

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

CURRENTS

Spring / Summer 2019 Vol. 35, No. 02

www.awchamburg.org



HEALTH



May Open Board Meeting: The equal signs demonstrate support of the campaign #HamburgJetztGleich (#HamburgGoEqual) launched by the Landesfrauenrat Hamburg to bring equality between women and men in Hamburg, as required in the Basic Law (Art. 3, Para. 2).

President's Message

The AWCH Board has been working hard to find out how we can best serve and communicate with you, all our members, and how we should present ourselves to the public. One of the first steps was the comprehensive survey. At the time of the deadline for *Currents*, we have a representative 30% response. The preliminary analysis shows most are a member of our club because of friendship (79%) and social events (80%). Looking 5–10 years in the future, 78% saw AWCH as a club with a strong network to support overseas American and international expats and 69% as a club that focuses on activities and causes that support the empowerment of women. We feel reassured that the responses reflect the direction that the club has taken in the past years and we will continue to work on a strategy for the best way forward and keep you informed.

AWCH has a long history of working with local charities to give back to the city we live in. Our new charity is the Autonomous 5th Hamburg Women's Shelter, which offers shelter and comprehensive support for women and their children, who have been mentally, physically, and/or sexually abused. Our first donation was clothing from the Sip & Swap evening at Charis H.'s. Our first fundraiser will be Dumpling Making with Weibin K., who has generously offered to donate her expertise, home and time. A major event that all members can support is the annual charity run *Ongoing against Violence (Laufend gegen Gewalt)* on Sunday, August 15. You can participate by running, walking, serving at a stand, donating baked goods, or soliciting donations. Please see the calendar on our website for more information and contact Jennifer L., our coordinator.

Through our umbrella organization FAWCO, AWCH supports global charitable initiatives. See the report on the FAWCO Biennial Conference for the awesome wrap up of the Target Project *Hope Beyond Displacement* (p. 12), to which we have donated \$7975. The AWCH conference delegation was thrilled when our nomination of a *Kindergarten for Tribal Children in Rural India* was awarded a 2019 FAWCO Development

Grant of \$5500 (see photo right). This grant will completely finance the construction of a kindergarten building in the same village where our nominated project the Hazarwadi Open Well was constructed last year.



One of the strengths of AWCH are the groups within the club and their dedicated coordinators. The Book Club is happy to announce its new coordinator, Felicia S., a new member who loves books. A new Theater Group under Andrea M. was launched with two fun evenings of plays. Get Up & Move is a new, diverse group under Christine R., for health and well-being in line with the FAWCO Target Program *Health: Ensuring Healthy Lives and Promoting Well-Being to Improve the Lives of Women and Girls*. All of our groups are open to all members.

Spring has brought a flurry of AWCH activities along with it and you can read about the Farewell Brunch for our Honorary President Kathrin, the Walking Tour of Little Jerusalem, and many more activities in this issue.

We would like to thank all of our amazing volunteers. Have you ever thought about how many hours you've contributed and how much you've benefited from the hours contributed by others over the years? Every act of volunteering is important and it is a great way to make new friends and connect to the club. We try to reach out to and welcome everyone to make our club a community of inspiring women. Helen Keller so aptly stated: "Alone, we can do so little; together we can do so much."

Sincerely,
Carol Strametz
AWCH President

Currents Magazine

© 2019 American Women's Club of Hamburg e.V.
 Postfach 13 04 05, 20104 Hamburg
 Website: <http://www.awchamburg.org>

Bank Information:

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

Editor-in-Chief: Carol Harbers
 Theme Editor: Christine Riney
 Content Editor: Shelly Schoeneshoefer
 Layout Editors: Ulrike Cameron Henn
 Carol Harbers

Spring/Sumer 2019 Contributors: Carola A., Anne Crocker, Thelma Freedman, Adelina Gonzalez, Marinell Haegelin, Carol Harbers, Tine Hestbaek, Ulrike, Lemke, Tracy Moede, Deborah Ockert, Karen O'Shaughnessy, Elizabeth Reifke, Marilyn Richter, Christine Riney, WangDi Schandendorf, Diane Perry Schnelle, Shelly Schoeneshoefer, Anna Sizorina, Susan Stanley-Witt, Rebecca Tan, Nancy Tilitz, Holly Todd, Palvasha v. Hassell, Geysa Wiemann

Photography: Marinell Haegelin (film posters), Carol Harbers, Jess Mancuso, Tracy Moede, Shelly Schoeneshoefer, Carol Strametz, Holly Todd, Jordan Beck Wagner

Front Cover: Photo by Engin Akyurt from Pexels

Proofreaders: Carola A., Carol Battenfeld, Pat Frickey, Adeline Gonzales, Jenny Mather, Birgit Schrupf, Anne Sizorina, Carol Strametz, Becky Tan, Holly Todd, Sheila Zengerly

Webgineer: Cat Conner

The AWCH is not responsible for inconveniences and/or expenses incurred due to misinformation in *Currents*.

All rights reserved.

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

AWCH Board of Directors 2019

President	Carol Strametz pres@awchamburg.org
Vice President	Shelly Schoeneshoefer vpres@awchamburg.org
Treasurer	Tracy Moede treasurer@awchamburg.org
Secretary	Jordan Beck Wagner secretary@awchamburg.org
Membership	Holly Todd membership@awchamburg.org
Activities Chair	Anne-Marie Suriano activities@awchamburg.org
Events Coordinantor	Darja Henschel events@awchamburg.org
FAWCO Rep	Christine Riney fawcorep@awchamburg.org
Currents	Carol Harbers currents-exec@awchamburg.org

Inside this Issue

AWCH and FAWCO News

Farewell Brunch for Kathrin..... 04
 Tour of Historic Grindel..... 06
 Sip and Swap Donation Drive..... 08
 Members Meet Members..... 09
 Cinco de Mayo..... 09
 FAWCO Biennial Conference..... 10
 FAWCO's Target Program Health..... 14

Theme Pages: HEALTH

The World, Women and Health..... 15
 A Common Sense Approach to Good Health..... 16
 Flexitarian=Flexible Vegetarian..... 17
 How East and West Mingle in Nutrition..... 18
 Tracking Good Health..... 19
 Couch to 5K..... 20
 Qi Gong—Hong Kong Style..... 21
 Hiking in Hong Kong..... 21
 Healthy Mind, Healthy Body..... 22
 WHO's Afraid of Dementia..... 23
 Healthy Fashion: Three Pioneers..... 24

AWCH Members and Events

Why Try to Make Relationships Work..... 26
 Film Group Annual Tea..... 27
 The Opera Club Takes Off on a Czech Adventure..... 28
 Contemporary Art Lecture..... 30
 Art Club: *Lange Nacht der Museen*..... 31
 Book Club: Visionary Women, Nuclear Catastrophe, MentalHealth..... 32
 World Leadership Summit..... 34

In Hamburg

Art in the City..... 35
 Theater in Hamburg..... 38
 Film Reviews..... 40



Farewell Brunch for Kathrin

Thirty plus AWCH women attended a farewell brunch on Sunday, May 11, to say "Thank You" and *Auf Wiedersehen* to Kathrin Yoneoka, our Honorary President since Summer 2016. Kathrin originally accepted the position by saying, "While my title is 'honorary', I plan to be very active—bringing people together and having them connect." And in the words of AWCH President Carol Strametz, "It didn't take us long to comprehend the meaning of those words. And it didn't take long for her to win our hearts."

The Farewell Brunch took place at the lovely home of member Sarah T. The sun streaming into the open living and garden area provided the perfect warm, friendly, and modern atmosphere deserving of the special event. Carol S. welcomed Kathrin and the other guests and gave us a short overview of the extremely positive impact Kathrin has had on our club during her three-year stay in Hamburg. As stated in her interview in *Visionary Women*, FAWCO's quarterly magazine, Kathrin's mission is "to connect the right people with each other, to make this world a better place with a special interest in women's empowerment and supporting children." Kathrin has clearly demonstrated to us that these are not empty words. Using her special talent of bringing people together, she has connected AWCH members to the Hamburg community and to each other.



An important beginning was when Kathrin opened the door for us to support events with the U.S. Consulate General, starting with a 2017 National Women's History Month (NWHM) lecture by Melissa Fischer on female entrepreneurs in the digital world. This cooperation continued together with two very successful NWHM events, "Nevertheless She Persisted" and this year's "Visionary Women", which were supported by and coordinated with the Amerikazentrum Hamburg. We are proud to have worked together to support these events that empower women.

Kathrin has been active in our club in many other ways. To name just a few:

- She actively supported many events. In particular, our FAWCO Fun Run on the Alster in 2017 and the many Halloween Parties at the U.S. Consulate, utilizing the spooky basement to create a haunted house.
- She was the perfect hostess, as she opened her home, the Consul General residence, to our annual Christmas Cookie Exchanges and to many New Member events.
- She served as co-coordinator of the AWCH Hamburger Helpers and as coordinator of the Winterhude/Uhlenhorst group.
- She never hesitated when asked to stand up and speak at an event. We cherish her inspiring words, whether in the more intimate setting of Thanksgiving, more formal at the Celebration of Membership, or in public events, such as at Visionary Women.





Past AWCH Presidents, Laura Langford (2015 and 2016) and Marlene Nigbur (2017), and Vice Presidents, Suzana Zhuta (2018) and Shelly Schoeneshoefer (2019), were in attendance to present a flower bouquet and give a toast, showing their deep appreciation for Kathrin's outstanding dedication to the our club. AWCH members presented her a membership to FAUSA, enabling her to continue her contact with FAWCO and build connections to many other like-minded women living in USA with a global perspective and philanthropic interests. Kathrin, in turned, thanks us for the friendship and

support she has received from our many members. Stating how important these contacts have been even when she thought she "was back home in Germany."

After the more formal opening, we enjoyed the delicious buffet of Middle Eastern food, catered by ChickPeace, a catering group started by refugee women from Syria, Somalia, Eritrea, and Afghanistan. Sweet strawberries and a beautiful lemon-elderberry flavored cake, decorated with a golden ship and sugar magnolias (Kathrin's favorite flower), topped off the wonderful event.

The festivities ended with bittersweet emotions, as we expressed our farwells of sincere thank-yous and best wishes as Kathrin's ship brings her to her next destination with its new challenges, experiences, and friendships.



Historic Grindel: Names and Places to Remember

by Marilyn Richter

A small group of AWCH members (some with spouses, others with visiting friends) met on the Moorweide at the *Platz der Jüdischen Deportierten*, the Place of Jewish Deportation on a Sunday morning in May. The Moorweide is situated to the west side of the university's art and law library is home to a granite sculpture and plaque—a memorial to commemorate the site where Hamburg's Jews were systematically collected, beginning in 1941, and forced to gather while waiting to hear their fates. Some were deported to work camps, others to concentration camps. The Nazis originally chose this area because it was an open space and the rounding up of Hamburg's Jews could be publicly witnessed adding to their humiliation and denigration.

Our tour guide, Oliver Krewitt, introduced himself and explained why he chose this memorial as the starting point of our tour. This small area of greenery, tucked away and protected amidst one of the most bustling areas of Hamburg, was selected by Hamburg's Department of Culture as an area of solace and meditation. It was conceived as a place of remembrance for both sides: remembering the victims who suffered and the need to pay tribute to them; on the other, an invitation to German citizens to confront their own history. How is it possible to extend empathy to victims when one belonged to another side that enabled and perpetrated genocide?

The monument itself is a granite block. It was designed and conceptualized by artist Ulrich Rückriem in 1982. Upon careful observation of the stone, a 'T-form' can be discerned. This 'T' is associated with the Hebrew letter 'Tav.' Although 'Tav' has connotations of suffering and death, the artist intended for the letter to also symbolize and connect observers with the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem—a place of mourning. In 1988 a black board for additional explanations of the various meanings of the sculpture was added. Up until that point there too were many misunderstandings.

We proceeded with our tour through "Little Jerusalem" past more university build-

ings until we came to a small copper plaque. It was hidden between bushes and somewhat hard to find. Oliver told us that this was where the old Neue Dammtor Synagogue (New Dammtor Synagogue) once stood. Inaugurated in 1895, it was architecturally composed of oriental style elements. Partially destroyed during *Kristallnacht*, the Nazis allowed the building to be rebuilt by its Jewish members, who were allowed to use it as a house of prayer from 1939 until 1943. Simultaneously, it was used by the Gestapo as a storage depot. The building stood until the night of July 27, 1943, when it was destroyed by Allied bombs and air strikes. Operation Gemoorah was responsible for over 40,000 deaths and over 900,000 citizens were displaced. Half the city was destroyed. Oliver was quite insistent for us to understand that the synagogue was not destroyed by *Germans* but by *the British*. I think the point he was trying to make was that there are times when we all must take two steps back and understand that the casualties of war produce victims on both sides. The Germans were confronted with an acute dilemma. How were they to understand their power as perpetrator suddenly reversed into victimhood? They too had their own civilian losses to endure.

Even more of a psychological conundrum was that presented by Jewish inmates and their "double misery." As forced labourers from the nearby concentration camp Neuengamme, they were brought in to recover the bodies left in the aftermath and bury them.

The tour moved on to the mural painted on the side of the Hochschule für Wirtschaft und Politik building. I have always loved this mural because it was painted by the students the year I began my studies. It was designed by the Argentinian painter, Cecilia Herrero, and depicts the once thriving





Jewish culture and orientation of life in the Grindel before it was destroyed. The artist invites us to imagine how vibrant the area once was with its stores, delicatessens, schools and two synagogues. The large tear down the centre of the mural not only symbolises the systematic persecution and destruction of a way of life through Nazi rule and dominance, it depicts the difficulty of gluing that tear together again. Within the mural there are three political posters, including “*nie wieder Krieg*” (never again war), which are reminiscent of the Weimar Re-

public and abhorrence of the Nazi reign of terror. The poem by Nelly Sachs dominates the mural and is a reminder to stay vigilant; how we must never forget what happened.

Further down the way, not far from the Abaton movie theatre, is the building housing the sociology department’s library which has been nicknamed the “Pferdestall.” In the lobby are six murals and next to them, two male figures sewn from yellow fabric. The color is reminiscent of the yellow in the *Judenstern*, or Star of David that Jews were forced to wear. The murals in this building are also a testament of the many people that hid in the basement the night of the bombings. The safer hiding place was the bunker across the street next to the Bornplatz synagogue but “non-Aryans” were not permitted shelter there.

The area where the Bornplatz synagogue once stood has been renamed the *Joseph-Carlebach Platz* in honour of Joseph Carlebach, the synagogue’s head rabbi. This synagogue was the first of its kind due to its prominence and visibility from the street. It boasted of 1,200 members and had a 40-meter-high ceiling with a cupola. During *Kristallnacht*, (the night of November 9, 1938), the synagogue was damaged and defiled but it did not go up in flames like many other synagogues in Germany. Instead, the Jewish community was forced to sell their property way below value to the State of Hamburg and to dismantle the building that they had once built.

On the Joseph-Carlebach Platz, a memorial of small black, brick-shaped mosaics have been placed in

the ground, reflecting the architectural design of the ceiling of the old Bornplatz synagogue. This tessellated motif is subdued but serves its purpose as a gathering place for people who want to pay their respects. In an attempt at reconciliation to bring back Jewish life to the old Grindel community, the Tora Talmud Schule, a once all boys school of Talmudic learning, was reinstated as a neighborhood school. Education has always been a cherished value in Jewish life.

We stood in front of the Talmud Tora Schule and read the different names on the various *Stolpersteine* or stumbling blocks set in the ground. Many of us agreed that our admiration for the artist Gunter Demnig was beyond words. His idea of the stumbling block brought people together through a monumental art form that makes a poignant statement in a subtle way. The idea of walking down a street and stumbling onto someone, whose life was disrupted in manner we cannot comprehend, invites anyone to stop and think, “How lucky am I to live in a world of freedom and security?”

Further down the street was the Hamburger Kammerspiel Theatre where our guide spoke of his admiration for Ida Ehre, a great actress who was interned but courageously made her come back after the war was over. She dedicated the rest of her life to bringing back theatre and culture to the old neighborhood, re-rebuilding what the Nazis had destroyed.



After the war, many people banded together with ideals of reconstruction in a spirit that few would recognise today. The masses of people that lined the streets to say good bye to Ida Ehre, as her funeral procession passed, was a moving testimony to that spirit.

After the tour end, we continued talking about what we had just experienced at the Café Leonar, a beloved Jewish restaurant of the Grindel area. Sunday mornings it is hard to find a seat. People sit reading the FAZ or just speak about what theatre piece or movie they saw the previous evening. One might catch wind of any number of conversations but what is common to all are values embodying love of culture and humanism.

That Saturday, we as members of the AWCH did the same. We spoke about movies, women’s projects and old friends. We also spoke about the *Stolperstein* that we will sponsor. In November this year we will give honor to one Jewish women who lost her life—and will be remembered.

That Saturday, we as members of the AWCH did the same. We spoke about movies, women’s projects and old friends. We also spoke about the *Stolperstein* that we will sponsor. In November this year we will give honor to one Jewish women who lost her life—and will be remembered.

A Successful "Sip and Swap" Donation Drive

Jordan W. and Charis H. came up with a very creative way to help our local charity, the 5th Hamburg Women's Shelter e.V. On April 30, ten AWCH ladies came with stacks of clothes to Charis's lovely home. Several mini golden bottles of champagne and exotic snacks were provided; and a lively time ensued—everyone trying on and picking out clothes from all that had been brought. This included several bags of clothing and shoes donated by Karen O'S., before her move to Texas. More than enough clothes for the ten women—but this is part of the idea. The rest? A nice donation to our charity!



To hand over the donation, Charis hosted another get-together at her home on June 3. A coworker of the shelter was invited, as well as several AWCH board members and ladies who donated clothes. The coworker gave a nice overview of the challenging but successful, anonymous shelter program. Preliminary arrangements were made to have a volunteer from the organization come to present more details of the program (in English) at an open board meeting in the fall. The coworker of the shelter left with five boxes filled with needed women's clothes and shoes. Stay tuned for the announcement of a second "Sip and Swap" in the Fall. (Shelly S.)

5.
HAMBURGER
FRAUENHAUS E.V.

Our 2019/2020 Local Charity: 5th Hamburg Women's Shelter

The women's shelter is a temporary shelter for women and their children. Here women who are mentally, physically and/or sexually abused or threatened can find comprehensive support. The house is open to adult women of all nationalities, regardless of their religion or income. We support the shelter by supporting their "Run against Violence", giving clothes and toys, and donating money.



Join us on August 18 for a "Run against Violence"

Sponsored by our local charity, registration is now open for the run (see our calendar at www.awchamburg.org for more info). Do not want to run/walk? We are also looking for volunteers to distribute water and donate baked goods. Contact activities@awchamburg.org.

Members Meet Members

On the Wednesday afternoon of April 3, five new AWCH members took the opportunity to meet fellow newcomers and long-time members over a cup of tea. Several Board members, Hamburger Helpers and Group Coordinators were on hand to answer questions and to explain different events and activities. The event took place in the pleasant, light rooms of the Meßmer Momentum, overlooking the Sandtorkai in the Hafen City. Judging by the fact that we “closed down” the teashop—it was indeed a successful event. A similar event is planned after the summer vacation. This is great opportunity to meet old friends and new members in a casual atmosphere.



Cinco de Mayo in Hamburg

Who doesn't LOVE tacos and margaritas!? Cinco de Mayo was celebrated in great spirits at Mexiko Strasse Taquería. Our “After Work Drinks” coordinator Jordan W. had the great idea to move “after work” to the weekend, and not just any weekend. What a great way to honor a national Mexican holiday. I personally think this should become a new AWCH tradition! Thank you, Jordan, for organizing.





FAWCO Biennial Conference: BONNIE, BRAVE, and BENEFICENT

by Christine Riney

The 2019 FAWCO Biennial Conference, held in Edinburgh, Scotland from March 21 to 24, delivered the theme Bonnie, Brave and Beneficent with skill and energy. Here are only a few of the instances that encapsulate a very successful conference.

Bonnie...

were the **166 full-time attendees** who all enjoyed the lovely setting at the beautiful Dalmahoy Resort in Edinburgh, Scotland.



—were the **men in Kilts** who flamboyantly addressed the haggis, the vegetarian haggis (!), with the words from the famous Scottish poet Robert Burns. As far as I understood, they basically told the haggis how tasty it was and that we could not wait to eat it before stabbing the bonnie thing. A very dramatic and emotive ceremony.

—were the **ladies enjoying a Scottish Ceilidh**. Swinging around in their Scottish dress as the caller quickened the pace.



Photo credits: Patrick Ramaer

Brave...

—was the presentation by Kirin Saeed. „Audio Description for the Blind and Access to the Workplace for Those with Sight Loss“ opened up a fascinating world of visual impairment and offered an invitation to the sighted to open their eyes. Audio Description is used in movie theaters, Netflix, television, film, dance, opera and visual arts—transforming a production into an experience on par with or even beyond that of sighted individuals. Kirin explained that the descriptions are not only of immense benefit to visually impaired people, enhancing their unseen world, but it is also a lesson to the sighted to stop, think, look and listen! The fact that the sighted tend to take for granted what is right in front of them was brought home by a small demonstration. She asked one member of the audience to describe a room in their house while another member drew what they described on a whiteboard. It became immediately apparent that the description was lacking and causing vast miscommunication. On a more fundamental level, it reminded us that each individual has unique limitations and under-



standings of the world we share. For the visually impaired, Audio Description allows different media and performance art to become "alive" and more accessible. Plus the sighted world begins to realize that they do not see as clearly as they believe. Kirin did an excellent job of opening our eyes and helped us understand that interpreting the world does not require vision, and can sometimes actually be a distraction.

—are Samira Kitman and Roza Salih, refugees in the UK.

Samira Kitman is an Afghan woman who attended the Turquoise Mountain Art School, founded by the Prince of Wales in 2006. Samira's teachers noticed that she possessed a natural talent for calligraphy and painting traditional geometric designs. After her graduation in 2009, she created her own art academy in Kabul for both men and women and continued to be its director until 2014. During this time she won a contract to decorate a five star hotel in Saudi Arabia with her art. With the money earned from this commission, she purchased a potato chip factory, which she named Seven Days, to help lift people in her part of Kabul out of poverty. In 2014, Samira was declared as Afghanistan's Woman Entrepreneur of the Year. Her success and publicity caught the attention of a few that felt it was wrong for her to have this honor. Samira's life was in danger, forcing her to seek asylum in the UK. Now living in Lincolnshire, she continues to pursue her dreams, painting exquisite traditional designs, creating jewelry, and creating textiles for beautiful pillow covers. She has met the Prince of Wales, Laura Bush, John Kerry and she has developed a working relationship with the designer Pippa Smith.



Roza Salih's family sought refuge in the UK when she was 12 years old. Two of her uncles, as well as her grandfather, had been executed by Saddam Hussein. She had formed close relationships with many other students seeking asylum in her school in Glasgow, one of which was sent to a detention centre with her family. Knowing that the next step would be deportation, Roza and her friends worked

hard to raise awareness about her friend's plight through petitions and speaking to the Scottish First Minister. Their efforts paid off when her friend was released from the detention centre. This group of girls who fought for their friend became known as „The Glasgow Girls“. Roza graduated with a degree in law and politics from Strathclyde University. She now works

for Chris Pine, a member of parliament for the Scottish National Party. To this day, Roza continues to be passionate about fighting for the rights of others. Currently, she is focusing upon the rights for the Kurdish people.

Samira and Roza are determined, motivated, intelligent women who are doing what they can to make this world a better place for everyone.



Beneficent...

—is **Social Bite**, a **Scottish social enterprise**. One of its co-founders, **Alice Thompson**, was our keynote speaker. Social Bite started out in 2012 as a café chain, with one in four of its staff from a homeless background, feeding and supporting the homeless community everyday. Now, in 2019, Social Bite is a national charity with a much wider mission than the café. Social Bite's goal is to end homelessness in Scotland by being a thought-leader and positive disruptive force in the industry. Their initial „Sleep in the Park“ fundraiser to raise awareness to the problems of homelessness has grown into the world's largest „Sleep Out“, providing funds for a nationwide „Housing First“ programme, aimed at getting hundreds of people

off the streets and into homes of their own, and for their „Social Bite Village,“ which houses and supports up to 20 people in a community with low-cost yet dignified accommodations. The next world-wide Sleep out is December 7; see www.bigsleepout.com for details. Social Bite has grown steadily and

quickly, and has gained international notice attracting President Bill Clinton, George Clooney, Malala Yousafzai and many other celebrities to their Edinburgh fundraising events. Alice is a very inspiring young woman. If you want to find out more, the website is www.social-bite.co.uk.

—are **FAWCO members**, who have raised over **\$190,000 for the Target Project Hope Beyond Displacement**. 1290 individuals have been benefited as of the end of 2018 and more will be reached as programming continues through September 2019, including...

- Renovating the CRP Playground
- Translation of the SuperGirls curriculum into Arabic
- Expansion of programs to the new downtown center
- After School Club



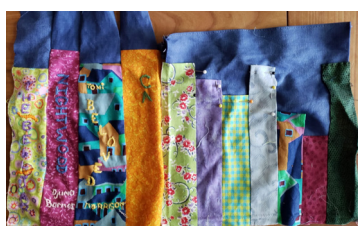
After such a successful Target Project, the nomination, evaluation, and selection of the new project under the 2019-2022 Target Program Health is much anticipated (see next page).

FAWCO Friendship Quilts

The winner of the 2019 Friendship Quilt Raffle was Mary Stewart Burgher of AWC Denmark. The quilt titled “Tell Me A Story” portrays a large bookshelf with over 374 titles. The raffle raised \$4556 for the FAWCO FOUNDATION.

The Friendship Quilt for 2020 has been announced and, as it is our 25th year of quilting, the design will be a traditional sampler. If you are interested in contributing, the block must be completed by the October 10, 2019. Instructions can be found here: www.fawcofoundation.org/fanfare-please

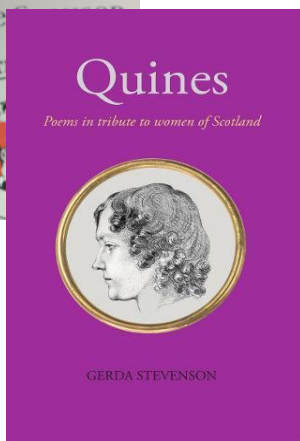
Thank you to our AWCH members Carola A., Anne C., Tracy M., Susan S.-W., and Shelly S. who made squares for the 2019 quilt.





Gerda Stevenson, the closing speaker, provided a wonderful summation of many **Bonnie, Brave, Beneficent** women.

Gerda is a poet, writer, actor, director, singer-songwriter, who works in theatre, television, radio, film and opera in Britain and abroad. She has won many awards, including a BAFTA Best Film Actress for Margaret Tait's feature film „Blue Black Permanent“. Gerda captivated us with her poetry collection *Quines*, a word she explained refers to women, girls, lasses, and contains the romance of „queen“. Each poem refers to a Scottish woman of the past, some famous, some obscure or overlooked, from Neolithic times to the 21st century. There are no men, but the women represent a cross-section of society.



First up was *Nessie* who, after all, is female: “... My paps slope with the grace of Jura, their nipples bright as fresh water pearls, sleek hips fit for tender cargo.”

Many of the women remembered in Gerda's prose were denied recognition for discoveries or talents. These include *Williamina Fleming*, a kitchen maid to a Harvard professor of astronomy, who recognized and nurtured her talents. Despite Ms. Fleming's discovery of new stars and of the Horsehead Nebula, her name was eliminated from Harvard's list of astronomical discoveries.

The watercolourist *Christian Small*, assumed from her name to be a man, was denied a job interview with the phrase, “We regret your sex.”

Crystal Macmillan, politician, barrister, feminist, and pacifist, who organised the protest against the Treaty of Versailles by the International Committee of Women for Permanent Peace,

was remembered with the words: “...justice...if half of humankind is erased from its scales, the word can hold no weight.”

Margaret Blackwood, confined to a wheelchair, refused merely to “learn to knit ... or make lampshades” and fought for rights for the disabled, leading to the introduction of benefits such as mobility and attendance allowance.

There are many more women to discover in her book, which is available on Amazon.

FAWCO Regional Meetings Open to Everyone!

Since we are all members of FAWCO you can attend any Regional Meeting. It is a great opportunity to explore new places, make new friends and be inspired!

- September 20–22 Region 1—England, Ireland, Scotland. Hosted by AWC London.
- October 4–6 Region 4—Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg. Hosted by AWC Amsterdam.
- **November 15–17 Region 5—Germany & Austria. Will take place in Leipzig.** There will be a Friday Dinner & Talk, Saturday meetings, Sunday Sightseeing. There will be a group of us going from Hamburg. Join us!

FAWCO Region 5 Participants at the Edinburgh Conference



Interested in any more information:
Contact Christine at fawcorep@awchamburg.org

FAWCO's Target Program Health 2019–2022

Health—Empowering Women and Girls by Ensuring Healthy Lives and Promoting Well-Being

“Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.”

—World Health Organization



This statement illustrates how broad the definition of health is and gives a hint of how the theme health is connected to all of four areas of the FAWCO's Global Issues Teams and Programs: Human Rights, Education, Environment and yes, Health.

The theme for the Target Program Health was announced at the Biennial Conference in Scotland and a campaign to raise education and awareness has begun. Importantly, the new Target Program Health supports the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goal 3 (SDG3), Good Health and Well-Being, and is connected to the other United Nations SDGs.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Over the next three years, FAWCO will work with the Global Issues Teams to promote awareness of these connections and actions to be taken to strengthen good health for women and girls.

Key areas that have serious consequences for female health:

- Unequal power relationships
- Social factors
- Malnutrition
- Universal coverage
- Environment
- HIV
- Mosquito nets/Malaria prevention
- Tobacco use
- Discrimination
- Mortality during pregnancy and childbirth
- Economic empowerment
- Lack of information
- Physical, sexual and emotional violence
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Unsafe cooking fuels
- Early marriage

In order to improve health for women and girls, change needs to occur in all these areas and more. These factors are addressed in the targets of SDG 3. Targets, you may ask? Within SDG 3, Good Health and Well-Being, there are 13 specific targets to be

met. We will be looking at these, as they afford us a broad view of global health. We will also be learning about the grim statistics of women's and girls' health: Did you know that every two minutes, a woman dies due to a lack of prenatal or obstetric care? Are you aware that over 50% of the world's population has no access to health care, and that women comprise a majority of that 50%? It is past time to change these statistics. I invite you to join us as we learn about the issues in global women's health and choose a project that will enable us to affect change. (*Martha Canning* FAWCO Target Program Chair)

Timeline:

March 2019–March 2022	Education and Awareness Raising
May 2019–September 2019	Target Project Applications
March 2020	Target Project Announced
March 2022	Target Program & Project Conclude

The education and awareness raising campaign has started and you can find information in the Target Bulletins and a Health Matters Blog, which will be used to explore the top impediments to women and girls achieving good health, the global health goals of governments and aid agencies, and the effects on communities of improving health for women and girls. To learn more and keep up to date go to the FAWCO Target Program Health Matters Blog and sign up for the monthly Target Bulletins.

Could your project be the Target Project for Health?

The selection process for the next Target Project that will be supported by the Target Program is now open for applications. Do you know of a project that would be a good candidate to be the next Target Project? Are you involved with an organization that is working to improve the lives of women and girls in a health-related area and that has a project that might be a good candidate? If you think you do, get more information on the FAWCO website (Target Project Application Information.)

Theme: HEALTH

The World, Women and Health

by Anna Sizorina

Photo credit: Flickr, DVIDSHUB, Combined Task Force Lightning



The word “health” may have different meanings for different people in different contexts. For quite a long time western medicine used the biomedical model of health postulating that a medical intervention alone is sufficient to eliminate symptoms and treat the illness. The World Health Organization definition of health as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity” dates back to 1946. However, only beginning from the 1970’s did academic medicine start a reluctant turn towards the psychological and environmental factors of health and illness. Surveys conducted in different countries identified health as (1) a state of not being ill, (2) a reserve of coping potential, (3) a set health-supporting behaviors, (4) a state of fitness and vitality, (5) the ability to fulfill social roles, and (6) a state of subjective well-being. The view on health differs among cultures: Europeans and Americans value personal functioning, for example, individual fitness; collectivistic Asian cultures may see health as a state of harmony and social connectedness.

Being a man or a woman may influence health in different ways. According to WHO, women’s health should not be limited to the reproductive ability and absence of disease, it should include other conditions that may affect women’s lives and well being.

Nature took care of the survival of humankind: whereas more boys are born, women, in general, live longer than men. Worldwide, for every 100 boys, there are 94-98 newborn girls. In certain cultures, boys have a greater value for parents and society, which drastically influenced natural events;

for example, in some parts of India the ratio is 80 girls for 100 boys, and in China 84 to 100. Compared to their male siblings, girls who had a chance to be born, are doomed to receive less attention and care from their parents, and are sometimes deprived of immunization and medical help.

Statistically, global life expectancy increased from 51 years in the early 1950s to nearly 70 years worldwide and to 80 in 35 developed countries. Organ mutilation, human trafficking, “honor killings” result in a wide range of health problems and premature death. In countries with lower economic development death rates are higher especially among girls, female adolescents, and young women. In some African countries women hardly survive 54 years, which is less than the lifespan of men.

Socioeconomic status is directly related to health. Women are more likely to be in unpaid and low paid jobs. One in five households worldwide is headed by a woman, and these households are particularly vulnerable to poverty. According to the US census, 28% of women and children in female-headed households live below the federal poverty line, compared to 18% in male-headed households and 5% in married couple families. Traditional family responsibilities may contribute to negative health outcomes, for example, breathing in air tainted by solid fuels during cooking, substantially increases the risk of pulmonary disorders in women compared to men. In less developed countries women are disproportionately responsible for collecting household fuel and water, which deprives women of the possibilities of getting paid jobs, an education, active in politics, and/or attending to their own health care needs.

Though these adversities also influence men, women tend to be disproportionately affected. Social norms and gender discrimination support violence against girls and women and limit access to health resources, family care, and education.

References:

- World Health Organization. (2009). Women and health: today’s evidence tomorrow’s agenda. World Health Organization.
- Institute of Medicine (US). Committee on Women’s Health Research. (2010). Women’s health research: Progress, pitfalls, and promise. National Academies Press.

A Common Sense Approach to Good Health

by Palvasha von Hassell



2017—*Annus Horribilis* for my health; the idea is to not let it get you down

The WHO definition of health as a “state of complete physical, mental and social health” is meant to drive home the point that the concept of health should be viewed comprehensively in the endeavor to lead a well-adjusted life. For too long, health has been understood to refer solely to physical health. In recent years all this has changed, though there is still a stigma attached to mental health issues in affluent, highly developed societies where performance counts. A good example is being set by the younger Royals in the UK, with both their open admission of such issues in their own lives as well as support for charities that provide quick support and help to people suffering from depression etc. Such humane initiatives benefit society greatly.

It is, in fact, quite important to strive for all three kinds of health; for, while physical exercise such as going to the gym, running, walking, cycling, or swimming is undoubtedly beneficial and very useful in coping with stress, sometimes it is not enough. If one's mental health—and I lay special emphasis here on its emotional component—is seriously compromised by persisting problems at work or home, taking exercise won't dispel them for good. They will have to be identified and tackled, perhaps with

professional help, as they may be affecting one's social life as well and leading to isolation.

My tips—

Exercise: Spread your exercise over the week: a brisk walk in the morning before breakfast, exercise routines at home with equipment like mats, balls etc., cycling, running. Swimming on holiday. In my case a horrendous splintered metatarsal fracture in the summer of 2017, totally unrelated to exercise—still can't quite believe this actually happened—drastically limited the level of activity I'd been used to engaging in as a moderate but enthusiastic runner since my teens. Also, like Virginia Woolf, I passionately enjoyed *street-haunting*. I have to be careful now to limit physical exercise and activity to manageable levels of pain, and try not to let this get me down.

Social: Follow your interests or develop new ones. Bound to get you in touch with the locals. Of course, having German helps, though this is not absolutely necessary. In fact, speaking from personal experience, *Hochdeutsch* can even lead to some discomfort and sometimes outright incomprehension...

Eating: Take your own sliced vegetables and fruit and a whole banana or two with you to work or when you're out and about instead of consuming fattening food at eateries. If you can't resist it, limit comfort food to once a week. I'm still trying!



Whatever you do, take yourself and your needs, physical, emotional and intellectual, seriously. Women sometimes need to be reminded of this. Take time to do things you enjoy, from attending literary and/or political discussions and going to the opera to reading, seeing friends or movies like the excellent *Stan and Ollie*. Limit time spent on social media. **Respect yourself.**

Flexitarian=Flexible Vegetarian

by Christine Riney

Flexitarianism or ‘casual vegetarianism’ is an increasingly popular, plant-based diet that aims to reduce your carbon footprint and improve your health with an eating plan that’s mostly vegetarian yet still allows for some meat. The rise of the flexitarian diet is a direct result of people taking a more environmentally sustainable approach to the types of food they consume as well as being extremely beneficial for their health. These plant-based foods include lentils, beans, peas, nuts and seeds, all excellent sources of protein. You don’t have to give up meat entirely. Simply tip the balance in favor of plant-based meals on most days.

What are the health benefits?

Plant-based diets generally contain less saturated fat and more nutrients such as potassium, folate, beta carotene, vitamin C and fiber as well as protective phytochemicals such as antioxidants. Studies have shown a shift to a Flexitarian eating style found benefits for weight control, blood pressure and type 2 diabetes risk.

To get the health benefits you need to make sure you don’t replace meat and include more sugars, saturated fats, too many refined carbs, potatoes, desserts, sweetened drinks—basically you need to replace meat with healthy and tasty plant-based alternatives.

Healthy Swaps

- Legumes such as soybeans, chickpeas, lentils, and kidney beans
- Tofu
- Veggie burgers
- Nuts and seeds and their pastes and butters
- Quorn (Mycoprotein)

Not ready for a Flexitarian diet? Why not try Meat Free Monday?

Meat Free Monday is a global not-for-profit movement encouraging people to do their bit to help slow climate change, conserve natural resources and improve their health by having one meat-free day a week. It doesn’t have to be Monday or only one day a week. No matter how often during the week you choose to make plant-based meals your focus becomes part of the collective effort to reduce environmental impacts and increase your overall wellbeing. The website gives you some great recipes as well as the reasons that this is the way we all should be eating. www.meatfreemondays.com/

Photo credits: Pixaby (congerdesign) and Unsplash (Tetiana Bykovets)



“Food is the single strongest lever to optimize human health and environment sustainability on earth.”

—EAT-Lancet Commission

How East and West Mingle in Nutrition

by Shelly Schoeneshoefer

Meeting Canadian-born Natalia Morrison, who has a master degree in Nutrition, gave me insight to trying to change my diet. She grew up in a large family on a farm and the reason she is a foodie is due to her Ukrainian-born mother. One of her luckiest moments was when she took part on a Canadian World Youth exchange program that took her to the mountains of Thailand, where she learned about Thai cooking. This set her course for life. She decided to get her Bachelor and Masters in Nutrition and was determined to help the Canadian Inuit population with diabetes. But, sadly said, this was a difficult battle; fresh food was scarce and extremely expensive and the rest of the food was frozen with low nutritional value.

At some point, she and her husband headed to the mountains of Japan, where she learned Japanese-style cooking in exchange for English lessons. Her love of home cooking has taken her to a totally new level, opening the international door to healthy benefits from food of around the world. Natalia has now been in Hong Kong for six years and already written a cookbook with a very interesting underlying concept.

In Hong Kong, it is very common to have domestic help who lives with you in your home. She never wanted help, but in order to rescue a dog from a shelter, she and her husband had to prove that they had someone at home during the day. To her good fortune she met Elsa, a Philippine woman who had worked in Singapore for several Chinese families and with excellent cooking knowledge and extensive skills. Recognizing this, Natalia approached



her with a proposition to create a cookbook that would combine recipes from the East & the West. Half of the profits for every book go into a retirement fund for Elsa.

Home Cooking East & West is the result. It's a colorful cookbook with over 160 recipes from the East, the West and places in between. The dish pictured above is the popular stir-fried Japanese noodle dish known as Yakisoba (found in the cookbook). It also features a chapter on how to promote kitchen happiness with domestic helpers and another on healthy meal planning made simple.

I have to say that I am excited to try out some of these different recipes. I think the challenge will be trying to find all ingredients here in Germany. If anyone is interested in seeing this cookbook, just drop me a note! For more information see www.homecookingeastandwest.com.

Ginger

- Aids in nausea
- Reduces muscle pain and exercise-induced muscle soreness
- May reduce symptoms of osteoarthritis due to its anti-inflammatory properties
- Beneficial for indigestion and related GI discomfort.
- Lowers LDL cholesterol and TG levels
- May protect against age-related neurological damage and improve brain function



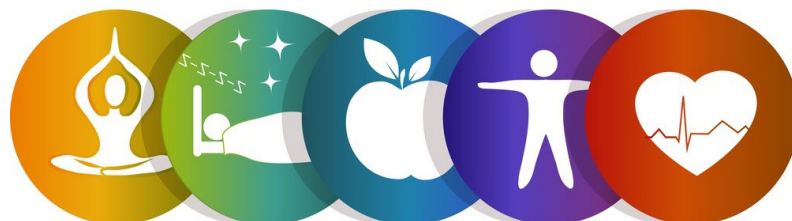
Spinach

- Loaded with protein, iron, vitamins and minerals.
- Vitamin C—powerful antioxidant for promoting skin health and immune function.
- Vitamin K1—essential for blood clotting
- Folate—essential for normal cellular function and tissue growth
- Iron--binds hemoglobin to transport oxygen to the body's tissues
- High in magnesium—supports energy metabolism, maintains muscle and nerve function, regular heart rhythm, a healthy immune system, and good blood pressure.



Tracking Good Health

by Carol Harbers



If there's one thing most people neglect on a daily basis, it's taking care of their health. Statistically, those who simply increase their intake of water and daily cardio-exercise live longer, healthier lives. Can an app on your ever-present mobile phone or Fitbit help? There are literally thousands of apps out there, all with the same goal: to help benefit our health, whether that's physical, mental, or our general social well-being.

Activity and exercise trackers are generally the most popular. But do they really bring results? A recent published study* of over 700 participants says, "Yes! Exercise app users are more likely to exercise during their leisure time, compared to non-users...." The data suggest that the apps are able to reduce barriers that often get between the different stages of planning, action, and maintenance—leading to better exercise habits. Over time, these improved habits can mean big changes.

Another broad spectrum of apps on the market is the "intake tracker". Be it water, calories, nutrients, or medication, they can all be counted. Although my 90-year aunt swears by the "eight rubber bands on the glass" trick to ensure she has fulfilled her water intake, the Waterlogged app keeps track using your metric input or photos (!)—and churns out graphs and charts for your files. This may be a bit over the top, but my own (small) survey found one app that is gold—My FitnessPal. This app has been

amongst the top ten health apps for a long time for a reason. Firstly, it helps you keep track of your diet (and your water) easily. It has a database of more than five million foods (just scan the barcode on the package), providing caloric and nutrition information. Plus, you can sync My FitnessPal with other fitness-tracking devices and apps. It will work out your net calories from exercise and food compared against your daily target, calculated from your weight goal. It's great for giving you a sense of which foods have high-calorie or high-protein content and what foods don't, helping you to manage weight in the long run. It also provides an up-to-date blog with tips for exercising and eating healthy.

Working out and proper diet are not the only factors that influence your health. In order to improve the quality of your life, you should make sure to keep stress in check. The best way to do this is with the help of meditation. The popular Calm app can guide you through different types of mediations or simply play natural sounds that will help you calm down and get rid of stress. Our Events Chair Darja H. recommends the meditation app 7Mind, which covers different topics: stress, fear, sleep, *etc.* „My morning routine consists of seven minutes of 7Mind meditation, neck exercises, 15 minutes of fitness training—and coffee."

It is important to take time for ourselves.

*Litman et al, J Med Internet Res 2015;17(8):e195

Couch to 5K

by Tracy Moede

I hate to run, which is surprising since I was on the track & field (mostly field!) team in high school and played field hockey in both high school and college. But running offers me no excitement whatsoever. So, a few years ago when I wanted to lose a bit of weight and get in better shape, I was truly astonished when I thought of running as a way to accomplish these goals.

Enter the Couch to 5K apps. These apps are typically built around an 8- or 9-week program that eases you into running using the interval training method. You start out with an even mix of walking and jogging, with the program gradually increasing the running intervals as you progress through the program. The goal is by week eight you're able to complete a full 5K run with no walking breaks needed.

They come in two versions: free and paid. The internet is rife with test reports on which one is better than the other. I was quite happy with a free app that kept track of running time and distance. Search for "Couch to 5K" in the Google Play Store

and you're going to find dozens of app options to choose from, so which one is right for you? There are a couple of free options that are a bit more basic, as well as some premium options that play nice with other fitness apps and include GPS to track your run routes and distances. You're also going to need a good set of in-ear headphones to get the most out of these apps because they all use audio cues to tell you when to switch from running to walking—plus it's always better to run with music.

My husband, Dietmar, and I started together. He was able to do the 5K in 30 minutes. I managed 4K in 40 minutes. I know I'm a slow runner. I guess if I ran faster it would be over sooner, but that is not really ever going to happen, so I am actually quite pleased with my results.



Beet Juice

- Rich in minerals, such as calcium, iron, magnesium, zinc, copper, and selenium
- Good source of vitamin C, vitamin B6, and folate
- Rich in dietary fiber and antioxidants
- High in nitrates—increase blood flow, suppress dementia, lower blood pressure, and boost stamina
- High in betaines—detoxifies the liver

Bananas

- High in antioxidants: good for heart, may lower the risk of infections and some forms of cancer
- High in potassium: reduces high blood pressure, and risk of heart disease



Qi Gong—Hong Kong Style

by Shelly Schoeneshoefer

For years, I have wanted to take a class in Qi Gong, but never dreamed I would find a wonderful Hong Kong silk painter named Theresa Derrick (Chinese name: Cheung Kit Ping), who would take the time to instruct me on the art of Qi Gong. Now you may be asking, what is Qi Gong? Qi is your life force or vital energy, and Qi Gong means to cultivate or practice these vital life forces. This ancient Chinese practice is a holistic system of coordinating body posture with movement, breathing and meditation. It is also considered a form of Chinese medicine, where practitioners are able to move the Qi in a patient's body. As such, it is used for health and spirituality, as well as the martial arts.

While on an extended trip to Hong Kong where Qi Gong is often referred to as Chinese yoga, I had the good fortune to accompany members of the American Women's Association of Hong Kong to one of Derrick's classes. It was a red warning day, mean-



ing that the weather forecast is about to turn nasty. As the skies grew dark and the clouds seemed ready to let their Qi go, the session began. Theresa went through her routine as we ladies attempted to mimic her every move. She finished just in the nick of time, and we went to a café to have a small energy booster by way of food and drink. I must say that after the session I felt even more energized, and I was thankful that I recorded it to practice at home. People in Hong Kong don't have much space, but they make the most of it. If they want to learn to dance, they do it in a small park. If they have a rooftop available to them, they will do a Qi Gong class. There are no excuses. Just do it and be healthy!



Hiking in Hong Kong

by Shelly Schoeneshoefer

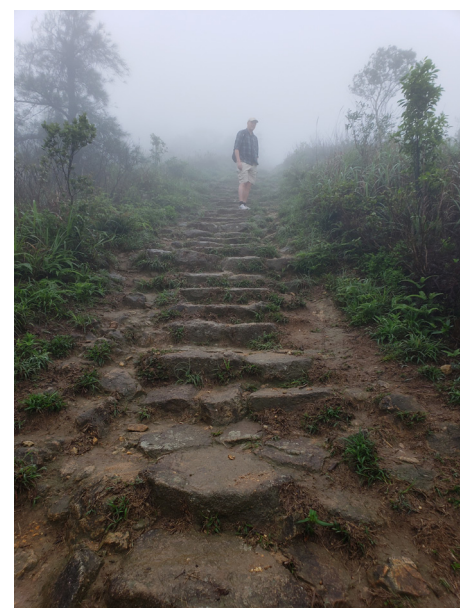
Before arriving in Hong Kong, my expectations were visiting museums, shopping, and having high tea. But I never imagined so much nature! I certainly wanted to explore some of the 200+ islands, since the Hong Kong territories have

so much greenery: urban parks, open spaces, and islands with lots of hiking paths. I recently saw an excellent series on Hong Kong issues: *Vox Borders* with Johnny Harris, who discusses the enormous housing problems, with 75% of the territories designated green spaces and a population squeezed into 15% of its zoned space for multiple housing. (*This is a series I can recommend for everyone, although it is not necessarily about health issues.*) On the one hand, Hong Kong is incredibly crowded in this high-density city; on the other hand, there's plenty of hiking space.

I downloaded my Health app and away I went, easily doing seven miles a day every time I hiked on an island or climbed Victoria Peak. Funny, but even on a rest day, I still averaged six miles a day; and shop-

ping is mostly uphill! Must admit, I never took taxis or the local MTR, unless under time pressure.

The hardest part isn't the hike itself but the weather: I was there at the beginning of the monsoon season, with humidity at 85%. It may rain, be extremely hot and sunny, or very foggy. I learned to listen to my intuition: rapid changes in the weather and I'd turn back. It was a wonderful experience to hike trails such as the Dragon's Back, the Big Wave, and Lantau Island. They give you a sense of peace and quiet, as well as keeping you fit. Just don't forget your sunscreen, water, rain jacket and something to eat. And ... if the weather's worsening: GO BACK—and try on another day!



Healthy Mind, Healthy Body: Mindfulness Meditation

by Holly Todd

In 2013 Laurie Cameron, an American I knew in Hannover, Germany, moved with her family to Washington, D.C., and started a new business. After working for many years as a “change manager” for Fortune 500 companies, she decided to apply her skills to counseling individuals online. I agreed to be a guinea pig and had several sessions with her. Her approach was all about fostering mindfulness, and she encouraged me to meditate daily. For my birthday she sent me a copy of *Radical Acceptance* by Tara Brach, a clinical psychologist and a meditation teacher. Now and then I listen to podcasts of Tara’s weekly Buddhist-influenced one-hour classes in Bethesda, MD, and to do her 20-minute guided meditations (www.tarabrach.com). In the Buddhist spirit these are free though donations are welcome.

I have become a total believer in the power of meditation; it made me more aware of what sensations and emotions I am feeling and how they are affecting me moment to moment. I credit mindfulness with having helped me break a long cycle of chronic UTIs. I don’t meditate as much as I would like to, but have improved lately, again helped by Laurie, who, after becoming a senior mindfulness teacher at Google’s Search Inside Yourself Leadership Program, published a step-by-step guide last year to



The Mindful Day as a National Geographic book. She encourages readers to set out 10-minutes twice a day for meditation and suggests practical ways to “find focus, calm and joy” in between. Pragmatists may prefer *10% Happier* by ABC anchorman Dan Harris whose nervous breakdown on national TV led him to meditation. Citing studies showing that long-term meditation can affect the brain’s neuroplasticity, Harris subtitles his book “How I tamed the voice in my head, reduced stress without losing my edge, and found self-help that actually works—a true story.”

Get Up and Move: Walking Group

In glorious early summer weather, a small group of Altonaers launched the new AWCH Friday lunchtime walking group. Meeting at the Altona train station, we soon left urban Hamburg for the verdant pleasures of the Altonaer Balkon park overlooking the Elbe. We had a bit of an adventure getting separated in the labyrinth of paths leading to the “Rosengarten” and our somewhat ambitious destination, the replica of the historic garden of the Liebermann Villa in Wannsee there, but a good time was had by all. Such a nice way to get to know new friends and check in regularly with old ones while doing something healthy! (Holly T.)



WHO's Afraid of Dementia?

by Deborah Ockert

Let's face it—we are all growing older. Not only we as individuals, but the world population as a whole. The World Health Organization (WHO) has recognized evolving health problems due to aging in countries large and small, and in 2017 set up a "global action plan" as a response to the incidence of dementia (approximately 5% in people over 60 years of age). To help individuals, families, institutions, communities and governments cope with this growing health burden, the WHO issued guidelines

outlining risk factors and suggestions for prevention in its May 2019 document titled: "Risk reduction of cognitive decline and dementia". So what can we do to prevent dementia? The WHO has set up a summary of recommendations based on evidence from studies. Besides getting older (risk factor number one), here are other factors WHO considers to be related to the development of dementia. And in parentheses, suggestions as to how we in the AWCH can respond.

1. Physical activity (AWCH: Get Up & Move!)
2. Tobacco cessation (AWCH: Never a problem at meetings?)
3. Nutrition (AWCH: Healthy bagels...)
4. Alcohol use (AWCH: After Work Drinks - but in moderation!)
5. Cognitive training (AWCH: Who are those lovely ladies in that picture? What was her name?)
6. Social activity (AWCH: Activities, events, groups galore)
7. Weight management (AWCH: No weighty problems here...!?)
8. Hearing loss (AWCH: Well, sometimes our events are rather noisy...)
9. Diverse chronic ailments (AWCH: Health-related lectures are planned for 2019 – stay tuned!)

It seems AWCH (and FAWCO) are right on target to attend to health in general and the growing incidence of dementia. Let's stay fit and have our fun together as well!

For more information see

www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics
www.who.int/mental_health



Water

- Helps dissolve minerals and other nutrients in the body
- Detox effects—lessens kidney and liver burden by flushing out waste products.
- Increases brain power—helps thinking, focusing, concentration, and staying alert
- Contributes to healthy immune system



Blueberries

- High in fiber, vitamins C and K
- Excellent source of antioxidants—may reduce risk factor for heart disease; benefit brain function and delay mental decline
- Like cranberries, may help prevent urinary tract infections

Healthy Fashion: Three Pioneers to Google Right Now!

by Karen O'Shaughnessy

When we think about our health, we often don't take fashion into the equation, unless it's about our yoga outfit (see my article in *Currents* 2/17). But think again!

To produce fashions, costs are kept to a minimum, most commonly achieved by production in low-wage Asian countries—Bangladesh amongst the worst. The fabrics and leathers are processed and dyed using highly toxic substances that have their highest concentrations right in the factory; the sewage is seldom filtered sufficiently, due to lack of regulations or their enforcement. Workers as well as those living nearby are exposed to the highly cancerous toxins full of azobenzene (AZO), polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH), and much scarier words. These are in fact carcinogenic and should be scaring the fashionista in you silly.

These chemicals furthermore end up in our clothes. Ever gone to a store and thought it smelled "cheap"? That's most likely toxins you are smelling. But not only the cheap stores are affected! Europe has regulations and limitations on the toxins permitted in clothing. Many big retailers are in partnerships to regulate themselves, however, governmental product testing for these chemicals remains insufficient,

and retailers are often entrusted "to do the right thing." Smaller businesses don't usually test their products at all before import; in the end, it's "Mr. Franklin" who dictates fashion and ergo, our health.

Not only are these toxins out there, but they are also behind the new *fast fashion* trend, in which people buy clothes more quickly, then sort out and dispose of more. If we're lucky, this created surge of clothing is recycled wherein most wearable clothing is sent to African countries, and the shirts and pants sold so cheaply that the local fashion industries have had to close.

We're so used to *fast fashion* that the outcry about the environmental consequences, the pollution by toxins and chemicals, or the underpaid workers and the economical outreach to the African textile industry is widely known but has lost its shock-value.

In the last couple of months, I've stumbled across two very interesting alternatives to share with you. I'm aware that these alternatives will most likely not be suitable for mass production and won't change the fashion industry forever, but they are worth looking into, as they give us a broader understanding of the alternatives and other choices in clothing we may have one day.

Get Up and Move with Zumba©



The Get up and Move group is starting a Zumba© course led by AWCH member Anne-Marie Suriano!

Zumba© is a high-energy dance workout, designed for those of us who love to move to the music but aren't real dancers. We will dance to choreo made from repetition of simple moves for Latin, ballroom, and hip-hop dance styles. Each move can be customized to your abilities; so all fitness levels can take part. Dancing to the upbeat music burns hundreds of calories before you even notice!

Bring to class: gym shoes, a water bottle, and a towel to catch the sweat



ANKE DOMASKE and QMILK fiber. Although her idea to produce materials and clothing from milk isn't new, Anke found a way to develop "QMILK fiber" in a more eco-friendly way than approaches in the early 1930's. The smooth, silk-like fiber is said to have antibacterial properties. Out of the need for hypoallergenic clothing, Qmilk uses a waste product unfit for foods. No chemicals, little water and lots of milk that would be otherwise tossed down the drain are used. Google QMILK fiber or go to www.qmilkfiber.eu and learn more about this fascinating idea for healthy fabrics.

SALLY FOX and Vreseis Ltd. have been growing cotton that naturally "blooms" colored cotton since the early 80's, making chemical dyes unnecessary. The colors can even intensify over the course of washings—a very interesting approach to preventing the use of highly toxic and dangerous dyes. Unfortunately, it's still about "Mr. Franklin": the highest profit margins are still from low-cost countries. Google Sally and her colored cotton for interesting interviews about this cotton pioneer and a different perspective on what is possible in fashion. www.vreseis.com



STELLA MCCARTNEY is a well-known fashion designer, who has made it her prerogative to design vegan sportswear. I name Stella not for any super innovative idea, but for giving us an alternative to mass *fast fashion*. "Vegan" now has a face. She uses alternative materials and components (adhesives must also be vegan). Thanks to Stella, people no longer think of vegans as canvas-slipper-wearing, "plain Janes" with pigtails. Stella is well worth having in your portfolio of "fashionistas to know". As a front-row animal activist, she claims "sustainability can be sexy", a mantra some people certainly need to learn! *Go, Stella!*

Almonds

- High in antioxidants—protect cells from oxidative damage, a major contributor to aging and disease
- High in vitamin E
- High in magnesium—beneficial for type 2 diabetes and high blood pressure
- Reduces LDL cholesterol
- High in protein and fiber



Why Try to Make Relationships Work

by Anna Sizorina

Of all social relationships, marriage has the strongest protective effect on health. Researchers found out that being married reduces the risk of premature death by 500% (it is not an error—five hundred percent!!!) for MEN. They really need us, especially in the second part of life. For women, the effect is only 50%.

However, hostility in relationships is known to have a damaging effect on health. Women in a stressful marriage are more likely to have increased weight, higher blood pressure, more frequent sleep disturbances, more anxiety and depression than women living in harmonic relationships.

In January AWCH hosted two workshops on relationships and cross-cultural differences. Culture is the instrument that helps to deal with social problems and to fulfill biological needs in specific contexts. This collective mental programming influences patterns of thinking that are reflected in the meaning people attach to various aspects of life. In our workshop, we looked at different ways of communication, hierarchies, attitudes towards uncertainty and planning, emotional expression and regulation. We looked into the history trying to make sense why it was so important for all of us to become who we are.

In the next workshop, we followed Dr. John Gottman's model of a Sound Relationship House. We have uncovered "four horsemen of the apocalypse" that are fatal for every relationship: criticism, defensiveness, contempt and stonewalling and have learned how to stop them; we have realized that in order to understand the partner and feel his pain, we do not have to assume his position and give up our ideals.

Our members have developed different strategies to adapt and here are their stories:

“ I found the workshop helpful because it provided an opportunity for a safe and honest discussion about some of the cultural challenges faced with a mixed marriage as well as living in a foreign country. I took away the importance of communication throughout the different stages of a relationship as well as the opportunity to resolve many issues that could otherwise disrupt a relationship. ”

—Tamilyn L.

“ Being that German and American cultures have a lot in common I often forget that there are still differences. It's helpful to have the differences explained and fascinating to understand why someone does what they do. To know that my husband is not being difficult ... he's just being German. ”

—Susan St.-W.

“ I would say, thank God that my German husband, Gernot, is extremely patient and understanding. I prefer to speak English with him and he has obliged, making his English all the better... so good for me. In our family, Gernot's kids learned the difference between Chinese and German cultural—simple thing like listing what they prefer to eat...what kind of *Brötchen* they want for breakfast...is a learning experience. I, coming from a Chinese family always have meals 'family style' and we share everything. So when we first had breakfast, even though the kids had each ordered their choice of *Brötchen*, I ate half of the *Sesame-*, and then half of *Laugenbrötchen*. Later the kids asked their father why Stella ate their *Brötchen*. In this way they learned about Chinese 'family style' where everything is shared. We still eat this way at all meals and all have grown to respect and to like it. ”

—Stella K.-R.



Film Group Annual Tea

Becky Tan generously invited the Film Group for their Annual Tea took in the Atrium Lounge of the Fontenay Hotel by the Alster on Wednesday, April 24. Fifteen group members enjoyed a special high tea with delicacies from Chef Pâtissier Marco D’Andrea, who just won the prestigious, international Rolling Pin Award. We were all in awe of the simple but sophisticated selection—light, modern, artistic and delicious!

Everyone was especially happy to greet a special guest: Seattle film-group member, Karen Pecota, who was in HH for a short week before flying back to Seattle via New York City where she will go to the last half of the Tribeca Film Festival. She is a long-time AWCH member, who served as AWCH President in 1999 and 2000. She writes film reviews and represents the Film Group internationally by going to film festivals (besides Tribeca, also Sundance and Slamdance and perhaps this year, Seattle). Karen lived in Hamburg for many years—her (now-grown) kids went to school here, and she and her husband founded a church in Norderstedt. Karen shared that she and Becky have an regular exchange of goods—coffee from Hamburg for Kellogg’s Shredded Wheat made in the USA.



It was a wonderful setting on a beautiful day for an extraordinary high tea. We all enjoyed catching up on the latest news and sharing our ideas on films and other topics. I don’t think any of us really thought that *Green Book* deserved the Oscar for Best Film.

At 6:00 p.m., we were invited up to the 6th Floor to enjoy a drink and the fantastic view of the Alster and Hamburg, which is said to be the best. (Carol S.)



The Opera Club Takes Off on a Czech Adventure

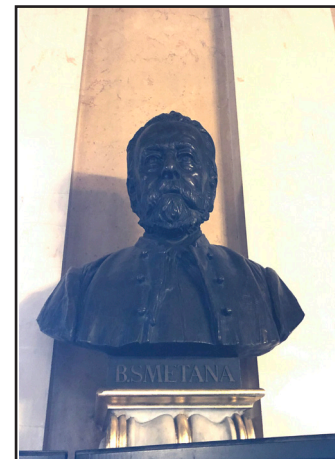
How about an April weekend in Prague complete with beautiful native music? The Opera Club certainly could not resist such an opportunity, and so we recently embarked on our long-awaited first international trip.

WangDi Sch. had led the charge by inspiring us with the music of Bedřich Smetana. As the late April schedule of the Prague National Theater included a performance of his best-known opera, *The Bartered Bride* (*Prodaná nevěsta*), our choice of destination quickly became clear. Eleven of us past and present Opera Club members, accompanied by three husbands and two kids, made our way to Prague for an inspiring weekend.



Only native works may be experienced at the beautiful, gold-trimmed Prague National Theater (*Národní divadlo*), which also predominantly features Czech performers. This gave us Opera Club travelers the opportunity to experience a truly authentic Czech production. While *The Bartered Bride* is

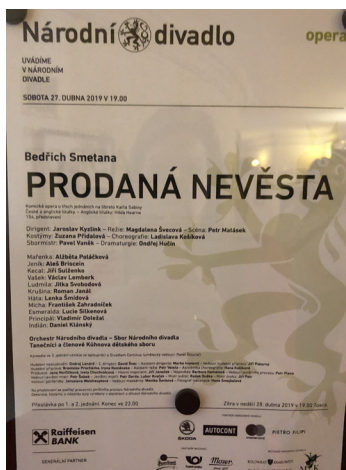
anchored in a familiar opera format, the National Theater's show pulsed with a wonderful whirl of traditional vocal and dance music. (However, we must admit to being quite grateful for the English subtitles.) A private tour of the opera house also provided us with the opportunity to explore inside the theater and enjoy the view atop that gorgeous golden roof.





Opera-related activities were just part of the weekend, however. Prague is full of wonderful opportunities for tourism, and we did not hesitate to make the most of them. From the astronomical clock to the Charles Bridge to the Prague Castle, smaller and larger groups of us drank in the beauty and history that may be found around practically every street corner. Further highlights included the theatre at which Mozart’s *Don Giovanni* had its premiere, boat tours, and even a current movie set. Fortunately, no defenestration incidents came to pass. Culinary adventures were also high on many of our lists. Food tours, the Restaurant Smetana, amazing ice cream, and of course the post-opera disco restaurant were fun discoveries that kept our stomachs full and our spirits high. Na zdraví, Prague!

As we continue to enjoy our memories of our Prague weekend, a question is already starting to tingle at the back of our minds: where will we go next year? Join us at Opera Club in our new season and help us decide! (Elizabeth R.)



Opera Club Returns in August - featuring - *Don Giovanni* by W.A. Mozart

Performance date: late October, date to be determined

Meeting dates:
August 23
September 20
October 18

Fridays starting at 10:00 a.m. until approx. 12:30 p.m.
Location: Elizabeth R’s home in Hamburg-Poppenbüttel

Diana Schnelle's Extraordinary Contemporary Art Lecture

Have you ever gone to a museum or an exhibition and been confronted with a modern piece of art and didn't know what to think of it? It might have left you cold or just made no sense because you didn't have the tools or the background to understand why the artist would create such a piece. Our own AWCH art lecturer, Diana Schnelle, has an MA, has worked for the well-known Sotheby's auction house and ran a commercial gallery in London. Not only well-versed in art, art is her passion. You saw it immediately when she calmly ran through her power-point presentation. This is her world and she understands it fully. She originally planned to talk about the workings of the commercial art world but

connecting to the contemporary art scene. Diana took it all in stride; she assured us by the end of the lecture that we would have a basis to help us approach these works of art. She showed many of her favorite artists, who do installations, videos, and onetime performance pieces.

She gave us online-magazines that we could access: Artnet.com, Artsy.net, Friese.com, Hyperallergic.com, Tate.org.uk, and artspringboard.com. With different emphasis, these help us acquire knowledge needed to further our education in the Modern Art scene. By the end of the lecture we all definitely wanted more to learn. also want to thank everyone for bringing wonderful food to my house for the lecture. We said good-bye to Karen M., who was off to Texas. And thanks to Karen for the art museum tray and candy, won by Marilyn Richter. A wonderful time was had by all. (Shelly S.)



decided to go one step back, so that all of us would be on the same page.

So what *is* contemporary art? Diana took the J. Paul Getty Museum definition: Art made and produced by living artists. Working in a wide range of mediums, contemporary artists often reflect and comment on modern-day society, responding to a global environment that is culturally diverse, technologically advanced, and multifaceted. Contemporary artists may question traditional ideas of how art is defined, what constitutes art, and how art is made, while creating a dialogue with—and in some cases rejecting—preceding styles and movements. The result can be very intimidating if you did not study art and may explain why many have a hard time



Bagels, bagels, bagels! A big thank you to Tracy M. for organizing another great bagel sale. The proceeds are used to buy fabric and accessories for the sewing bee held every year by the SnB group for crafting heart pillows and holder bags for drainage bottles. These in turn are donated to breast cancer patients.

The SnB meets every other Tuesday night for a "fantastic evening of crafts and laughs with friends." They have found a permanent place to meet. For details, contact Jess M (snb@awchamburg.org.)

Art Club at "Lange Nacht der Museen"

Lange Nacht der Museen has been running successfully in Hamburg since year 2000. This year the Art Club decided to experience the popular cultural event first-hand with our own program. Since most of the participants came to Hamburg for family reasons, Shelly and Jennifer chose the theme 'A bit of Hamburg's History' along with four museums for our group outing on May 18.

After a lively and bubbly reception at Jennifer's living room, where an oversized piece of original art captures the eyes of the visitor, we began our tour at Museum für Hamburgische Geschichte for a brief introduction to the long history of our adopted home city. We then elbowed our way through the

boisterous and crowded streets of St. Pauli to visit its museum about this colorful district.

At our third stop, Hamburg Schulmuseum, we could not resist the temptation to put on school uniforms and name tags and sit behind each desk to relive, mo-

mentarily, our primary school days, watching Jennifer on the class podium role-playing the teacher.

By the time when we arrived at Komponisten-Quartier, the sky had turned dusky. Numerous tealights on the cobble stones heightened the romantic atmosphere emanating from the reconstructed 19th-century merchants' houses turned into museums. A guided tour on Brahms, one of the famous composers born in Hamburg, just started to tickle our interest in Hamburg's outstanding musical history. Meanwhile, a boutique concert with a flutist accompanied by a harpsichord was held at the adjacent museum of C.E. Bach. The music gave us a 'live' testimony that "music gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination and life to everything." (Plato).

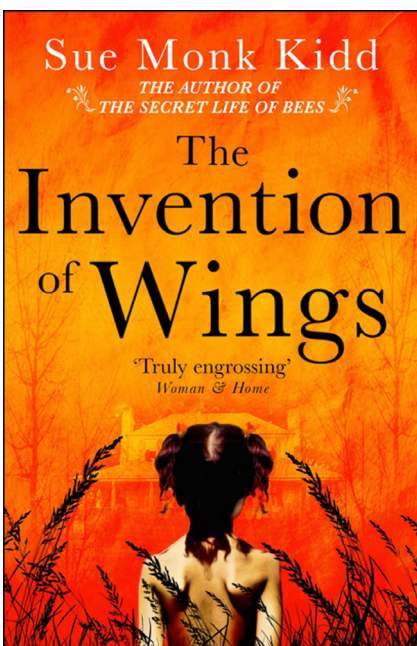


Bagel Sale and Stich 'n' Bitch



There are different ways to explore a new country, a new city and its surroundings. One fun way to discover, enjoy and fall in love with Hamburg, as our experience on *Lange Nacht der Museen* proved, is to team up with girlfriends; get up and go; chat, joke and giggle along the way while learning about this multi-layered cosmopolitan home away from home. (WangDi Sch.)

Book Club: *Visionary Women, Nuclear Catastrophe, and Mental Health*



The Invention of Wings

by Sue Monk Kidd

Publisher: Viking (January 2014)

ISBN13: 9780670024780

"I ask for no favor for my sex. All I ask of our brethren is that they take their feet off our necks." This quote, used by Ruth Bader Ginsberg when she gave her first oral arguments to the Supreme Court, has been recently resurrected in films on Justice Ginsberg and also by demonstrators in the *Me, Too* movement. But these are

the words of Sarah Moore Grimké, an early abolitionist and suffragette. The March book club selection, *The Invention of Wings* by Sue Monk Kidd, illustrates the life of Sarah Grimké and the young slave gifted to her, Hetty Handful Grimké, in antebellum Charleston.

In her novel, Ms Kidd switches between the stories of Sarah and Handful. Sarah was the daughter of a prosperous lawyer and plantation owner and lived with all of the benefits and comforts that life provided. She was intelligent and inquisitive and her love of reading was encouraged by her father. She wanted to be a lawyer, but that path was closed to her as a woman. Handful was a young slave gifted to Sarah by her parents to attend to Sarah's personal needs. Sarah abhorred slavery but accepted

Handful rather than leave her to the treatment she would receive as one of her mother's slaves. Through the stories of Handful and Sarah we get a glimpse of the cruelty of slavery as well as the limitations placed on women in the 19th century.

The book led to a lively discussion of issues addressed in the book's historical setting and how they have significance today. Although this is a work of fiction, Ms Kidd undertook a great deal of research to give the stories authenticity. When characters whose names we recognized were introduced in the book, we all expressed surprised when we then realized that Sarah was based on a real person. Even though the time period of the novel was the first half of the 1800's, much of our conversation focused on how we are still struggling with these same issues 200 years later. While things have certainly improved since then, it's become increasingly apparent in recent years just how fragile these changes have been. We also discussed how the attitudes of racial and gender superiority have always been part of the American attitude and still exist today. This thought-provoking book is one we all thoroughly enjoyed and would certainly recommend reading. Thank you to Tine H., for hosting in your charming home. (Anne C.)



Midnight in Chernobyl

The Untold Story of the World's Greatest Nuclear Disaster

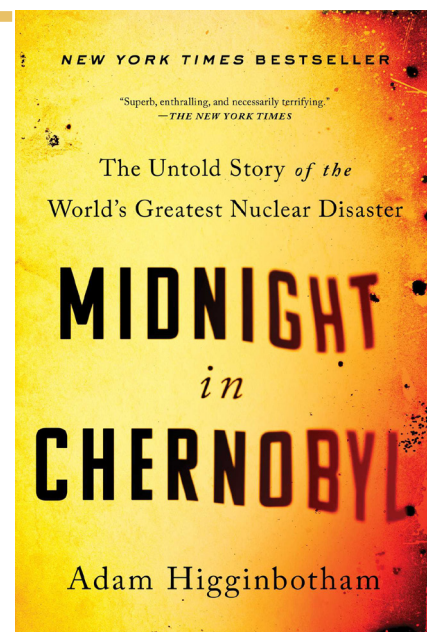
by Adam Higginbotham

Publisher: Simon & Schuster (February 2019)

ISBN13: 9781501134616

"Beneath the sickly fluorescent strip lights of Control Room Number Four, a rancid haze of cigarette smoke hung in the air. The midnight shift had only just arrived, ..."

So, begins the fifth chapter of Adam Higginbotham's harrowing and compelling narrative of the Chernobyl disaster, arguably history's worst nuclear accident. Higginbotham reconstructs the disaster from the ground up, through the eyes of the men and women who witnessed it firsthand. The first four chapters are a prelude to the disaster. We were warned by others, "to keep reading through the technical sections, it gets better." However, understanding this background, which outlines the technological optimism but overwhelming





Maybe You Should Talk to Someone:
A Therapist, Her Therapist, and Our Lives Revealed
 by Lori Gottlieb

Publisher: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (April 2019)
 ISBN13: 9781328662057

In May, the Book Club met at Carol H.'s home to discuss *Maybe You Should Talk to Someone* by Lori Gottlieb. Nine members were present for a great discussion, which meandered around a bit, but always came right back

on topic. Many of us agreed with one published reviewer's statement that the book was part Oliver Sacks and part Nora Ephron. In her book, Gottlieb, who is a Psychotherapist (and, yes, she does mention how that word can be divided), writes about her patients, her own therapy, her therapist, and life in general. It is a charming and witty book, which gives the reader an insight into therapy—and therapists.

Everyone in the group could relate to the cases presented at some level, thus reading the book is one part voyeurism into other people's issues and one part self-discovery and/or identification with

a challenge. Although many different, serious, and profound issues are dealt with by the therapist / author and her various patients, Ms Gottlieb is able to maintain a light and funny narrative, which is also very insightful. Looking for something witty, charming, profound, and deep?—check all with this book.

Additionally, the book gives good perception of a therapist's work. As such, there are many professional terms and explanations used—but only to add clarity. This is a practice that works so well that readers can begin to feel like a therapist themselves; sort of like suddenly becoming an expert judge on practically any sport during the Olympics. It's just instant! (Tine H.)



bureaucracy, hierarchy, secrecy and incompetence of the "cracking foundation of the Soviet empire," is essential to understand the multitude of decisions, activity and inactivity that occurred at "midnight in Chernobyl."

It is a story of human tragedy. Although the official Soviet report claimed the death of 31 persons as a direct aftermath of the catastrophe, the exact number is unknown and clearly much higher. The long-term consequence of radiation makes it nearly impossible to determine an accurate cause and effect. Evacuation of the neighboring "atomic city" of Pripyat, with its population of close to 50,000 persons, occurred too late—40 hours after the Chernobyl explosion—and no attempts were made to track the whereabouts or health of these displaced persons. Over 600,000 "liquidators" were called up around the Soviet Union and subjected to excruciating minutes of deadly radiation levels. The livelihood of countless was disrupted—not just in the neighboring villages but also in Kiev, with its two-million inhabitants, and in Northern Europe, where the "malevolent cloud" of fallout was first detected.

It is also a story of human resilience and ingenuity. Amid bureaucratic incompetence were scenes of

stunning bravery. Helicopter pilots dumped bags of sand into the reactor to quell its burning red core. Nuclear scientists and engineers worked day and night to devise unfathomable structures to stave off the "China Syndrome"—a nuclear meltdown tunneling through to the other side of the world.

The discussion at our book club meeting, hosted by Carol S., was full of awe and praise of the book. Venita K. shared some photographs taken by a friend who had visited the area on multiple occasions. They brought back to life the many scenes described in the book of the disrupted life and environment. We were all amazed to hear that Chernobyl is now a "destination spot" for tourists. One can only help that this new turnabout serves as a reminder of the destruction that can occur when mankind carelessly seeks to harness nature. (Carol H.)



World Leadership Summit

by Susan Stanley-Witt

Fifteen thousand people came to hear Barack Obama, as well as other speakers, talk in the Lanxess Arena in Cologne in April. Obama and his interviewer, Cristián Gálvez, sat in armchairs, wearing jackets but no ties. Obama was at ease with the interviewer and the audience but simultaneously very concentrated. One noticed that he was always thinking a few steps ahead and remembering a couple steps behind, connecting the puzzle pieces as he went. A simultaneous written translation on a big screen during Obama's hour-long interview made it possible to listen to him in English.

Obama was born in 1961, making him the youngest president and also ex-president ever. He spoke of his beginnings as a community organizer in Chicago. He reminisced on how he learned that it was important to work with people and to allow them to do things for themselves as a group. Group dynamic was, and still is, important.

Six months before his second term in office finished, he started giving thought to what would come afterwards. After catching up on his missed sleep and having to figure out how to make coffee with a very complicated coffee machine, he had his answer. He began working with young leaders. He has created a network of young leaders to whom he gives his support. He said that the most important thing as a leader is to listen and not to give big speeches. Put the ego aside and find out what they feel and care about. Understand their story. Form a relationship to the person. He first traveled to Africa, then Asia, and is now in Europe meeting up with young and future leaders. The day after the summit he met with his friend Angela Merkel and young leaders in Germany to give them support and guidance.

Obama made a point of saying, "Focus on what you want to do and not on who you want to be." The goal is not what you want to be but what difference you want to make. Concentrate on the change you want to achieve.

Obama is convinced that democracy is a great thing! It is a compilation of competing ideas, competing voices. Do not look for facts that just reinforce or support your opinion. It is important to have a round table with lots of different kinds of people. You need a lot of women because studies show that companies with women on their board do better financially. One needs different skill sets, different religions, different races, etc. We all have blind spots meaning we need all the facts, data and options presented by different people. He said to never have a meeting with a homogeneous group. We need to be challenged to get good results and move forward.



Asked about women in leadership he said that when he was in office he had put a lot of women in important positions. The women complained that men spoke over them or stole their ideas then sold them as their own. Obama told the women that they had to speak up and assert themselves, but he also addressed the men, telling them they had to listen to the women. One needs to involve men from a very early age, teaching them how to treat women. Obama also made a point of asking the opinion of people who generally did not contribute in meetings, as they often had the best ideas. His junior staff was also called upon to contribute. You need to create an environment where everyone has value. Coming back to women's equality, he stated that it is necessary to start with childcare because otherwise it falls back on women. The government needs to step-up to provide this care.

Moving on to the climate change. He is pleased to note that awareness and motivation are up. He encouraged people to start voting for concrete plans and not for vague statements. We need to get active and speak up. We don't ask our grandfathers to pick out the clothes we wear; why should we then step back and allow our elders to make all the decisions for a future that affects us?

His hope for the future. He thinks the world needs more tolerance. He envisions an open society. We need a "bottle" of ideas or stories. How can we come together? We cannot afford the violence we are capable of inflicting on each other. Change happens so fast these days. For example through migration. This makes people insecure. It's the old story—they are not like us. Our suspicions make matters worse through force. That is how society works. It is the battle between two stories. Young people are cynical and skeptical about government/society but idealistic about humanity and each other. Barack Obama hopes young people choose the right story.

Art in the City

In the Light of the North: Danish Paintings from the Ordrupgaard Collection

Hamburger Kunsthalle
www.hamburger-kunsthalle.de
May 10, 2019 through to Sept. 22, 2019

2020 has been designated a “Year of German-Danish Cultural Friendship” consisting of multiple exchanges and events in both countries. As a kickoff, the Hamburg Kunsthalle pulled off a coup by hosting works from the Museet Ordrupgaard while this small gem of a museum on the Danish coast just north of Copenhagen is closed for renovation. The Danish Ambassador was on hand to open the first installment of this loan in May, 48 works from what is considered to be one of the finest collections of Danish painting in the world.

In the Light of the North (Im Lichte des Nordens) is small exhibition to savor. As pointed out in the catalogue and emphasized in the show’s title, the predominantly light-filled pictures are an antithesis to the “Nordic noir” crime series which have come to represent Scandinavia to us all in the age of Netflix. In a series of lovely small paintings, Danish artists like Christian Købke (1810-1848) began in the 1830s to venture out of academic studios into the open air to record the Danish countryside in carefully



Wilhelm Hammershøi (1864-1916) *Sonnenstrahlen oder Sonnenlicht, 1900*
Öl auf Leinwand, Ordrupgaard, Kopenhagen; © Foto: Anders Sune Berg

composed yet freely painted studies of unremarkable intimate spots. This combination of idealizing clarity of line and structure with subtly material, tactile brushwork becomes the basis of increasingly finished studies in the following decades of more pointedly evocative views. During this period, painters like Johan Thomas Lundbye (1818-1848) sought to capture the specialness of the Danish landscape as part of the romantic search for identity in a period of when the nationhood of Denmark was challenged by a series of conflicts and wars.

This development in Danish landscape painting culminates around the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries in the realist work of Lauritz Andersen Ring (1854-1933). Here strongly foreshortened paths or streams lead from the picture plane straight into the vistas but end or change course abruptly and so become part of a series of interlocking flat matte color areas that counter the suggestion of depth. Ring celebrates rare appearances of sun in the darker months, setting linear patterns of gnarled bare trees against crisply contoured fields, sea and sky rendered in matte, delicately varied browns and intense high value greens and blues, perfectly conveying the brittle beauty of dry sunny days in winter and early spring. The sensitively varied brushwork and rich grey and beige palette with which he represents ghostly pollarded trees and closed up houses blanketed in velvety damp air on overcast days remind the viewer how very precious any light at all is in wintery rural Denmark.

Born in a village in Zealand to a wheelmaker and farmer’s daughter, Ring trained aca-



Christen Købke (1810-1848) *Partie von der Dossierung in Kopenhagen mit zwei Jungen auf einem Steg, Studie, um 1837*, Öl auf Papier, © Ordrupgaard, Kopenhagen; Foto: Anders Sune Berg

demically in Copenhagen but was drawn to images of the poor and uneducated inhabitants of rural France painted by Jean-François Millet (1814-1875) and later Paul Gauguin (1848-1903) as well as the "social realism" of Jean-François Rafaëlli (1850-1924) and other contemporaries. One of Ring's signature grey days expressively sets the scene for a mob of villagers forcing an alcoholic out of a village in *Drunk* of 1890, considered a key work of Danish social realism. The psychological isolation of the protagonist is a theme also addressed in various nuances in a series of paintings exploring the romantic topos of the solitary figure gazing out of a window. Two of these are shown in the exhibition.

This subject was also a favorite of the 15-year younger painter, Wilhelm Hammershøi, who goes as far as to make the windows themselves the subject occasionally in the often empty and sparsely furnished interiors for which he has earned international renown. Mostly painted in his own 17th-century home in Copenhagen, these are reminiscent of the 17th-century interiors of Jan Vermeer, whose work Hammershøi encountered on a trip to Holland in 1888. In the Danish painter's work, simple classical tables and chairs aligned to aged ivory walls submit to a rigorously rectilinear organization of windows, doors and wall moldings often unfolding parallel



to the rectangular plane of the picture. Hammershøi reverently envelopes these enduring, comfortably stable spaces with transcendent light entering through windows sometimes unseen, softening hard edges and making emptiness palpable. These paintings are very beautiful and very quiet. I will be sorry to see them leave Hamburg in November, but not too sorry because they are being replaced by a set of gorgeous paintings by French painters including Delacroix, Courbet, Manet, Monet, Degas, Cezanne and Gauguin, the second installment of the loan from the exquisite Ordrupgaard Museum collection. (Holly T.)

Lauritz Andersen Ring (1854-1933) *Ein Bach bei Frederiksøerød im Frühling, 1900*, Öl auf Leinwand, © Ordrupgaard, Kopenhagen; Foto: Anders Sune Berg



Friedrich Carl Gröger (1766-1838) *Lina Gröger, die Pflgetochter des Künstlers, 1815*; Öl auf Leinwand, © Hamburger Kunsthalle / bpk; Foto: Elke Walford

Hamburger Schule Das 19th Century Rediscovered

Hamburger Kunsthalle
www.hamburger-kunsthalle.de
April 12, 2019 through to July 14, 2019

The title of this exhibition is somewhat misleading, as Hamburg didn't have its own academy of fine arts until early in the 20th century. On the 150th birthday of the Kunsthalle, however, curator Markus Bertsch set out to determine which stylistic tendencies, thematic preferences, artistic influences and artists' associations might constitute or have contributed to a distinct Hamburg "school" of painting. Although the pragmatic *Pfeffersäcke*, the shippers and traders of Hamburg, were slow to institutionalize culture, there was plenty of money to foster a flourishing art market. During the first half of the 19th-century, the local Kunstverein and Künstlerverein (Arts' and Artists' Associations) encouraged collectors to donate their art to a public collection, which became the Hamburg Kunsthalle in 1869. To sift through the museum's vast holdings of works painted by

Hamburg artists, Bertsch enlisted the help of Prof. Iris Wendeholm from the Hamburg University and her art history students, who also contributed to the accompanying catalogue. They are celebrating an anniversary as well; the Hamburg University was founded 100 years ago.

Some of the pictures have been hidden in storage for the past century. And while occasionally one can understand why, there are some nice discoveries to be made here, especially for Hamburgophiles; for example, a lovely Dutch-inspired view of the Innenalster lake and Alsterfleet canal by Adolf Friedrich Vollmer with the Petrikirche in the background, not long before the picturesque huddle of small-scale old buildings, which were destroyed in the Great Fire of 1842 and replaced by the more spacious Venice-inspired Alsterarkaden. Another painting documents the imposing Baumhaus, which dominated the inner harbor at the corner of Baumwoll and Steinhöft streets for nearly two centuries but was torn down in 1857 when the harbor

entrance was widened to accommodate growing shipping traffic. More pastoral images of the original fishing village of Blankenese are the subject of a special section of the exhibition.

The paintings are not all landscapes. If the romantic Shakespeare scenes and Nazarene biblical paintings, some large-scale, are not to your taste, you may like a fascinating pair of works documenting an early example of LGBT parenting. A self-portrait of Friedrich Carl Gröger (1766-1838) at his easel with his male partner and their foster child is followed by a wonderful later portrait of the girl as a self-possessed young woman gazing openly and directly at

the viewer. A less happy outcome is recorded in an unusual epitaph-like history painting with an elaborate arched frame lent by the St. Petri church. It shows French soldiers herding 1800 Hamburg citizens into the church during the Napoleonic occupation on Christmas Eve in 1813. They were made to stand there through the freezing night and many died when they were driven out of the city the next morning so there would be more food for the soldiers.

Since budding Hamburg artists had to study elsewhere, many of the exhibited works were painted in locations far afield. Those who enrolled at the Munich Academy were fascinated by the Alps, so different from the heath and coastal marsh landscapes they were accustomed to around Hamburg. Others continued further southward on the traditional artist's pilgrimage to Rome and the Italian *compagna*. Quite a few Hamburg artists headed in the opposite direction up to the Copenhagen Academy, from which they ventured

over to the Swedish coast or into the Norwegian mountains on study trips resulting in a number of sensitive drawings and oil sketches and one or two finished paintings. They were following in the footsteps of well-known early Romantic painters, including Hamburg's most famous artist, Phillip Otto Runge. While Runge's luminous symbolic painted masterpieces are on permanent view at the Kunsthalle, the talented draftsman's wonderful drawings are seldom shown and it is a rare pleasure to encounter several of these in a small room near the end of the exhibition (Holly T.)



Jacob Genster (1808-1845) Am Ellstrand bei nerdeckter Sonne, 1840; Öl auf Papier, © Hamburger Kunsthalle / bpk Foto: Christoph Irrgang

Do you know that AWCH has a new Theater Group?
 Enjoy live and streamed theater productions in English with a group of lively ladies. And why not meet up before or after the play for dinner or drinks?
 Contact theatergroup@awchamburg.org for details.

Theater in Hamburg

Frankly, There's No Time for a Slipup

by Marinell Haegelin

Moonlight and Magnolias

by Ron Hutchison

at The English Theatre of Hamburg
with Paul Glaser directing

The Atlanta, Georgia native, born 35 years after the Civil War ended, grew-up listening to first-hand descriptions of Confederate's efforts; these became instrumental to her debut novel. When published in 1936, Margaret Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind* was a raging success. Within a month, titan producer David O. Selznick bought the motion-picture rights for \$50,000—take into account it's 1936—and undertook transferring it to the silver screen.

Production's finally underway, but lacks "vision" so David O. Selznick fires the director and screenwriter. While negotiating with Ben Hecht, legendary screenwriter and script doctor, Hecht admits he's never read *Gone with the Wind*. Hagglng over details, Selznick gets five days of Hecht's time. Then, esteemed director Victor Fleming arrives; the idea of resuming filming without a screenplay appalls Fleming. Undeterred, Selznick authoritatively calls his secretary Miss Poppenguhl into the office and orders her to hold all phone calls and bring lots of "brain-food" (i.e., bananas and peanuts), as Ben and Victor start squabbling. As soon as Miss Poppenguhl's delivered everything, Selznick locks the two men and himself in his office. Over the next five days he and Fleming will act out the book, thus wrangling a screenplay from Hecht. Selznick's dic-



tum is, "We gotta' have big." Two days later, David O. pushes and cajoles while reminding them who's boss. When Ben takes issue with a slap scene, Selznick won't budge. Things get personal as politics and prejudices are brought into the verbal fray. Screenwriter vs. Director. Producer explodes, has a tantrum, then freezes in a catatonic state. Worried, director reminds screenwriter why Ben likes working for Selznick; they consider sneaking out until exhaustion forces compromises. Following five madcap days, knackered and surrounded by chaos, the three philosophize while preparing to rejoin the world-at-large about: Hecht's "six pointed star" outlook; whose power determines Selznick's fate; Fleming's fears, and "putting a button" on that final line. Unsurprisingly, the man of action revives quickest, confidently saying, "Yea, well, I'm the producer..." with his eye already on the golden statuette.

Central to this play is power echelon, which director Paul Glaser concentrated on during the casting process. Auditioning in small groups, Glaser subsequently pulled single actors to create the four characters' distinctive personalities, and succeeded brilliantly. While rehearsing, maintaining the pervasive hierarchy and attitudes inherent in early Hollywood's film studios was paramount. Which included bigotry, egoism, jealousies, male chauvinism, and xenophobia; Glaser kept the 2019 actors focused on these 1930s dimensions. It's noteworthy that Glaser also choreographed onstage skirmishes, and composed the original music that includes a lively typewriter-influenced cue. Set



Clara Aileen Bowan (Miss Poppenguhl) left, and Rory Murphy (David O. Selznick) right

design (Mathias Wardeck) and costumes (Patricia Royo) atmospherically complete the illusion. Regarding casting, the Brexit-created U.K. instabilities and confusion were compounded by countless uncertainties that the theater dealt with.

The multi-talented thespians' international credits include film and music as well. Their key challenges were: getting the right spin on the fine art of farce, and the amount of intense dialogue for the guys. The farcical aspect is portraying serious conditions in a way that highlights its ludicrousness. Because the David O. Selznick character is central, Rory Murphy's rigorous lines had to be down pat, as did roundly portraying the mogul's temperament. To that end, Rory read Selznick's memoirs, and nixed watching archival footage; he didn't want to mimic Selznick. The short three-week rehearsal, combined with being in a foreign environment was a new, yet fun experience. Tom Dunlea, having recently finished a two-year tour of a musical, liked playing the serious, albeit loquacious Ben Hecht. Ben's full of himself, high-minded about certain political and ethical issues, yet callow; he intentionally upsets Victor, ignoring probable consequences. Ben refuses to break or concede, albeit he'll bend when necessary. For Victor Fleming's character, Edwin Flay utilized Meisner techniques—a form of method acting—to understand, then project Victor's subconscious behavior: he feels things deeply, constrains himself, while outwardly is reserved, i.e. keeps things bottled up. As unlikable as some aspects of each man is, nonetheless, all three like their characters. Clara Aileen Bowan's biggest hurdle was Miss Poppenguhl's entrenched mindset: a 21st century woman, adopting an early 20th century woman's mindset, and adapting that accordingly to her portrayal. Yes, the boss' secretary has the keys to the realm, but the men own it. Whenever she's onstage, Clara Aileen steals the scene.



The Irish writer Ron Hutchinson worked many jobs—fish gutter, carpet fitter, *etc.*—before his break writing a television play for BBC. He has several writing awards, was Writer-in-Residence at the Royal Shakespeare Company, and is widely produced in the U.K. and U.S.A. Writing for American television and film companies since moving to Los Angeles, he's an Emmy-winning feature and television writer, and has taught screenwriting at the American Film Institute.

As of the 21st century, the novel's been translated into 40 languages and sold 30-plus billion books worldwide. Just as Selznick's iconic film won eight of thirteen Oscar® nominations in 1939, and is one of the greatest box-office successes in film history. Selznick became a mogul in his own right, producing a string of legendary films, including *Rebecca*, his second Oscar® winner a year later.

For fast, frantic farcical fun, treat yourselves to *Moonlight and Magnolias*. This quick-witted homage to Hollywood's golden age is also CliffNotes™ for filmmaking: Its passion, its demands, and its never-a-dull-moment madness.

MOONLIGHT AND MAGNOLIAS, premiered on April 25, and runs until June 22, 2019. Stephen Mallatratt and Susan Hill's thriller THE WOMAN IN BLACK will kick-off the 2019–2010 Season, premiering early September 2019.

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.

Tom Dunlea (Ben Hecht) left, and Rory Murphy (David O. Selznick) right

Tom Dunlea (Ben Hecht) foreground, and Edwin Flay (Victor Fleming) and Rory Murphy (David O. Selznick) background



From left Tom Dunlea (Ben Hecht), Rory Murphy (David O. Selznick) and Edwin Flay (Victor Fleming)

Photo credits: © Kock, ETH

Film Reviews and more...



Nur eine Frau (A Regular Woman) ****

Germany 2019

Opening May 9, 2019

Directed by: Sherry Hormann

Writing credits: Florian Öller, Matthias Deiss

Principal actors: Almila Bagriacik, Merve Aksoy, Aram Arami, Rauand Taleh

On the evening of 2005 Hatun Aynur Sürücü was shot on a Berlin street by her youngest brother Nuri. Her deeply religious Muslim family had emigrated from a Kurdish section of Turkey with one child. They had eight more children in Berlin (including Hatun, who went by her middle name Aynur) with whom they shared limited apartment space. Aynur was separated from her familiar environment when her parents

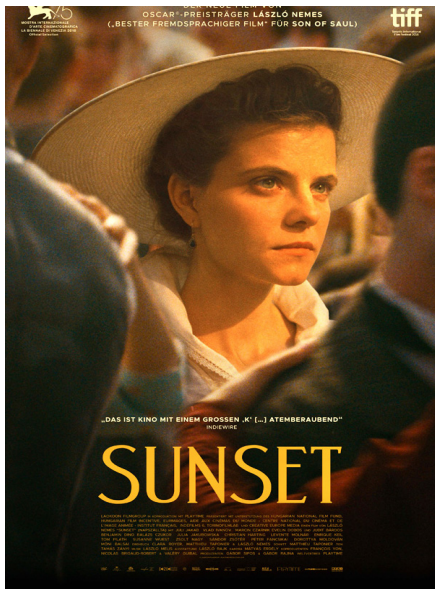
sent her back to Turkey to marry her cousin. She was only 16 and forced to leave school. Soon she returned to her parents, pregnant, and hoping to find sympathy for having been married off to a violent man. She had bruises to prove it. The family members were more interested in saving its "honor" and continued to reject her. Her son, Cen, was born and they eventually moved out on their own. After many difficulties she finally received aid from the German authorities: living space, continued education, and financial support. Eventually she studied to be an electrician (with possibilities of getting a degree in electrical engineering), moved into her own apartment with Cen, took off her headscarf, cut her hair, and dated a German man. She had German friends who took her dancing at night. At the same time, she attempted to remain close to her family which pushed her away, calling her a "whore" or worse. Her brothers stalked her on the phone and in person. They seemed to be influenced by pressure from leaders in their local mosque, although this could not be proved later in court. Only one brother thought differently; he was studying law in Cologne and advised her to leave Berlin for safety reasons. In all, her martyrdom spread out over seven years, before she died at age 23.

Under the guidance of director **Sherry Hormann**, all of these facts, as well as many more, come to light in the film, in the voice of Aynur (**Almila Bagriacik**) telling her own story. In my showing the producer **Sandra Maischberger**, along with **Amilia Bagriacik** and **Rauand Taleh** (plays Nuri) and **Aram Arami** (plays older brother), were present to answer questions. There were about 50 viewers in my audience, and only about eight were male. No one was wearing a religious headscarf. This team was scheduled to visit four Hamburg cinemas on this one day. The audience was definitely moved by this experience, not necessarily to leave depressed, but all felt a need to rise to the problem. How can we help? Three members of Terre des Femmes monitored a table full of helpful pamphlets about the rights of women in Germany including "... it is prohibited to force someone to marry. It is a punishable offence." This must-see film, which premiered at the 2019 Tribeca Film Festival, will soon begin showing in German schools, accompanied by opportunities to discuss in class. (Becky Tan)

Sunset (Napszállta)****

Hungary, France 2018
Opening June 13, 2019

Directed by: László Nemes
Writing credits: László Nemes,
Clara Royer (co-writer), Matthieu
Taponier (co-writer)
Principal actors: Juli Jakab,
Susanne Wuest, Vlad Ivanov,
Evelin Dobos, Levente Molnár



Set in elegant 1913 Budapest at the end of the powerful Austro-Hungarian Empire, with the awakening of its revolution against the aristocracy, the streets only appear to be quiet. Orphaned as a small child (her parents had died in an accident), young hat maker Irisz Leiter (**Juli Jakab**) arrives in the city and first applies for a job at Leiters, the famous millinery that had belonged to her family. Now run by Oszkár Brill (**Vlad Ivanov**), he refuses to hire her but takes advantage of her family name keeping her in his retinue. Irisz's real goal is to find out what happened to her family and search for her lost brother. We follow this quest through her eyes, her head silhouette often filling the screen with blurred action in the background, as if she is the everyman experiencing the downfall of civilization. Although intriguing, with strong sexual undertones, so many innuendos become confusing and repetitive during the 142 minutes.

However, the film, which I watched in Hungarian with German subtitles, makes a strong artistic and political statement. Costumes are sumptuous—as are the hats! (Nancy Tilitz)

The Dead Don't Die ****

USA 2019
Opening June 13, 2019

Directed by: Jim Jarmusch
Writing credits: Jim Jarmusch
Principal actors: Adam Driver,
Bill Murray, Chloë Sevigny, Tilda
Swinton, Danny Glover, Steve
Buscemi, Tom Waits

Centerville, USA, the fictional setting of **Jim Jarmusch's** latest movie, has a sign welcoming visitors to "A Real Nice Place". Except things here are definitely "going to end badly," as Ronnie Peterson keeps reminding us throughout this comedic send-up of a zombie film. Ronnie, played by **Adam Driver** (also the star of Jarmusch's last feature film, *Paterson*), is one of a trio of small-town cops—**Bill Murray** (another Jarmusch regular) and **Chloë Sevigny** play his partners—who find themselves fighting off re-animated dead guys and gals when Centerville is overrun by zombies. Visiting "hipsters from Cleveland" are thrown into the mix, alongside eccentric locals and a newly arrived undertaker, **Zelda Winston**, whose knack for samurai swordplay comes in handy. (She's played by **Tilda Swinton**, in a similarly silly name-game as **Rosie Perez** playing a newscaster called Posie Juarez.)

But there's more than mere silliness in *The Dead Don't Die*. Murray and Driver's deadpan repartee offers laugh-out-loud moments, and many of the film's jokes pay tribute to the rich vein of zombie and horror movies Jarmusch drew influence from. There are also plenty of meta moments that reference Jarmusch's own films, particularly when his "regulars" reprise elements of previous performances or poke fun at themselves. Singer **Iggy**

Pop appears here as a zombie, which is pretty much what **Iggy Pop** looks like on any given day. Amusingly, this zombie is as drawn to coffee as he is to human entrails—a silly reminder of the power of that black beverage, which he and **Tom Waits** drank together in Jarmusch's *Coffee and Cigarettes*. Waits is also in *The Dead Don't Die*, playing the accurately named Hermit Bob. He's the mouthpiece of Jarmusch's more somber messages, or warnings, about the irreversible harm we're doing to our planet, and the empty promises of capitalism.



Overall the film feels melancholic and verges on hopeless—this is going to end badly—even with all that joking. But what makes it work is that it's not *completely* hopeless. As the WU-PS delivery guy says, "the world is perfect, appreciate the details." Details like the fact that maybe some of the kids in this movie will be alright (hope for the next generation?), or more meta Jarmusch details: the delivery guy is played by **RZA**, another Jarmusch alum, and the leader of the band the Wu-Tang Clan. (Get it? WU-PS?). Regardless of which details you focus on, this movie offers plenty to feast on, whether you're a big Jarmusch fan, or enjoy the escape of a zombie romp, or just want to revel in what cinema does best—entertain us. (Diana Perry Schnelle)

(another opinion)**The Dead Don't Die** ****1/2

Thanks to human interference, Mother Earth is thrown off-kilter. Straightaway Hermit Bob (**Waits**, whose hair looks conspicuously like the Lion's in *Wizard of Oz*) spots curious upheavals in his natural habitat. Likewise, the running commentary of the quintessential police chief Cliff Robertson (a sardonically imperturbable **Murray**) and deputy Ronnie Peterson (**Driver**, as a droll, nerdy know-all) is about the radio static and daylight at 20:20, "something weird's going on." Farmer Fred's (a cantankerous **Buscemi**) dog runs off 'bout the time he notices other critters missing. Matter of fact, around Centerville—"A Really Nice Place"—alot is erupting; now whether these oddities are perceived for what they are depends upon the shifting sands of attentiveness.

Writer-director **Jim Jarmusch's** newest ghoulish fest (*Only Lovers Left Alive*, 2013) comes to life with casually laconic, limerick-like script, and a to-die-for ensemble. Massaging their line's contextual juices while delivering infinitely witty performances are also **Danny Glover, Eszter Balint, Rosie Perez, Caleb Landry Jones, Selena Gomez, Austin Butler, RZA**, et al. **Tilda Swinton** is delicious as the unconventional, longsword-wielding mortician **Zelda Winston**; worth noting, **Zelda** and the critters uncanny perception has the same result. Even the many non-speaking roles are delivered with panache, e.g., **Iggy Pop, Sara Driver, Carol Kane**, and **Sturgill Simpson**, a country music singer-songwriter. **Jarmusch** keeps histrionics in check, and the visual jokes are sometimes funnier than the leitmotifs.

Slip-sliding and gliding between **Sturgill Simpson's** theme song is signature **Jarmusch** dialogues: Tongue-in-cheek, mocking humor to perceptive yet unflattering socio-political

passages to **Tom Waites'** running commentary-cum-soliloquies, there are nuggets to be digested in retrospect. Plaudits to **Ellen Lewis'** casting, **Affonso Gonçalves'** editing, and **Alex DiGerlando's** production design. **Frederick Elmes'** camerawork caresses the cast, and Victorian charm and Catskill natural beauty surrounding the village of **Fleischmanns, New York...** even in the dark. Besides being uncommonly funny, and with its foot-tapping music, *The Dead Don't Die* gives audiences a leg up if ever in a similar situation—go for the head! 112 minutes (**Marinell Haegelin**)



Britt-Marie war hier (Britt-Marie was here, Britt-Marie var här) ****

Sweden 2019
Opening June 13, 2019

Directed by: **Tuva Novotny**
Writing credits: **Tuva Novotny, Anders August, Øystein Karlsen**
Principal actors: **Pernilla August, Petr Haber, Andrs Mosslingk, Malin Levanon, Stella Oyoko Bengtsson**

Britt-Marie (Pernilla August) has been the perfect housewife for 40 years. She cleans an already spotless house; dinner is always on the table at exactly 6 p.m.; shirts hang washed and ironed. She seems to have molded into an

uninteresting, demanding kind of robot wife with no real emotions. Perhaps it's not surprising that husband **Kent (Peter Haber)** is having an affair with a younger woman; anyone would be more appealing. **Britt-Marie** discovers this infidelity and determines to change her life, which she does to the extreme. Giving up her entire past, she leaves home and ends up in a small-town community called **Borg**. How to find a job, especially at age 63, after having had no professional job experience? She lives according to her motto "one thing at a time" and eventually lands in a clubhouse on a soccer field. It's a mess—a condition that **Britt-Marie** recognizes and simply cannot avoid. She begins cleaning up the clubhouse, which leads to acquaintances with the kids and listens to their troubles about winning a soccer game. Although she hated that her husband watched soccer for hours on TV, she becomes a coach and life brightens with unforeseeable goals and appreciation. And this is just the beginning, because "dreams are dreams and life is life," and they can merge together for the next adventure.

What a fun film with something for every age group! It is based on the book of the same title by Swedish author **Fredrik Backman**, who also wrote *A Man Named Ove*. Both books were exceptionally successful, and after the huge success of the filmed version of *A Man Named Ove*, it is not surprising that **Tuva Novotny** strove to film *Britt-Marie war hier*, her second film as director, after *Blind Spot* in 2018. Naturally, actress **Pernilla August** is excellent, but equally good are the seven young actors who play the soccer team members. Every viewer will recognize something of his/herself in this heartfelt film. (**Becky Tan**)

Long Shot (Long Shot—Unwahrscheinlich, aber nicht unmöglich)***
USA 2019
Opening June 20, 2019

Directed by: Jonathan Levine
 Writing credits: Dan Sterling, Liz Hannah
 Principal actors: Charlize Theron, Seth Rogen, O'Shea Jackson Jr., June Diane Raphael, Andy Serkis



The title says it all. It is a long shot, that the beautiful, ultra-glamorous, successful and ambitious Secretary of State Charlotte Field (**Charlize Theron**) should fall for the nerdy, chaotic, permanently underdressed, just-out-of-job journalist Fred Flarsky (**Seth Rogen**), in this unlikely odd-couple romantic comedy. In a chance encounter during a high-class party the two one-time neighbors (Charlotte used to baby-sit Fred when she was 16 and he was 13, having a crush on her already back then) meet again. Charlotte's highest ambition is to become the first female President of the United States, and—against the advice of her adviser Maggie (**June Diane Raphael**)—she spontaneously signs Fred up as her speechwriter. They embark on an equally unlikely world tour to present her "Save the Planet" project, during which they discover their feelings for each other. Does this improbable romance have a chance to survive?

Jonathan Levine (50/50, *The Night Before*) teamed up with **Seth Rogen** again, who, together

with **Charlize Theron**, is co-producing this movie. It received an audience award at this year's SXSW Film Festival in Austin, Texas. 125 minutes (Ulrike Lemke)

Tolkien ****

USA 2019
 Opening June 20, 2019

Directed by: Dome Karukoski
 Writing credits: David Gleeson, Stephen Beresford
 Principal actors: Nicholas Hoult, Lily Collins, Colm Meaney, Derek Jacobi, Anthony Boyle, Patrick Gibson, Tom Glynn-Carney



In 1937, John Ronald Reuel Tolkien's fantasy novel *The Hobbit* (originally written for his children) was published to great success. It captured extensive reading audiences' imaginations, young and old. Seventeen years later, *Lord of the Rings* trilogy was published; after its cinematic inception was released (2001–2003), global recognition soared. A trilogy of films based on *The Hobbit* followed from 2012 to 2014. **Dome Karukoski's** film is, however, about the creator of these novels, who was as phenomenal as his work is unforgettable.

Tolkien examines phases of the author's life that were complicated, and grim. Orphaned at fifteen, Ronald

(**Harry Gilby**) and brother Hilary (**Guillermo Bedward**) subsist on others handouts and kindnesses through their guardian, Father Francis (**Meaney**). It is at Mrs. Faulkner's the brother's meet another talented resident, Edith Bratt (**Mimi Keene**). When stuck in a privileged school, Tolkien and fellow misfits (**Adam Bregman, Ty Tennant, Albie Marber**) forge a fellowship. That friendship carries Ronald (**Hoult**), Geoffrey (**Boyle**), Christopher (**Glynn-Carney**) and Gilson (**Patrick Gibson**) through World War I; Ronald survives combat action with Sam's (**Craig Roberts**) help, but carries entrenched scars. Steadfastness and goading from Edith (**Collins**), his lifelong love, was the encouragement that keeps Ronald's passion for fantasy alive.

David Gleeson and **Stephen Beresford** structure their screenplay around facts, with slight deviations and omissions, e.g., why Mrs. Tolkien was at the church's mercy. The cast is sterling; the two-tiered protagonists seamless portrayals from adolescence to adulthood are outstanding; **Genevieve O'Reilly** portrays the boys' creatively influential mother. **Grant Montgomery's** production design is outstanding. **Lasse Frank Johannessen's** rock-solid cinematography fires imaginations as to how early 19th century Birmingham and England's architecture, and its surroundings must have influenced Tolkien's imagination that **Thomas Newman's** music accompanies.

Director Karukoski undertook a daunting quest to convey Tolkien's complex background to audiences. Tolkien was equally ardent about language and philology, his literary and academic careers and was quite an artist. It is impossible to fit all that in one film, so the focus of *Tolkien* is well-intentioned, although **Harri Ylönen's** editing gets lost on the battlefield, which is also too graphically conveyed

considering this is J.R.R.'s story, for goodness sake. Understandably, now that Karukoski has brought people's attention to J.R.R. Tolkien, other filmmakers will follow and we can only wonder why it took them so long. 110 minutes (Marinell Haegelin)

Der Klavierspieler vom Gare du Nord (Au bout des doigts; In Your Hands)***

France 2018

Opening June 20, 2019

Directed by: Ludovic Bernard

Writing credits: Ludovic Bernard, Johanne Bernard

Principal actors: Jules Benchetrit, Lambert Wilson, Kristin Scott Thomas, Karidja Touré



This is a coming-of-age film about a gifted piano player who lacks money, support, guidance, and, most of all, confidence to develop his talent. Mathieu (**Jules Benchetrit**) lives with his mother and siblings in one of the troubled Parisian suburbs. He inherited a piano from a neighbor who gave him lessons when he was a child; since the old man died, he doesn't play it much anymore. Classical music isn't valued in this environment. On his way to work though, he can never resist playing the piano that is placed for public use in the busy train station *Gare du Nord*. This is where Pierre Geithner (**Lambert**

Wilson), principal of an esteemed Parisian music school, notices him and is enchanted by his playing. It will take *Pierre* much more than handing Mathieu a business card to convince him to try out at the conservatoire.

This film is as much about the protégé as it is about his teachers—especially his piano teacher “The Countess” (**Kristin Scott Thomas**)—who give it their all to further an extraordinary talent and put much effort into getting Mathieu ready for an important music competition.

Ludovic Bernard (director/writer) was inspired by *Billy Elliott—I will Dance* (2000) to write this story. His film doesn't engage the audience emotionally as much, partly because Mathieu's character has not been developed significantly beyond “the angry young man.” It still is a worthwhile film about the power of music and the importance of teachers, and Bernard avoids predictability by “infusing” some fresh ideas into this all too familiar genre. 106 minutes. (Carola A.)

Inna de Yard—The Soul of Jamaica ****1/2

France 2019

Opening June 20, 2019

Directed by: Peter Webber

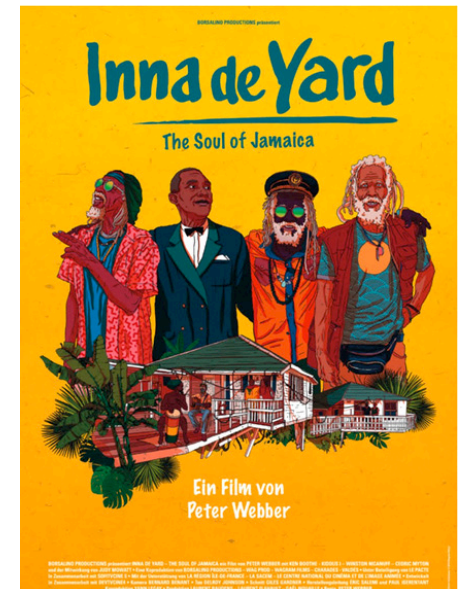
Writing credits: Peter Webber

Principal actors: Documentary: Kiddus I, Ken Boothe, Cedric Myton, Winston McAnuff, Steve Newland

It is impossible to leave this documentary without smiling, and wanting to have been at Le Trianon in Paris on October 27, 2017. Onstage performing were Jamaica's Inna de Yard—a collective of reggae veterans—as the standing-room-only audience waved their arms aloft, and collectively soared in time with the beat.

British writer-director Peter Webber's (*The Girl With the Pearl Earring*, 2003) great opening sequence marries legendary musicians and music, with

lively visuals to whet audiences' appetite. In the Garden, Inna de Yard is doing what they do—old and young musicians gather for reggae jam sessions—but never recorded before. “It's [reggae] the language of our people.” “Some countries have diamonds, some have pearls, ... [W]e have reggae.”



Focusing on anecdotes and accounts of some old-timers, and newbies, Webber's well-structured documentary framework takes audiences through the history, and heart and soul of reggae. Instrumental to the film is the informative and encompassing, inclusive camerawork (**Jodie Arnoux, Bernard Benant**). For **Kiddus I**, the Rebel, it is about luck; **Cedric Myton**, leader of The Congos, explains how despite having a hit, the group received no royalties. “Electric Dread” **Winston McAnuff** talks about bereavement, as does **Derajah**, while **Var**, a descendant of Maroons, explains Jamaican slave's rebellion. A pastor's daughter, **Jah9** converted to Rastafarianism at university; her activism and outspokenness spill into her music. “The Godfather” **Ken Booth** has learned from mistakes, withstood the test of time, and knows his priorities. **Judy Mowatt's** luck came in the persona of **Sonia Pottinger**, a Jamaican record producer.

Winston ‘Bo Pee’ Bowen, Lloyd Parks, Rashaun “Kush” McAnuff, and Steve Newland appear as well.

Reggae is an accumulative music genre from non-island sources the local artists inhaled, sped up and gave birth to in the late 1960s in Jamaica. Noteworthy reggae pioneers include Ken Boothe, Bob Marley, Prince Buster, and Desmond Dekker; lately, the musicians have been going back to their roots. Heartening is how established musicians work with young artists, whereby the “youngsters” increase “live” skills, while the “oldsters” pick up new trends. With these common goals, global audiences enjoy the fruits from this win-win relationship. 99 minutes (Marinell Haegelin)



Where is Kyra? ***

USA 2017

Opening June 27, 2019

Directed by: Andrew Donsum
 Writing credits: Darcy Picoult
 Principal actors: Michelle Pfeiffer, Kiefer Sutherland, Suzanne Sheperd, Sam Robards, Babs Olusanmokun

After a recent divorce, Kyra returns to live with her mother, who dies despite her care and attention. From this moment on, she loses control of herself and begins a struggle to

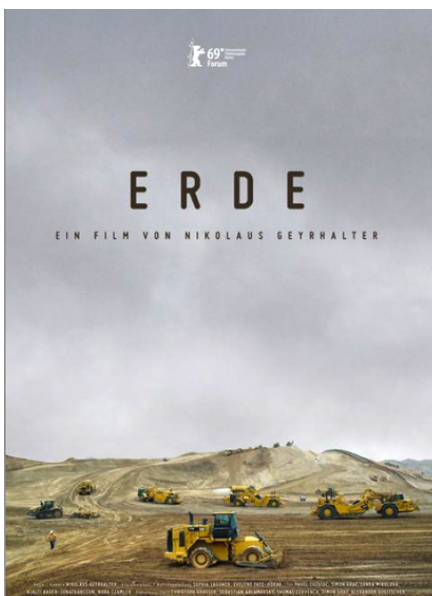
reestablish and take control of her life again. More and more she enters into a “tunnel,” living alone and isolated from society. Surrounded by debts and without a source of income, she tries to stay in her mother’s apartment, where she begins an endless search for herself and a job. The result is disappointment and no confidence in herself or in the future. In this precarious and desolate situation, she tries to hide from her only friend, who, in the end, discovers the perfidious and criminal plan that has chosen to get her out of the situation she is in. Despite the struggling efforts to achieve a decent living, she ends up surrendering and succumbing to the diversities of life, in which she herself did not know how to leave by entering a dubious path. (Geysa Wiemann)

Erde (Earth) *****

Austria 2018

Opening July 4, 2019

Directed by: Nikolaus Geyrhalter
 Writing credits: Nikolaus Geyrhalter
 Principal actors: Documentary



Mankind moves about 156 million tons of earth on a daily basis, which is twice as much as occurs naturally. That is truly food for thought! Austrian film director **Nikolaus Geyrhalter**

was determined to prove this hypothesis by showing this in a very direct documentary. He shows how little time it takes for us to destroy the Earth’s crust using giant machinery. He has forced his audience to take off their rose-colored glasses and face the Earth’s shocking dilemma. It begins in California where big muscular men sit in their XXL graders and diggers as they reshape 1000s of acres of land in preparation for yet another suburban neighborhood. These men were interviewed and were asked why they were doing this, and their answers were as egotistical as their actions. One man answers, “Well, because we can.” Another says, “Well if we don’t do it someone else will and besides it pays good money.”

Geyrhalter captures this devastation and does it in a very slow and gruelling process, just long enough that it seeps below our skins until we want to scream “Stop! Don’t you see what you are doing?” He then moves onto other continents which makes us aware that it is not only the Americans doing this but it is a global problem. The film seems long, but in actuality it could probably go on longer so we realize how bad it has become. The film is dismal but very important. Through these interviews we see that a conversation must begin and we need to challenge the short-term greed that is so prevalent and use awareness to stop it before it is too late. (Shelly Schoeneshoefer)

Apollo 11 *****

USA 2019

Opening July 7, 2019

Directed by: Todd Douglas Miller
 Writing credits: Documentary
 Principal actors: Documentary: Neal Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin, Michael Collins

President John F. Kennedy awakened Americans’ imagination to the infinite possibilities of human space travel in 1961, pledging to “be

bold." Eight years later, that boldness is put to test, and that **Todd Douglas Miller** brings to life, in *Apollo 11*, a must-see documentary. It is engrossing, spellbinding and an incredible thrill to experience 50 years to the month after the feat.



Established in 1958, NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) is the parent organization of Kennedy Space Center in southeast Florida; that area is pancake flat, and with the right weather conditions it is possible to watch a spacecraft launching into the wild blue yonder from far away.

In July 1969, its critical inception is the launching of Apollo 11; the reality of this extraordinary feat was astoundingly recorded from every viewpoint, including cameras attached to the spacecraft, and Lunar-landing module. For instance: moving the spacecraft to Pad A for launching; inside Florida's Space Center with the many scientists glued to screens and/or data, and Mission Control, Houston (Texas) during those eight frantic, taut days; Americans sleeping on beaches, climbing on cars and rooftops to watch the launch; the astronauts boarding the transport van, entering the spacecraft, inside Apollo 11, and commander **Neal Armstrong** and pilot **Buzz Aldrin** taking care of business

on the moon while **Michael Collins** pilots Columbia above, and its successful reconnection with Eagle. Then, USS Houston retrieving the pod.

American commentary by iconic newscaster **Walter Cronkite** steers audiences through the crisp, clear repurposed footage; seeing it in 2019, a time warp occurs. Miller's editing is outstanding, and the reconstruction was surely painstaking: its structure, **Matt Morton's** unobtrusive music, and sound design. Little known or remembered facts emerge, e.g., worldwide agencies participated in boosting the American Lunar off the moon's surface.

"No matter where you travel, it's always nice to get home." Just as, seldom can anyone say, "I've been to the moon," yet whoever sees *Apollo 11* will have that distinction. The film is honest, provides hope, and reminds us, adventure waits! 93 minutes (Marinell Haegelin)

Yesterday *****

UK 2019

Opening July 11 2019

Directed by: Danny Boyle

Writing credits: Jack Barth, Richard Curtis

Principal actors: Himesh Patel, Lily James, Joel Fry, Kate McKinnon, Ana de Arma, Ed Sheeran

Jack Malik (**Himesh Patel**) has given up teaching to embark on a career as a singer/songwriter. Unfortunately, after one too many unappreciated gigs and against the wishes of his longtime friend and manager Ellie (**Lily James**), he decides to give up. That very same evening he is hit by a bus during a worldwide power cut. His breakthrough comes when he realizes that after the blackout he is the only one who seems to remember the Beatles.

With a constant bewildered look on his face, Jack tries to remember all the lyrics to the Beatles songs and becomes a BIG hit. His friends are supportive and even Ed Sheeran (playing himself)

appears to help Jack produce recordings. Ed resolves himself to playing second fiddle to Jack, but does succeed in getting him to change "Hey Jude" to "Hey Dude."

Although Jack is now a big star he feels guilty at deceiving the world and he decides to remedy that. The movie has everything. It is a love story and a story of friendship—sentimental, funny, silly and warmhearted. And very definitely an homage to the Beatles. (Thelma Freedman)



(another opinion)

Yesterday ***1/2

Director **Danny Boyle's** latest comedy will have audiences humming as they leave cinemas, on top of reenergizing low-key "Beatlemania." The script creates a phenomenally improbable global event concocted around the four irascible Liverpoolian lads, while taking a poke at "image makers." Throughout, the best-selling rock band's classic song titles and/or tunes are cleverly, credibly interspersed; globally, 800 million Beatle records have been sold.

Presently, this peculiar marvel lasts just long enough for Jack (**Patel**), watching lights blink off instead of where he is going, to collide with a bus. Waking in hospital, Ellie (**James**), the singer-songwriter's ever-faithful manageress, is patiently waiting

and, together with a little help from his friends (**Harry Michell**, **Sophia Di Martino**), Jack is soon back on his feet, although bewildered. It seems this worldwide blackout erased collective memories about a number of things, including the Beatles! Which gives Jack a brilliant idea—nothing ventured, nothing gained. Traveling a long and winding road playing small clubs, his first break is from Gavin (**Alexander Arnold**); **Ed Sheeran** follows with a gig offer—Rocky (**Fry**) is Jack's roadie—and then, Roxanne (**McKinnon** delivers a top-notch performance) moves in for the kill with an offer too good to refuse. Or, is it?

The cast is sound, with great chemistry between Lily James and newcomer Himesh Patel. Cinematography (**Christopher Ross**), and editing (**Jon Harris**) are solid. **Daniel Pemberton's** music is genuine without trying to compete. Its dialogue's harmless humor, and meandering surprises builds to a witty finale. So, yesterday Jack was screaming, "help me" but most likely, tomorrow people will be humming *Yesterday*. 112 minutes (Marinell Haegelin)

The Biggest Little Farm (Unsere grosse, kleine Farm) ****1/2

USA 2018

Opening July 11, 2019

Directed by: John Chester

Writing credits: John Chester, Mark Monroe

Principal actors: Documentary: John Chester, Molly Chester, Raul Rios, Flavio Vidales

"Who saved who?" In producer-director-cameraman **John Chester's** documentary, **Mallory Cunningham**, **Benji Lanpher**, **Chris Martin**, and **Kyle Romanek** assist John with the stupendously breathtaking camerawork. Their mastery promises, "you will see things you never saw before," plus meeting many of the Chesters' two- and four-legged friends and seeing nature's mysteries, accompanied by **George Fenton's** artistically distinctive music.

Based in Los Angeles in 2010, **John's** work (film/television cameraman) brought him and Todd together, with **Molly's** blessing. When their pooch's barking gets them evicted, common sense dictates. Enter Molly's dream: a personal chef with a cooking blog, she dreams of preparing food with self-grown products. Bridging that gap to Apricot Lanes Farm is a wonderfully clever, playful and naively drawn (**Jason Carpenter**) animated sequence. An hour drive north of L.A., the only thing the 200-acres (81 hectare) farm lacked, and had for years, was tender loving care. That resulted in dead soil, dry and untended fields, and derelict property. Under **Alan York's** tutelage, a biodynamic consultant and horticulturist, the "rhythm of farming" is reborn. As Alan points out, "[There is] never enough time to do it wrong, but enough time to do it over." He

realistically outlined how and what to do when.

Co-writers **John Chester** and **Mark Monroe's** imprecise script, and **Amy Overbeck's** strict editing attribute to the film's biggest small deficiency. They sparingly illustrate progress during the early months and years, are dismissive of effects from natural catastrophes, and after one referral to their budget at the 6-month point, expenditures are ignored, including for workers. By now involved, we want to know more. An additional 5-minutes or less—there are plenty of editing techniques available—would have made the difference.

For this small farmer's granddaughter, the Chesters missed an opportunity to compellingly broaden awareness. Many people have little concept of farming, and farmers' dependency on and union with nature's cyclical process. While urbanites suffer discomfort during heat waves, farmers can suffer loss of livelihood. Still, *The Biggest Little Farm's* rejuvenating power for a green planet is like rain to drought-ridden land. 91 minutes (Marinell Haegelin)





Auf Wiedersehen Kathrin!

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

