanese artist Seiichi Furuya expresses the loss he had experienced after his wife's suicide with a swan song about the social and political structure of the GDR. For the first time in Germany, the serious yet poetic written works of Helen Cammock are exhibited; Cammock was awarded the Turner Prize in 2019. The artist Khaled Barakeh's series of altered photographs from the Syrian war shows a mourner holding a lifeless body on his knees.

"We are not only showing here how diverse the representation of grief can be," says Koelle. Mourning is also a very political question; after all, there is a hierarchy of mourning; "[For whom] are we mourning? And for whom not? There is always a valuation in that!" She references the lack of compassion for the first AIDS victims in the early 1980s. "How were homosexuals mourned when the AIDS epidemic started and nobody really knew what it was?"

by Jennifer L.

Dying to see an exhibition? But feeling constrained by your little one? No need to miss the shows everyone is talking about. Check out these regularly occurring weekday morning museum tours in German:

Hamburger Kunsthalle

Vater Mutter Kunst—tours in German for parents with babies

Generally on first Tuesday of the month from 11am—12pm

Cost: 13€ for admission and tour

Next dates: April 7: Tour of Mourning: On Loss and Change and May 12 Tour of Max Beckmann: feminine-masculine

Bucerius Kunstforum

Mit Kunst und Kegel—tours in German for parents with babies

Every other Thursday of the month from 10-11am

Next dates: March 19, April 2, April 16, May 7: Tour of David Hockney: Works from the Tate Collection

Baby Concert

Sunday, March 15, 11-11:45am

Kultur Palast Hamburg, Kronensaal

Cost: Adults 17€ or 30€ for two, babies and kids free

Tickets: babykonzert.de/home/hamburg



GOYA, FRAGONARD, TIEPLO: THE FREEDOM OF IMAGINATION

www.hamburger-kunsthalle.de/goya

Exhibition: Now until April 13

As the ambitious grand finale of the shows and events marking its 150th anniversary, the Hamburger Kunsthalle is focusing on the work of three artists whose lives span the 18th century and whose works exemplify the artistic transformation accompanying the era of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution. Loans from major institutions including the Prado, the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam and the London National Gallery complement the Kunsthalle's own fine holdings of these artists.

Actually, four artists are featured in the exhibition. Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo (1727–1804) apprenticed to and later often worked with his father, the Venetian painter Giovanni Battista Tiepolo (1696–1770), for example on the latter's large-scale decorative projects like the stairwell of the Würzburg Palace or the Royal Palace in Madrid. These two, along with the French painter, Jean Honoré Fragonard, are great masters of the Rococo period. An oil sketch of the *Triumph of Hercules* (1760–62) for an



Francisco de Goya y Lucientes (1746–1828), Detail, Portrait of Asensio Julià, ca. 1798, oil on canvas, 54,5 x 41 cm, © Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid

illusionistic ceiling painting for the court in St. Petersburg by G.D. Tiepolo or a *Birth of Venus* (1753–55) by Fragonard confirms the prevailing image of the Rococo as being all about delicate pastel coloring and half-naked lovers or gods and goddesses exuberantly swirling in fluffy clouds. Other images of theater performances, amorous picnics and surprised lovers in the exhibition belong to the lighthearted themes which typified the Rococo. These smaller pictures attest to a change in patronage. Fragonard was one of the first artists in France to forego princely or church commissions in favor of selling to wealthy middle-class collectors.

Fragonard conceived his lusty scenes or images of fecund, affectionate rural families in admonishment to the prudery and regimented child-rearing of the wealthy. But it is the considerably younger Francisco José Goya y Lucientes (1746–1826) whose art became more explicitly critical of the morals and behavior of his compatriots toward the end of the century. Oblivious to the beautiful countryside around them, Goya's well-dressed but red-faced picnickers jostle for more wine while their friends retch and sprawl drunkenly around them. In a painting from the Prado, Goya depicts tobacco guards, apparently stuffing bribed goods under their clothing, in the swaggering guise of the smugglers they are supposed to

be thwarting. Goya returned to this and other themes of corruption and avarice as well as the deception, ignorance, and hypocrisy of his fellow man and the church in his etching series *Los caprichos* (1797–99), a sharply satirical version of the Rococo caprice. His grim etched "emphatic caprices", *Los desastres de la guerra* (*The Disasters of War*) (1810–20), based on firsthand witnessing of the atrocities of the Napoleonic wars, seem as remote as possible from the lighthearted Rococo.

The *Disastres* confront us with a brutal reality that is hard to reconcile with the English subtitle of the exhibition, "The Freedom of the Imagination" though it clearly applies to the anthropomorphic animals and hybrid creatures that mimic human foibles in *Los Caprichos*. But what links all four artists is that they were imaginative enough to recognize the artistic power of quickly executed preparatory sketches and to use the animated open brushwork and luminous, barely mixed colors of those to create gorgeous finished paintings. Spontaneous preparatory drawing is likewise the source of Tiepolo's beautifully penned caricatures or Fragonard's lovely wash drawings but also of the urgency and directness of Goya's etchings.

by Holly T.

The AWCH Group English Theater

The AWCH English Theater Group gathers monthly to take in and appreciate the talented English-speaking theater production companies Hamburg has to offer. The English Theater Group kicked off 2020 with the *Complete Works of William Shakespeare (abridged)*, put on by the Hamburg Players, the city's oldest English-speaking amateur theater group (founded in 1965). The farcical play loosely featured all 37 of the Bard's plays performed hilariously by only three incredibly talented

performers. In March, the English Theater group will enjoy the classic tale of *Cyrano de Bergerac* (and his nose) pursuing his love Roxane, performed at the West End London (James McAvoy!), but live streamed to the Savoy Theater. Upcoming events will include a backstage tour of the *Lion King* set in May and a showing of *After the Revolution*, performed by the Hamburg Players in June.

by Andrea M. and photo



THE ENGLISH THEATRE OF HAMBURG

WELCOME TO A MOMENTOUSLY REVEALING BIRTHDAY PARTY

Apologia by Alexi Kaye Cambell at the English Theatre of Hamburg

with Paul Glaser directing

ap·o·lo·gi·a (ăp'ə-lō'jē-ə, -jə), noun: a defense or justification of one's beliefs, attitudes, or actions.

[1775–85; < Late Latin < Greek] -thefreedictionary.com

From waiting tables in New York City to over a decade of theater and television roles in London, the Greek born playwright's characters exhibit his experiences. Alexi Kaye Cambell's debut play, *The Pride*, merited the British Olivier award before crossing to New York's Broadway. In *Apologia*, Cambell penned an acutely astute family drama brilliantly performed by the London dramatis personae. Versed in production intricacies as wide-ranging as Shakespeare, musicals, pantomime and comedies, plus film and television, the actors hold audiences spellbound during a momentously revealing birthday dinner.

Not one to mince words, the 1960's rebel Kristin advantageously turned her razor-sharp mind and clever tongue to writing

books, earning prominence. Sequentially, her memoir's publishing coincides with a birthday prompting her to invite her two sons with girlfriends, plus gay friend Hugh for dinner. The elder, dapper Peter arrives early with Trudi—naïve American, cutesy name, and Christian to boot. Enthusiastic yet slightly



Annelise Bianchini (Trudi), and Luke Jenkins (Peter / Simon)



Luke Jenkins (Peter / Simon), and Julia Righton (Kristin)

intimidated, Trudi gushes admiration for Kristin's works and her country kitchen's artsy embellishments, while ignoring Kristin's acerbic quips. Their present, an African mask, sets off a typical Kristin discourse that hurts Trudi's feelings, until Peter's frown curbs mum's tongue; albeit later she criticizes Peter's profession, accusing him of being a "taker." Hugh and Claire's arrival triggers Kristin's next face-off, this time with Claire about her profession. Hugh, her stalwart friend, steps in, particularly during talk about Kristin's acrimonious divorce. He reminisces, "I suppose we just wanted to change the world." Simon texts he's enroute, and dinner conversation more-or-less flows until Trudi compliments Claire's dress. Pleased,



From left: Michael Garland (Hugh), Michelle Fahrenheit (Claire), Luke Jenkins (Peter / Simon), Annelise Bianchini (Trudi), and Julia Righton (Kristin)

showed the thespians documentary clips demonstrating the nonconformist 1960s.

The actors compared portraying Apologia's difficult interpersonal complexities to peeling layers off an onion. Annelise Bianchini's journey as Trudi happens literally overnight when Trudi faces and deals with uncomfortable facts; to portray, Annelise combined thoughtful equipoise with unflinching candor. Whereas Michelle Fahrenheit found Claire flummoxing: "Why the f**k did she come to the party? Why did she stay?" Michelle undertook to understand Claire's contradictory personality, plus incorporate what happens to Claire offstage (e.g., a talk with Simon) into her onstage interpretation. Playing both of Kristin's sons, Luke Jenkins understood Peter's transparent personality, but struggled to understand and then depict Simon's instability. Additionally, Luke must switch characters fast so audiences can grasp the differences between the brothers. One of Michael Garland's challenges was Hugh's lines—many short sentences, with slight changes, delivered in quick succession that if incorrect would affect the overall dialogue's context. A second challenge was joining rehearsals on the third day; having only three weeks, Michael worked overtime catching up. Hugh's insightfulness into Kristin is ballast to the hailstorm of events that unfold. For Julia Righton, portraying Kristin's journey required that she carefully measure out the evening's emotional effect on her character. Content and intolerant, Kristin unmasks herself by doggedly wanting to be right. Julia's intention is to increase audiences' understanding enough to wonder: Is Kristin willing to change?



Michelle Fahrenheit (Claire), Luke Jenkins (Peter / Simon), and Annelise Bianchini (Trudi)

Claire's explanation ignites Kristin's rampant opinions, and lord forbid that anyone disagree. During the heated exchange, Trudi accidentally upsets red wine on Claire's white designer dress; Claire calls Kristen a "dinosaur," and infuriated, Peter demands Kristin justify having children if unprepared "to do the job properly?" Oops! Kristin's purported "memoir" doesn't mention her sons. To what extent it hurt them emerges while mending Simon's hand much later. Mostly monosyllabic, Simon relives a distressing childhood account; belatedly, Kristin is cognizant of parental fault. That is unsettlingly reinforced in the morning when she discovers the African mask's meaning. Can Kristin's resiliency confidently permit change?

Versatile director Paul Glaser wanted to stage Apologia for some time. Recognizing its challenges, Glaser's approach was one of applying continuous fluctuation, beginning with letting actors move spontaneously through their lines during rehearsals. As they familiarized themselves with their characters, shifts occurred, were incorporated, and once grounded so was the action. Ever resourceful, Glaser

The thespians have a great esprit de corps—as if they linked arms, jumped, and now are flying as one with their perceptively interpreted characters. What is worth pondering is why Cambell wrote idealism as a double-edged sword. The catalyst is the memoir, but by the early light of dawn everyone has laid aside his or her mask, however briefly.

APOLOGIA premiered February 13 and runs until April 11, 2020. The next production is OUTSIDE MULLINGAR, a comedy by John Patrick Shanley. Premiering on April 23, it runs through June 20, 2020.

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

by Marinell Haegelin

THE OSCARS PARTY WITH THE FILM GROUP

Monday Morning After—the 92nd Academy Awards in Hamburg

On Monday, February 10th, eleven glamorous members of the Film Group braved a cyclone to attend the annual Oscar party at Nancy T.'s home, continuing a long tradition, conceived by Kirsten Greco almost 20 years ago—the ladies' Super Bowl! As always, the members avoided all media prior to the party in order to ensure that no one knew who the winners would be. "Academy" ballots and were provided and filled out prior to the ceremony and covered all 24 Oscar categories. While we watched the show and scored our ballots, we also played Tracy's Oscar Bingo, which she personalized this year by not just including actions on the screen but also those of our members in order to strike a Bingo.

The awards ceremony itself did not disappoint, with perhaps the biggest surprise coming from *Parasite*, which swept the awards. This included winning both Best Picture and Best Foreign Language Film, a feat which called into question the purpose of separating films into these categories in the future. Some other highlights were the amazing performance of Harriet's "Stand Up" by Cynthia Erivo, Bong Joon Ho's and Joaquin Phoenix's acceptance speeches, and Natalie Portman's embroidered Dior cape with the names of snubbed female directors.

The winners of our private show were many. Jenny won the Bingo game, with Stella as First Runner-Up. The prize for guessing the most correct Oscar predictions, went to our fabulous host Nancy! Anne and Brigitte were close behind her in their guesses and were the second and third Runners-Up, respectively. All three were awarded miniature "Oscars." But the top prize, "Special Honorary Governors Oscar for Extraordinary Lifetime Achievement," went to Becky Tan!

For the third year, a silent auction with items donated by members (including items sent all the way from Seattle by member Karen Pecota) was held, raising a combined amount of \$375 for the operating costs of our group website kincritics.com.

A delicious Governors Ball brunch was provided by the various attendees making for a lovely and filling culinary experience. There were so many homemade delights: Brigitte's apple crumble with vanilla pudding, Ulrike's spicy guacamole with tortilla, Nancy's rolls and gluten free "meat," Stella's fresh cream cheese and a beautiful "Becky cake" with daffodils, Jenny's biscuits, cheese and fruit, Addy's baked goods, Marinell's corn bread, Charis' canapés, and



Anne's treats....

Our annual Oscar party is always a great time for the film group and AWCH members to meet up and bond over our mutual love of film. We look forward to seeing you all next year for the 93rd Academy Awards in Hamburg!

Rose Finlay
and Nancy Tilitz

Becky with her Lifetime Achievement Oscar





The Berlinale 70th International Film Festival



It has been a spectacular year for the Film Group with five members accredited to attend the International Film Festival (Berlinale) in 2020. This year's Berlinale, in particular, is special because it is not only the 70th anniversary of the festival, but also introduces two new directors: Mariette Rissenbeek, serving as the executive director, and Carlo Chatrian, as the artistic director. Several changes took place such as the removal of the popular Culinary Cinema program and the edition of a new competition section entitled "Encounters." Celebrity sight-

ings included Willem Dafoe, Hillary Clinton, and Jeremy Irons, who served as the jury president. Our members Pat F. and Karen S. were accredited for the first time, joining returning members Rose F., Shelly S., and Becky T.. Unfortunately Mary W. was unable to attend the festival this year and was sorely missed. All five are now in the process of compiling their reviews and ratings and other impressions for the publication of the special Berlinale edition of *Currents* magazine.

by Rose Finlay

FILM REVIEWS AND MORE...



Jean Paul Gaultier: Freak and Chic
(Jean Paul Gaultier: Freak & Chic) ****
France 2018
Opening March 19, 2020

Directed by: Yann L'HénoRET
Writing credits: Yann L'HénoRET
Principal actors: Documentary

This runaway fashion show is an extravaganza! Commencing in Connecticut, USA and subsequently during the numerous and variable preproduction stages, **Jean-Paul Gaultier's** voiceover tells his life story while he collaborates with the composer, director, choreographer, dancers, top models, costumer, et al. "Freak & Chic" exceeds expectations; a haute couture fashion show-cum-revue with Paris' famed Folies Bergère its inspiration and setting. Over a two-year plus period, we glide through rehearsals, watch seamstresses during fittings in his workshop, and sit in as ideas are hatched. *Bon!*

Breaking down Gaultier's background into chapters depicted as video vignettes, Jean-Paul's *savoir-faire* is manifested in each episode: grade school otherness; first love; relationship with the Parisian fashion scene—"I'm not in vogue," and move from eccentric to sweet, and provocative to soothing; these will be projected onstage during the revue. We meet working associates **Cristina Cordula, Marion Cotillard,**

Catherine Deneuve, Rossy de Palma, and **Jean Teulé,** to name a few. Jean-Paul acknowledges that work gives his life meaning; he takes in everything around him, wherever he is, to feed his creativity. "He is like a computer," says a colleague. Complimentary to associates, and open to suggestions (e.g., better a dancer perform barefoot than stress his foot during the finale), Jean-Paul laughs often, has a ready smile, and really listens—no wonder everyone says working with him is fun. "He is my angel."

Writer-director **Yann L'HénoRET** has crafted a thematic homage to the acclaimed fashion designer whose *un certain je ne sais quoi* pulsates from the opening scene to the very last credit. **Nile Rodgers** composed the score and the soundtrack, with collaborators of **Diana Ross, David Bowie, Madonna** and **Daft Punk.** **Laurent Lefebvre** superbly edits cinematographer **Yann L'HénoRET's** skillful, diverse range of styles that fit the many venues and situations.

The planning and orchestration are *extraordinaire*: the high-spirited choreography, visionary designs, and exaggerated makeup and costumes herald a cabaret worthy of the legendary Folies Bergère. Even as guests arrive, work continues behind the scenes; then, lights dim and the cabaret explodes onstage before a transfixed audience. Gaultier's creative genius is *une expérience fabuleuse*. Being privy to this insider's view makes it irrelevant whether someone is a fashion enthusiast. *Jean Paul Gaultier: Freak & Chic* is a dip into the past, and the making of an icon. French / German subtitles, 96 minutes (Marinell Haegelin)



Waves ***

Canada/USA 2019
Opening March 19, 2020

Directed by Trey Edward Schults
Writing credits: Trey Edward Schults
Principal actors: Taylor Russell, Kelvin Harrison Jr., Alexa Demie, Bill Wise, David Garelik, Joshua Brockington.

Tyler (**Kelvin Harrison Jr.**) is a successful wrestler with dreams of representing his high school in a state competition. He is good-looking with dyed blond hair, which is unusual for an African American. He and his girlfriend Alexis (**Alexa Demie**) drive around in Tyler's car, always in good spirits. Tyler lives in a comfortable house in Florida with his father Ronald (**Sterling K. Brown**), his stepmother, and his sis-

ter Emily (**Taylor Russell**). They seem to be way above middleclass. Ronald is always pushing the family to higher achievements, saying "we cannot afford the luxury of being average." They are active church goers, where their pastor speaks about "love." Naturally if everything is perfect, the only direction from here is down and that's where the film goes: way down. Tyler injures himself during a wrestling match which puts him out of action and into the family drug cabinet. Alexis announces that she is pregnant and plans to keep the child. At about 70 minutes (into a 135-minute film), Tyler is practically incompetent and sister Emily takes the lead. She is dating a white boy, Luke (**Lucas Hedges**), and they take off from Florida and drive to Missouri. Can things get worse?

This is a basic story about people coping with the ups and downs (waves) of their lives. Director **Trey Edward Schults** says, "*Waves* follows a rhythm like high tide and low tide. I think that in this way, the film is very similar to real life." Perhaps viewers will recognize similar problems, relationships, and outcomes, as well as emotions which also come in waves: sanity, hate, love, crying, laughing, etc. I found that the most powerful waves appear as light or color, as well as waves of music with 32 songs including "What a Difference a Day Makes." No matter your opinion about the plot, for sure the excellent cast of African American actors is definitely worth your attention. (Becky Tan)



Seberg (Jean Seberg – Against All Enemies) ***

UK | USA 2019
Opening March 26, 2020

Directed by: Benedict Andrews
Writing credits: Joe Shrapnel, Anna Waterhouse
Principal actors: Kristen Stewart, Anthony Mackie, Jack O'Connell, Vince Vaughn, Margret Qualley

French director Jean-Luc Godard's landmark and hugely successful film *Breathless* (1960) firmly established him in *Nouvelle Vague*. Similarly, American Jean (Dorothy) Seberg became the movement's face in its starring role, reigniting her floundering career. Five years on, living in Paris with husband Romain Gary (**Yvan Attal**) and son (**Gabriel Sky**), Jean (**Kristen Stewart**) departs to audition for a Hollywood production. It is during this period that **Joe Shrapnel** and **Anna Waterhouse's** screenplay is loosely based, and that Australian **Benedict Andrews** directs.

Enroute to Los Angeles, Jean meets Hakim Jamal (**Anthony Mackie**), a reformed drug addict, cousin to Malcolm X and active in the black power movement. Her agent (**Stephen Root**) tries to dissuade Jean from getting involved. Unbeknownst, Herbert Hoover's Federal Bureau of Investigation has set up a task force to covertly watch Black Panther Party sympathizers. Frank Ellroy (**Colm Meaney**) assigns Carl (**Vince Vaughn**) and Jack (**Jack O'Connell**) to cover Jamal. With Jean's arrival, their boring surveillance juices up; it transpires that "America's sweetheart" supports human-rights issues for blacks. Jean is put under surveillance; Jack's long hours annoy wife Linette (**Margret Qualley**), and their lack of communication concerns her. Weeks pass; Jean's contribution to Hakim's wife Dorothy (**Zazie Beetz**) for the children center they are establishing is sizable. When Jean hosts a money-raising event, Romain meets Hakim; the lurking FBI team salivates when they spot BPP co-founder Booby Seele there. Next, Hoover condescendingly overlooks the increased intimidation toward Jean. "Before you were collateral, now you're in the crosshairs," she is warned. It is only a matter of time before major cracks appear throughout

Jean's life.

Kristen Stewart's first-rate performance, with Anthony Mackie and strong supporting cast, holds audiences' attention, despite the film's flaws. Best summed up as misdirection, four storylines are packed into 96-minutes: the Actress / personal issues, the Good Agent / wife angle, Black civil rights, and Voyeurism, which effectively relegates each a measure of muddling mundanity. Had director Andrews concentrated on the film's direction and, with editor **Pamela Martin**, tightened its focus, *Seberg* had the potential to be far better; **Jed Kurzel**'s music and **Rachel Morrison**'s cinematography is good. Clearly, Jean Seberg's death was mysterious in direct proportion to FBI involvement. Just as, Seberg clearly lived a generation, or two, before her time, "If you can change one mind, you can change the world." (Marinell Haegelin)



NARZISS UND GOLDMUND ***1/2
Germany 2020
Opening March 12, 2020

Directed by: Stefan Ruzowitzky
Writing credits: Stefan Ruzowitzky,
Robert Gold
Principal actors: Jannis Niewöhner,
Sabin Tambrea, André Hennicke, Hen-
riette Confurius, Uwe Ochsenknecht,
Emilia Schüle

Narziss und Goldmund is the film adap-
tation of literature Nobel Prize winner
Hermann Hesse's 1930 bestseller of the

same name. The story of the deeply pious
and studious Narcissus and the turbulent
and fun-loving Goldmund takes place in
the Mariabronn monastery in medieval
Germany. The young Goldmund (**Jan-
nis Niewöhner**) is sent to the monas-
tery by his father. Meister Niklaus (**Uwe
Ochsenknecht**) asks Narzissus (**Sabin
Tambrea**) to take Goldmund under his
wing and to teach him the strict rules of
the monastery. A true and ambigu-
ous friendship develops between the
two, until Goldmund decides to leave
the monastery to search for his mother.
Narzissus decides to devote himself to
the ascetic monastic life, while Gold-
mund, in a journey full of adventures,
gets to try the bittersweet tastes of free-
dom, love and sex. Years later, Narziss-
us and Goldmund meet again.

The choice of actors to interpret these
two opposite destinies is a tribute to
Hermann Hesse's quest for beauty and
his aspiration to reconcile spirituality
and lust, intellect and craftsmanship, aus-
terity and fun. Taking on the challenge
to adapt one of Hesse's novels of initia-
tion, Oscar-winning director Stefan
Ruzowitzky succeeds quite remarkably,
demonstrating the invincible forces of
faith and love. (Brigitte Bernard-Rau)



Harriet (Der Weg In Die Freiheit) **
USA 2019
Opening Germany April 16, 2020

Directed by: **Kasi Lemmons**
Writing credits: **Gregory Allen How-
ard, Kasi Lemmons**
Principal actors: **Cynthia Erivo, Leslie**

Odom Jr., Joe Alwyn, Janelle Monáe
English

The incredible story of Harriet Tubman,
the former slave from Maryland turned
abolitionist, was just waiting to be told
on the big screen.

Unfortunately, what could have been an
unforgettable film ends up falling flat.
Although co-writer and director **Kasi
Lemmons** does her best to capture Tub-
man's tenacity and resilience in the face
of slavery, her long-awaited biopic, *Har-
riet*, feels more Lifetime-worthy than
Oscar®-worthy.

Don't get me wrong. The solid perfor-
mance by English actress and Tony
award-winning **Cynthia Erivo** carries
the 125-minute film with quiet strength.
(It's no surprise she was nominated for
both a Golden Globe® and Oscar®.)
Erivo's acting chops, however, are over-
shadowed by a storyline that focuses
more on Tubman's supposed "other-
worldly" premonitions that repeatedly
save the day, rather than her extraordi-
nary feat of bringing nearly 300 slaves
to freedom—not to mention that she
also served as a Union spy during the
American Civil War.

While **Terence Blanchard**'s musi-
cal score borders on the saccharine,
the supporting cast feels entirely one-
dimensional (most notably Harriet's
coldhearted slave owner, played by the
boyish **Joe Alwyn**). Teeming with good
intentions, *Harriet* does illuminate Tub-
man's harrowing and inspiring journey
but ultimately fails to leave any sort of
lasting impression. (Erin Huebscher)

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