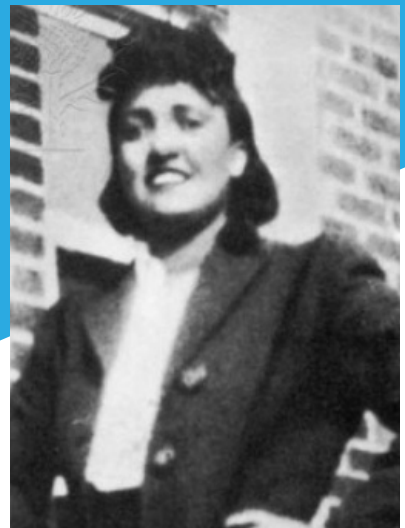


American Women's Club of Hamburg, e.V.

CURRENTS

Winter / Spring 2019 Vol. 35, No. 01

www.awchamburg.org



Visionary Women

President's Message

On February 28, AWCH jump-started US National Women's History Month with a panel discussion on the 2019 theme "Visionary Women—Champions of Peace and Nonviolence" (see pp. 8–9 in this issue). Making this inspiring event happen reflects what being a member of AWCH is about. So many members worked together and gave their time and skills to make this event a success. Heartfelt thanks to Carol Harbers for leading the committee and to Teresa Perez Y Landazuri for organizing the reception. We respected and trusted their guidance. We had fun working together and appreciated getting to know each other better. It was a great opportunity for AWCH to reach out to other organizations and to make our community the place that we want to be. In a past workshop where members looked for four words to describe what being a member of AWCH means, they aptly choose—friendship, respect/trust, opportunity and giving.

On January 27 the new AWCH Board of Officers was elected at the Annual General Meeting. We will miss those no longer continuing: Lyn Herr, Suzana Zhuta, Teresa P.Y.L., and Charis Habertag. Karen O'Shaughnessy will continue as Social Media Coordinator, now a board appointed position. They all did a tremendous job and it will be a challenge to follow in their footsteps. Lyn has returned to the U.S.; but Suzana, Teresa, Charis and Karen will remain active and support us. Continuing are myself now as President; Shelly S. as Vice-President, representing the club and ready to work on the club archive; Holly Todd as Membership Chair, happily caring for prospective, new and current members; Tracy Moede as Treasurer, keeping club finances in order with her organizational talent; and Carol H. as *Currents* Editor, not only publishing *Currents* but serving the Board in many capacities. New on the Board are Christine Riney, FAWCO Representative, who has already found new ways to bring FAWCO to the club; Anne-Marie Suriano as Activities Chair will manage our invitation system and coordinate the timing of all activities and events; Darja Henschel as Events Coordinator will coordinate and plan the events; and Jordan Beck Wagner as Secretary, who has already given the newsletter a new look. These new members bring new skills and talents; it will be exciting to work with them.

AWCH has Board appointed positions that are vital for the club: Web Engineer Cat C., absolutely irreplaceable; Hamburger Helpers Charis and Julia R.B., welcoming and reaching out to our new members; Social Media Coordinator Karen, giving us a profile on different media; and the Landesfrauenrat delegates Joana M.O'N. and Carol H., keeping us connected to over 60 women's organizations in Hamburg.



AWCH also has many "Clubs within the Club," which keep our club so diverse, and their very capable and amazing coordinators: After Work Drinks, Jordan W.; Art Group, Diana S. and Shelly S.; Book Club, Carol S.; *Currents*, Carol H.; Film Group, Becky T.; Köffeklöön (German Practice Circle), Karen O'S.; Moms and Bumps, Shelley S.; Opera Group, Elizabeth R.; and Stitch 'n' Bitch, Jess M. Stay alert, a Theater Group is being discussed. If you're interested in getting to know a group or joining, just contact the coordinator; you're always welcome.

And AWCH has all its members who support the club, graciously volunteer, and offer their talents to keep our club strong.

We all are the 63rd link in a long chain of AWCH volunteers and board members who have devoted themselves to this organization. I look forward with all of you to keeping AWCH a place of friendship and home-away-from-home and a place where women are empowered and join together to make a difference.

Sincerely,
Carol Strametz
2019 AWCH President



Currents Magazine

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Editor's Message

Our theme is a tribute to the U.S. National Women's Month of March, which we celebrate each year to honor the many visionary women that have made a difference in our society. These women should not be forgotten and thus I am pleased to present to you a few special women that you many not know...and should not forget. I hope you enjoy their stories. As always, we strive to cover all the activities our club offers. Maybe you too are interested in learning Mahjong or want to join our new group, Get Up and Move! What a great way to greet Spring!

Carol Harbers, Editor



Annual General Meeting 2019—A Year in Review

January in Hamburg has a special aura. The holiday lights are gone but the short, dark days persist. On one Sunday each year, in the middle of the vast DESY research campus, a single building is lit—acting as a beacon as cars drive up, unloading their passengers. Inside the bright, cheery room, a crescendo of chatter starts—warm greetings and open discourse of trips back home, family visits, holiday surprises, and skiing vacations. The Annual General Meeting (AGM) is about to start.

On January 28, our 2018 Vice President Suzana Zhuta opened the meeting. In the name of President Lyn Herr and the Board, she welcomed the members and thanked them for contributing their time, energy, and skills to support the AWCH throughout the year. The Membership Chair Holly Todd reported that 53 new members joined in 2018, giving us a total membership of 203. Our Activity Chair

and Events Coordinator, Charis Habertag and Teresa Perez Y Landazurri, respectively, gave a short review of the many (over 50!), highly successful events and activities that were organized in 2018. In addition to the traditional Fourth of July, Thanksgiving, and Winter Holiday celebrations, a Celebration of Membership and a Halloween Party took place at the U.S. General Consulate; and the AWCH hosted together with the Amerikazentrum the panel discussion “Nevertheless She Persisted” in realm of the National Women’s History Month. A sincere thank you to all AWCH members who have worked so hard to put on these events.

A number of fundraisers also took place, including the highly entertaining, “The Tree Thing” at the Museum für Kunst & Gewerbe and the very informative “Our Jordan Experience” and “Well-ness Evening” at members’ homes. This was all in addition to the yearly fundraisers, including the silent auction at the AGM, bagel sale, and donations at Thanksgiving dinner. “We can be proud,” reported our treasurer Tracy Moede, “how much money we have raised for different charities and organizations.” This was echoed by our FAWCO Rep Carol

2019 AWCH Board

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Vice-President: Shelly Schoeneshoefer

Treasurer: Tracy Moede

Secretary: Jordan Beck Wagner

Membership Chair: Holly Todd

Activities Chair: Anne-Marie Suriano

Events Coordinator: Darja Hentschel

Currents Editor: Carol Harbers

FAWCO Rep: Christine Riney





Strametz, who reported that we have obtained Diamond status for our support of the Target Project “Hope Beyond Displacement.” In addition, the FAWCO Foundations 2018 Development Grant was awarded to AWCH’s nomination, the Hazawardi Open Well.

After review and approval of the 2018 budget, the 2019 budget was presented. Due to a surplus in last year’s budget, we were able to set aside another 500 Euros to our 75th Gala Celebration fund. We have also budgeted more money for New Members Events and FAWCO awareness.

The main item on the agenda was the election of new officers. After a round of applause for the 2018 board members, who were recognized for their unwavering commitment, strong teamwork and willingness to go above and beyond, the nominating committee presented the new slate of officers. All nominees were voted into office and accepted their positions (see box).

New on the agenda, was the selection of a local charity for AWCH to support for a two-year period, using the criterion outlined in the newly adopted Charitable Giving Guidelines. Priority is given to charities that promote 1) international understanding, 2) welfare care and support of people in need, and 3) education. From a ballot of three nominations, the 5th Hamburg Women’s Shelter was selected as our 2019-2020 charity.

After a final review by the chairs of the numerous “clubs within our club,” the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm. But before going home, AWCH members turned their attention once again to the results of the Silent Auction. What a success! A total of € 2053 was raised for the FAWCO 2019–2022 Target Program Health.

Thank you for all who participated!

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HAMBURGER FRAUENHAUS E.V.

**Our 2019/20 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 will support the shelter by supporting their “Run against Violence”, giving clothes and toys, and donating money.





Our club is a proud member of FAWCO, and as an AWCH member, **you are automatically a member of FAWCO!**

FAWCO, founded in 1931, is an international federation of independent organizations comprising 65 member clubs in 34 countries worldwide, with a total membership of around 12,000. It is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization run by volunteers. FAWCO is a UN-accredited nongovernmental organization (NGO) with special consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

FAWCO in Focus

Get Involved: Awareness, Advocacy and Participation

FAWCO seeks to build strong support networks for its members; to improve the lives of women and girls worldwide; to advocate for the rights of U.S. citizens overseas and to mobilize the skills of its membership in support of key global issues.

FAWCO does this through its programs; Membership Support, US Issues, United Nations Advocacy, Global Issues of human rights, health, education, and the environment and through The FAWCO Foundation, which provides development grants and education awards.

Within these programs, there is a range of issues that could be of interest to you. Finding the areas is the key and getting involved can take many different forms. The most important part is to be involved in the issues that matter to you.

- Raise your **Awareness** by reading, watching recommended materials.
- Become an **Advocate** by sharing the information you have gained with family and friends.
- **Participate** by attending, sponsoring, chairing an event or donating.



As the FAWCO Rep for AWCH, I am here for any questions, suggestions, comments; Christine Riney, fawcorep@awchamburg.org.

Inspiring Women

In 2017 FAWCO launched its quarterly online magazine Inspiring Women. This magazine profiles the lives of members of FAWCO clubs throughout the world who have used their skills, talents, and passions to make an impact in the global community. Each issue has a theme; the next issue for spring is "Women who persist—Part 2." If you are looking for inspirational, visionary women you can find all previous issues and sign up to receive the magazine here; www.fawco.org/about/publications/inspiring-women

Global Issues

The Global Issues Teams support FAWCO's special consultative status to the United Nations Economic and Social Council by focusing on the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's). The four topics the Global Issues cover are education, environment, health and human rights. To get involved with these issues you can find information here; www.fawco.org/global-issues. And/or download the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals App—SDGs in Action.

FAWCO Global Issues—Environment in Focus

Earth Day is April 22nd

“Sooner or later, we will have to recognize that the Earth has rights, too, to live without pollution. What mankind must know is that human beings cannot live without Mother Earth, but the planet can live without humans.”

—Evo Morales

Earth Day is a day to ‘up’ our actions to help halt climate change which is integral to the successful implementation of the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically, SDG 13. Climate change disproportionately burdens the poorest and most vulnerable. The majority of the world’s poor are women and they are the most vulnerable.

2018: The year planet Earth cried for help loud enough for humans to hear.

Devastating forest fires in California, a deadly heatwave in Japan, drought in central and northern Europe, severe flooding in Kerala, India—environmental disasters were often on the news. Though no single extreme weather event can be attributed to climate change, the increasing number and severity of them point to the reality of what scientists have been trying to tell us for years. We must reduce greenhouse gas emissions drastically and quickly.

Though climate change is getting harder to ignore, understanding how you can make a difference can be challenging. The first step is to look at your footprint.

Everyone has a carbon footprint. Your footprint size is measured in tons of CO₂ emitted to fuel things you do over the course of a year. In order to shrink your footprint, you first have to know how big it is. Carbon footprint calculators are easy to find online for example; UN carbon footprint

calculator at (<https://offset.climateneutralnow.org/footprintcalc>)

The results from these calculators are estimates, they may vary a bit, they will be imperfect. That’s ok. Don’t get hung up on particulars. The most important thing to do is to act. Once you have a sense of how big your footprint is and what contributes most to its size, you can figure out how best to shrink it.

Next best and very important is to compensate for unavoidable emissions by investing in carbon offset projects. Offset schemes fund charitable projects that reduce, avoid, or remove greenhouse gas emissions. Examples include building solar power plants in the Caribbean, supporting reforestation in Nicaragua, making affordable efficient cook stoves available in Kenya, and building wind power plants in India. People and organizations can neutralize or offset

their calculated carbon footprint by paying an offset company or charity to reduce emissions elsewhere in the world by the same amount—thus making their carbon footprint „neutral.“

Offset strategies are an imperfect science but they do help. In addition, they make more visible the hidden costs to the planet of CO₂ emissions. Myclimate.org and the UN Climate Offset Platform are two places where you can invest or “purchase” offset projects. The Myclimate site is doubly useful. In addition to being able to buy offsets, its carbon calculator can be used to make adjustments that reduce emissions at the outset. For example, the calculator shows me that I can spare half a ton of CO₂ by flying to DC from Oslo via Reykjavik vs. making the same trip via Frankfurt. (Adapted from Global Issues Bulletin February 2019 Rena Levinm, AWC Oslo.)

Further reading: www.scientificamerican.com/article/carbon-offsets-really-do-help-lower-emissions.



Let’s Get to Work! Measure, Reduce, Offset your CO₂!

https://thespotlightinc.com/2018/05/01/what-is-my-carbon-footprint-and-what-do-i-do-about-it/

www.arborday.org/takeaction/carbon/about.cfm

Visionary Women Event Celebrating National Women's History Month

On Thursday February 28, we celebrated U.S. National Women's History Month with a lively panel discussion at the Amerikazentrum. The event was co-organized by the AWCH, the Amerikazentrum Hamburg e.V., and the U.S. Consulate General Hamburg, and was organized to reflect this year's theme, Visionary Women: Champions of Peace and Nonviolence. Our president Carol Strametz introduced the event, reminding us of the goal of National Women's History Month, to "write women back into history." Kathrin Yoneoka, the AWCH's honorary president, picked up on Carol's reference to Katherine Johnson, the NASA mathematician whose achievements were not recognized until late in her life, and added the story of Helene Lange, a German feminist, politician, and champion of women's rights.

The panel consisted of five contemporary "visionary women", who are engaged in various activities and work in different fields—from activism to television—and have a shared goal of driving positive social change. Each of the panelists discussed her work with our moderator, My-Linh Kunst, and it was clear that each of them had found her "cause"



particular combatting religiously and culturally motivated practices that lead to violence. She described her experience of growing up in a traditional patriarchal society in Germany in the 1950's, and her growing anger over the violence against women and girls around the world. After training as a sociologist, Heidemarie sought out other like-minded women, which led her into her work as an activist at Terre des Femmes, among other organizations.

Susanna Kelly-Shankar, the youngest member of the panel, grew up in Alaska, and talked about the problems of sexual assault and domestic violence faced by women in Alaska, as well as the impact of the climate crisis upon her home state. Susanna began getting involved in the refugee crisis in Europe after moving to Munich with her husband and seeing how easy it was for her, as an American, to



as a result of her personal experience, a clear illustration of the rallying cry "the personal is political." Johanna von Coburg, a TV moderator, works to promote awareness of the challenges around migration, racism, and equal opportunities, and is especially proud of her work focused on improving the self-esteem of young black women and girls. Although Johanna said that she never faced discrimination growing up in a German town where her father and her biracial siblings were the only black people she knew, she feels compelled to help others because "life is good to me so I give what I can to other people". Heidemarie Grobe has been working as an activist for women's rights for decades, in par-

get a visa to stay in Germany as compared with others fleeing violence and turmoil. She worked at a refugee camp in Greece, and works now as a freelance writer to draw attention to the issues she believes in. Julia von Weymarn's inspiration to start multiple organizations that help others participate in society stems from her experience of "fighting to participate." When Julia was studying cultural management, she realized that she couldn't afford to attend most of the city's cultural events, and began discovering how many free offerings there were. This led her to found KulturLeben e.V. Later, when she was working at the Hamburg Kunsthalle, she saw the hordes of refugees spending time near the main train station and, with the goal of build-

ing bridges, started St. Pauli leetHub e.V., an initiative that taps into the entrepreneurial potential of refugees, helping them connect to and participate in German society. This entrepreneurial engagement has also driven Sabine Cole, a cofounder of Chickpeace, a catering service run by refugee women, who has a close friend from Aleppo. When her friend described the destruction of her home city as a result of the Syrian civil war, Sabine was motivated to organize a business endeavor knowing that the best way to integrate people into society is through work. Sabine is also a journalist, using her writing skills to promote the causes that matter to her.



The panelists, led by My-Linh Kunst's thoughtful questions, addressed both the frustrating and satisfying elements of their work, as well as issues that affect their ability to successfully champion social change. Sabine spoke eloquently about being inspired by the dynamism of youth activism, in particular the young Swedish climate-crisis activist, Greta Thunberg, who has convinced Sabine to no longer fly within Germany. Sabine reminded us that in order to bring about change, patience is essential because progress comes slowly. Heidemarie reiterated that point from her perspective as a life-long activist, who's learned that "nothing changes overnight", and highlighted the fact that things happen in little steps. She defined success as having a positive impact upon one person, who can then work to spread change as well. Julia expressed frustration with the "system", and the hurdles that her organizations encounter when trying to find ways for disenfranchised people to contribute their potential to society. She also addressed the cultural speci-

ficity of views on gender, pointing out that many refugees have different views on the roles of women in society, which is an additional struggle. Johanna spoke about the positive and negative effects of the media, which allows everyone in society to participate, yet therefore also provides a platform for hateful speech. She talked about the frustrating need to participate in social media, to promote herself and the organizations she supports, because of the "fake world" that emerges on social media. Susanna also addressed youth activism, both the positive spirit and the potential for "clicktivism" (participating from their sofas through social media makes people think they are actually engaging.) She emphasized the power of microfunding for causes and organizations that people believe in, especially for young people who have limited financial resources to give to causes they support.

The panel discussion was energetic, and My-Linh enthusiastically engaged all of the panelists, and managed to pack a lot of ideas into the conversation. The discussion wrapped up with questions from the audience, including one about why only a



handful of men were present in a room with about 100 women! I think this is an important point, as change will only happen for society as a whole when women and men participate together to affect change. Luckily, we have inspirational "visionary women" to lead the way and help identify the work that still needs to be done, both to "write women back into history," and to continue their commitment to the goals of education, empowerment, equality, and inclusion.

The event was rounded out by a fantastic buffet, organized and provided by AWCH volunteers. Panelists and guests mingled for a long time afterward, encouraged by the delicious handmade dumplings, wraps, and meatballs and flowing wine to keep celebrating women who fight injustice. (Diana Perry Schnelle)

A big thank you to the many who contributed to this successful evening!



Visionary Women

Celebrating Helene Lange, A Champion of Women's Rights

by Kathrin Yoneoka

March is U.S. National Women's History Month. During this month we recognize contributions of women to events in history and contemporary society. It has been celebrated since 1987 to highlight the significant contributions that women make to society and history.

I can think of several women that made history because of their significant contributions to society, there are so many names that come to my mind, but there are a couple I would like to mention:

- Marie Curie (first woman to win Nobel Prize for her pioneering research on radioactivity)—she died at 66 as longtime result of her exposure to radioactivity
- Rosa Parks ("the first lady of civil rights" didn't give up her seat on the bus and became an icon of resistance to racial segregation)
- Mother Theresa (for taking care of the needy)
- Harriet Tubman (escaped slavery, became abolitionist)
- Eva Peron (Argentinian first lady, advocated for women's right to vote in Argentina)
- Diana, Princess of Wales (charitable contributions)
- Angela Merkel for showing women worldwide that a woman can be a successful leader of a big economy

Here in Hamburg we have a special legacy to celebrate. Some of you know the Helene Lange Gymnasium. I have been there, because my daughter did gymnastics there for a year. But who knows Helene Lange? I want to re-write her back into history and will give you a little background on her life:

Helene Lange was born in Oldenburg and lost her parents very early in life. While her parents had been very liberal, she afterwards lived with a family where she experienced discrimination against women and the deliberate exclusion of women from intellectual discourse. Some women would have complied. Helene Lange, inspired by this discrimination, educated herself as much as possible and



became a women right's advocate. She had a lot of obstacles thrown her way, but she was determined. She worked hard and finally became a teacher. At the same time, she started her engagement for women's rights. She started a petition with some female colleagues to get more girls into higher education. This petition was denied. Helene didn't give up. She then started the German female teacher's association and pushed for girls to be able to attend Gymnasiums. She was successful this time.

She later became chairwoman of the general women's association and was active in the presidency of the Association

of German Women's Associations. I think it is only fitting that I picked her for an American Women's Club of Hamburg event.

During her tenure she tirelessly worked for equal education and professional rights for women. Does this sound familiar to you? Ladies, this was over one hundred years ago, and we still don't get equal pay for the dollar (only 80.5 cents). Let's keep on working on this...

Helene Lange's belief was that women have a specific female influence on society, which should be advanced to correct the distortions of a male dominated world.

Helene Lange was also an advocate for the right to vote. When in 1908 women were allowed to get involved in political parties, she immediately joined a party and in 1919, a hundred years ago, she became one of the first women in the Hamburgische Buerger-schaft and the oldest member of the parliament.

I think Helene Lange was far advanced for her time. But I hope you understand why I choose to highlight her life. Women like her deserve their place in history and we must consider our history when we make decisions for our future.

We can't take women's rights for granted. We must stand on the shoulders of women like Helene Lange and continue the fight for our daughters, and for our granddaughters.

(Excerpt from speech at tgeVisionary Women Event.)

The Lady with the Lamp

by Jenny Mather

When Harry Potter went to Hogwarts he was placed in Gryffindor House. When I went to Durham Girls Grammar School, Durham City, England, I was put in Elizabeth Browning House. Harry was picked for his house by the sorting hat and I by my teachers who had four inspirational women to choose from. These were Elizabeth Barrett Browning, a local heroine called Grace Darling, Abbess Hilda and Florence Nightingale.

Elizabeth was a Victorian poet who married Robert Browning another poet. Grace Darling was the teenage daughter of a lighthouse keeper who went out with him in a tiny rowing boat to rescue shipwrecked sailors from a stormy sea. Abbess Hilda founded an abbey and headed up the Synod of Whitby in 664 and then there was the most influential woman of all, Florence Nightingale.

As a young woman born into a well to do family Florence had all the advantages but also all the limitations of her station in life. She faced parental opposition when she decided that she wanted to become a nurse because this was thought to be a disreputable profession and only for women 'of dubious morality.' Nevertheless, she went off to hospitals in Egypt, Dusseldorf and then Paris to learn about nursing. When she returned home to London, she took up an unpaid position as the superintendent of the Establishment for Gentlewomen during Illness in Harley Street. This cannot have helped her when she found herself nursing wounded soldiers.

An old family friend had become the British Secretary for War and he asked Florence to go out to the battlefields where the Crimean War



was being fought and nurse the injured soldiers. Florence and her team of thirty-eight trained nurses arrived in Constantinople (now Istanbul) to scenes of horror. When she discovered that injured soldiers were seven times more likely to die from disease than from their injuries, the Lady with the Lamp set to work. She arranged for a steady supply of fresh water for the men, had sewers dug to improve their hygiene and paid for medical supplies and fresh fruit and vegetables to supplement their diet.

After the war Florence used her reforming powers to press for improvements in all military hospitals. She opened a

training school for nurses in London and was responsible for transforming the profession into a respectable career for women. She also trained Linda Richards, said to be the first American nurse and was a consultant to the U.S. Government during the Civil War on the health of its soldiers. This indomitable lady is responsible for developing the industry and many of today's nursing techniques are directly attributable to her.

Over the last few years I've had more to do with hospitals than I've wanted but my admiration of doctors and nurses has grown tremendously. They are without doubt very special people. My mother was a nurse and as a child I enjoyed listening to her nursing stories. She and her twin sister had no sooner left school when World War II broke out. These teenage girls (not that the term had been invented then) were trained in a hurry to look after the casualties of war. Teenage boys and young men in their twenties would arrive in trainloads to be nursed back to health and then would be sent off to fight again. Just like Miss Nightingale, my mum would work tirelessly to help those wounded soldiers.

The lady with the lamp was a forceful and determined Victorian lady who inspired generations of young women (and today, men too) to follow in her footsteps. If there had been a sorting hat at my school I feel sure that it would have chosen Florence Nightingale House for me.



Crimean War: Florence Nightingale with her lamp. Coloured lithograph after H. Rae. Credit: Wellcome Collection. <https://wellcomecollection.org/works/zggyp55>; CC BY

Women of Consequence

by Marinell Haegelin

Greatness is not gender specific, and it is colorblind. Plainly, it is about people who leave an indelible imprint on womankind, and the world. As disparate as their backgrounds were, Frances Perkins and Henrietta Lacks' legacies are phenomenal—albeit men overshadowed one woman's greatness, whereas the other's was accidental.

A Bostonian by birth in 1880, Fannie Coralie Perkins grew up in solidly white middle-class society, graduated Mount Holyoke College (Massachusetts) in 1902, and Columbia (New York City) with a master's degree in political science in 1910. At Mount Holyoke, an American economic history course assignment, i.e. visit a factory, made Fannie aware of progressive politics and suffragettes that thereafter became salient objectives to many decisions and choices. Fannie legally changed her name to Frances in 1905. Of her seventies-something grandmother, Cynthia Otis Perkins, Frances later said, "... an extremely wise woman—worldly wise, as well as spiritually wise, I am extraordinarily the product of my grandmother."

Whereas, born to rural black Virginians in 1920, at age four Loretta "Hennie" Pleasant's father and TEN children moved to Clover, Virginia after her mother's death during childbirth. Thereafter "Hennie" was sent to live with black granddad Tommy, on white great-granddad and great-uncle's one-time plantation. Par for uneducated poor blacks, young good-natured "Hennie" worked tobacco farms. At fourteen she gave birth to a son, two years later a daughter, and in 1941 married their father, her cousin David "Day" Lacks.

Henrietta and David moved to Maryland in 1941 so he could work at Bethlehem Steel. They owned a house in predominantly black Turner Station in southeastern Baltimore county, and had three more children — in all three sons and two daughters. Almost five months after her fifth child's birth, Henrietta returned to Baltimore's John Hopkins Hospital, the only facility in the area treating black patients, where she was given the diagnosis of cervical cancer.

Conversely, Rebecca Skloot's curiosity was piqued while studying biology when she became aware of, and used HeLa cells in experiments that the professor praised for its significance to medicine. However, Rebecca could find nothing when she

searched for information about the source, i.e. woman. Later that inquisitiveness prompted the aspiring journalist to investigate, and ultimately expose the source of Henrietta's eponymous HeLa cells.

Whereas, New York economist Paul Wilson and Frances married in 1913—to keep her maiden name took a court decision, and she admitted, "he's quite the feminist." Their only daughter was born in 1916. After witnessing the deadly Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire in lower Manhattan in 1911 (146 deaths), Frances was hired executive secretary of New York's newly formed Committee on Public Safety. Her forceful advocating earned N.Y. Governor Al Smith and legislator Franklin Delano Roosevelt's respect. Privately, less than two years after their daughter's birth Paul's mental illness emerged. Thereafter, Perkins' husband was regularly institutionalized until his death in 1952.

Henrietta's oldest daughter Elsie, born with epilepsy and hearing impairment but misdiagnosed, was placed in the then Hospital for the Negro Insane (Crownsville Hospital Center). Henrietta weekly visited Elsie before being overwhelmed by cancer; Elsie died at age 15 in 1955. David outlived Henrietta by 51 years.

Henrietta died in the hospital at age 31 in 1951 following a two-month routine of blood transfusions, whereas Frances died in a NYC hospital at age 85 in 1962 following a stroke.

Frances' lifetime achievements are many; notably, New York Governor Roosevelt appointed Perkins industrial commissioner of that newly formed agency in 1929. Then in 1933, President Roosevelt nominated Perkins Secretary of Labor; before accepting, Perkins outlined policy priorities: eight policies (now taken for granted in USA) were directly worker related, the ninth was for universal health care. "I





came to Washington to work for God, FDR, and the millions of forgotten, plain common workingmen.” The first female U.S. cabinet member wrote substantial, important New Deal legislation.

A keen observer, Perkins developed and manipulated “gender stereotypes,” e.g., matronly wardrobe and maternal demeanor that together with her cool temperament helped win support for her political causes from male colleagues. After President Roosevelt’s death in 1945, Perkins left the Department of Labor; she penned a memoir about Roosevelt in 1946, and after government service, Frances taught and was lecturer at Cornell University (New York).

Whereas, Henrietta’s lifetime achievements surfaced after death and autopsy, when scientists discovered and then harvested the bonanza of Henrietta’s rapidly reproducing cancer cells. None thought to obtain permission from the woman, or family. Collins dictionary describes HeLa cells: “a strain of cells derived from the first carcinoma cells to be continuously maintained in culture: still used in cancer and biological research.” HeLa cells usage is essential in medical, scientific, and engineering laboratories worldwide.

Using a novelistic approach, first-time author Rebecca Skloot’s non-fiction book, *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*, is scientifically comprehensible and quickly became a bestseller. Rebecca allied the family’s support, then invested her time, research and money to reveal the source of vital HeLa cells used

in curing diseases, and ongoing research. Her eye-opening tome, a vehicle of communication for Henrietta and the Lackses, is sensitive, heart-rendering and nonjudgmental. It brings in question ethical and moral issues regarding biotechnical practices and research.

Still, both women were stigmatized. A defamation campaign was launched against Frances Perkins between 1935-1939. Rumormongers’ against New Deal economic measures spread hearsay that she was a Russian Jew, i.e. communist, falsely interpreting her ideology and religion. Perkins’ was subjected to hearings, constant press exposure and impeachment proceedings were introduced, and unanimously rejected. In Maine in 2011, “communist” complaints resurfaced that led to her mural’s removal from a state building. Henrietta’s skin color and socioeconomic factors resulted in unfair, disrespectful treatment: researchers early awareness of her tumor cells longevity was withheld from the family, as was any form of compensation. Instead, confusion, and illusory beliefs nurtured uncertainty and fears among Henrietta’s descendants for decades.

This portrait of two extraordinary women is painted with broad brushstrokes. Much is available about Frances Perkins, including Kirstin Downey’s biography, while for Henrietta Lacks there is Rebecca’s book. A revelation in itself, considering Henrietta’s immortal HeLa cells continue to give hope, and life. In 2010, Skloot established The Henrietta Lacks Foundation™ that receives a portion of the book’s proceeds “to provide assistance to individuals and their families who have been directly impacted by such research.” The global biomedical companies and pharmaceutical industry has yet to contribute to the Foundation, or Henrietta’s still impoverished descendants.

“There is always a large horizon.... There is much to be done.... I am not going to be doing it! It is up to you to contribute some small part to a program of human betterment for all time.”

—Frances Perkins

Writing Women Back into History

by Carol Harbers

In spite of all the achievements of women, the memory of them seems to fade faster than those of men. Yes, we can all name a handful of famous women, but only a handful. Historical archives and our own neural networks are full of holes when it comes to women's achievements...but these holes are slowly being patched. Actually, more quickly here in Hamburg than other places—thanks to one woman, Rita Bake. An economic and social historian, Rita Bake earned her doctoral degree at the University of Hamburg, and very quickly found her niche—Women's History. From 1990 to 2017, she worked for the Hamburg Agency for Civil Education, which is in charge of distributing educational material and information about the social and political history of Hamburg. During this time, she was committed to writing women back into the history of Hamburg. She has now retired, but in name not deed.

I recently met Rita Bake at a Landesfrauenrat (LFR) meeting, as she laid out her plans to get more streets named after women. The figures for Hamburg are sobering: over 2500 streets or plazas are named after men, compared with 415 for women. Rita admitted that she may not see the 50-50 mark in her lifetime, but she will do all that she can to keep the project moving.

And the tool to do that? A new databank with over 1110 women's biographies (and constantly expanding) has just been released this month (see www.hamburg.de/frauen-biografien/.) The focus is on deceased women who have worked and/or lived in Hamburg and who have left their mark. These can be authors, actresses, benefactors, pub owners,

politicians, scientists, artists, singers, entrepreneurs, doctors, social workers, lawyers, journalists, resistance fighters against and victims of the Nazi regime, etc.—but also perpetrators. It is not just "prominent" women or noble role models—but also the work and life of the "everyday" women who often worked in silence for her family, the city, the political party, the arts, for herself. And better yet, all this information is available as an App (for both Apple and Android—I've already downloaded mine!)

Photo credits: <https://landesfrauenrat-hamburg.de>



But this is not the only project responsible for the national and local recognition of Rita Bake leading to several awards (e.g. LFR's Hammonia in 2009 and the German Medal of Honor in 2018). She also co-founded the "Women's Garden" at Ohlsdorf Cemetery in 2000. The women's garden is intended to keep women who have helped to shape Hamburg's history in lasting memory. Many important women have found their last resting place at the Ohlsdorf Cemetery. But when the period of use for the graves has expired and nobody pays for the renewal fees, these graves are cleared. In order to save the grave-stones, the Garten der Frauen e.V. has them moved to the women's garden. Weren't important enough for Ohlsdorf?—Memorial stones are erected for them.



Vitavia [CC BY-SA 4.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>)]

In this way, the memory of artists and benefactors, resistance fighters and women's rights activists is kept alive. A small documentation center with exhibitions and guided tours makes the "Women's Garden" a special place of remembrance of female power and strength. A place that is inconceivable without the great commitment of Rita Bake.

Spring is here, and what better time to visit this attractive and bright garden situated in the old part of the famous Ohlsdorf Cemetery surrounded by rhododendrons—and start filling those vacant holes in our memory with women's history.

(see www.garten-der-frauen.de for more info.)

A Visionary Woman— FAWCO's Founding President

by Christine Riney

FAWCO has had many visionary women leading its development during its 88-year history. Perhaps most importantly our Founding President, Caroline Curtis Brown. Caroline (1871–1950) was a native of Broom County, New York. Her entry in FAWCO's list of prominent persons describes her as “composer and writer of international topics.” (Source: Spencer, p. 28). It has also been noted, that during the 1920's “Caroline, as the President of the AWC London (with over 1500 members), was considered one of the most prominent Americans in London. Under her tenure, the club sponsored many philanthropic projects including health care and education for American orphans. The musicals hosted at her Chelsea home were well known to attract only the most influential guests from British and American ‘aristocracy’ such as Viscountess Astor.” (Source: *Singing in the Age of Anxiety*, by L. Turnbridge, 2018)

Mrs. Curtis Brown's experiences with the AWC London during this critical time in history was perhaps key to her vision that “enlightened women, working cooperatively throughout the world, could do much to help achieve permanent international peace, and that this was especially true of American women living abroad who had acquired special experience in living in foreign lands among foreign people and foreign customs.” Experiencing WWI, the aftermath and the tensions leading up to WWII must have sparked her idealism and inspired her “in 1931, to invite representatives from Clubs in Antwerp, Berlin, Paris, The Hague, Vienna, and Zu-

rich to London to discuss the concept of forming an organization. This new Federation's Charter: an association of American women's clubs to work towards international goodwill

and the preservation of world peace, to help one another solve problems common to them all, and to aid women whose citizenship rights were being ignored or restricted.” (Source: *The Red Book*, FAWCO.) Today, 88 years later, the issues that led to FAWCO's creation continue to be addressed through FAWCO's activities as a UN-accredited NGO; dissemination of information on education, U.S. citizenship, living and working abroad; support for literacy and training programs for women and children in developing countries; and environmental protection projects. (www.fawco.org)

The vision of Caroline Curtis Brown and the many visionary ladies of FAWCO continue to provide inspiration for over 62 member clubs across 31 countries worldwide. International goodwill and world peace, a worthy vision for us all.



PRESIDENT AND DELEGATES AND OBSERVERS AT SEVENTH CONFERENCE, F.A.W.C.O.

7th FAWCO Conference—May 17-21, 1938 Hamburg, Germany

This was a critical year in history and several FAWCO member clubs were unable to send delegates to the Hamburg conference. For those who did attend, including Caroline Curtis Brown, it was a memorable experience, not all of it happy to recall. Scholarship programs, child-labor regulations, the Equal Rights Bill in the U.S., and the education of American children abroad were discussed. Speeches emphasized the social responsibilities of Americans living in foreign lands. All FAWCO activities were suspended from 1939 to 1949, but in the ten post-war years, FAWCO was able to expand to over 18 member clubs.

Photo credits: FAWCO archives

Catherine the Great: Ahead of her Time

by Carol Harbers

Catherine the Great, again. We had just finished reading about Catherine for our January book club meeting, and now, at the Montblanc tour, we discover a pen set dedicated to her and Peter the Great of Russia. Somewhat surprisingly, there were very few women honored in Montblanc's various Limited Edition series. In their Writer's Edition, just two women are represented (Agatha Christie and Virginia Woolf). In the Patron of the Arts Edition, Queen Elizabeth I (1533 – 1603) and Peggy Guggenheim (1898 – 1979) are honored, as well as the aforementioned Catherine (1729 – 1796) and her predecessor Peter (1672 – 1725).

Nevertheless, this is indeed a fitting tribute to a woman who was an important patron of the arts. One of the finest examples of her work is still quite visible today (and a must see!)—The Hermitage in St. Petersburg. Her famous winter palace now houses the royal art collection, which grew from a few dozen paintings to more than 4000 during her reign.

Catherine the Great, however, was more than just a patron of the arts, but truly a visionary woman, whose ambition was to continue the work of Peter the Great, the Russian Czar of the late 17th century. At the beginning of Peter's reign, Russia was severely underdeveloped compared to the culturally prosperous European countries. To reassert Russia's prominence, he led a cultural revolution that replaced some of the traditionalist and medieval social and political systems with ones that were modern, scientific, and influenced by Western Europe. But upon his death his work was not complete...

Catherine II was born Sophie Friederike Auguste, Prinzessin von Anhalt-Zerbst in Stettin, Prussia, in 1729. She arrived in Russia at the age of 15, assuming the title of Grand Duchess Catherine Alekseyevna, and the following year married her young cousin, the grandson of Peter the Great. The marriage was a complete failure; the following 18 years were filled with disappointment and humiliation. It was, however, the time in which she prepared herself for her future role as Russian empress. She immersed herself in the Russian language and culture, and adopted the Russian Orthodox faith. She became particularly interested in the writings of the major figures of the French Enlightenment, such as Voltaire, Diderot, and Montesquieu—and carried on extensive correspondence with the former throughout her life. She dreamed of establishing a reign of

order and justice, abolishing serfdom, spreading education—as well as creating a court to rival Versailles and both embellishing and westernizing Russian's unique culture.

In September 1762, after a successful *coup d'état* that ended her husband's short reign, she was crowned with great ceremony in Moscow and began her sovereign rule that was to span 34 years as empress of Russia. Unfortunately, her attempts at reform were less than satisfying. She saw very quickly that the reforms advocated by Montesquieu or Rousseau did not at all correspond to the realities of an anarchic and backward Russia. Her attempts to frame a new constitution and code of laws in 1767 came to nothing during her time. Her plan to emancipate the serfs, on whom the economy of Russia was based, also made little inroads, as she discovered very quickly that she needed the support of the serfs' owners to rule. The ensuing Pugachev Rebellion and French Revolution may have shattered the illusions of rapid political change that she had envisioned, but nevertheless, the intellectual climate in Russia was altered irrevocably.

In 1768, under the pretext of war with Turkey and frustrated in her attempts at reform, Catherine changed her policy to place emphasis on promoting Russian grandeur. Her strategy paid off with her many economic, military, and cultural projects. At the end of Catherine's reign, Russia had expanded westward and southward and had obtained access to the Bosphorus Strait. She implemented a new administrative reform plan across her vast republic. More than a hundred new towns were built; old ones were expanded and renovated. As commodities were plentiful, trade expanded and communications developed. She was a patron of literature and a promoter of Russian culture; she herself wrote, established literary reviews, encouraged the sciences, and founded schools. All these achievements have won her a distinguished place in history.

Montblanc would do well to continue to recognize more of the Visionary Women that have positively shaped history—and not just their new Limited Edition of Women Muses.



Montblanc Tour

In February we enjoyed a very informative tour of the Montblanc Headquarters, led by our charming host, Camilo, and accompanied by Christiane from the Montblanc Boutique. In the Montblanc Museum room we learned about the origins of the company and saw many vintage writing instruments and watches. In 1907, the original Montblanc Headquarters was in Sternschanze; and the six-pointed white star, which represents the snow-capped peak of Mont Blanc and graces all Montblanc products, can be seen at the top of the columns beside the entrance. This entrance has been replicated in the new headquarters at Hellgrundweg 100. Many pieces



of the extensive Montblanc art collection, each of which give's the artists interpretation of the snowcap emblem, are displayed at the Headquarters. (Sheila Z.)

Book Club: Catherine the Great

The January Book Club met in the *gemütlich* library at the Landesfrauenrat. We were a smallish group of six; we wondered if the 642-page, non-fiction book had intimidated others from joining. Nevertheless, those that tackled the book were quite enthusiastic. *Catherine the Great*, written by Robert K. Massie—a Pulitzer Prize winner and expert of czarist Russia—is a very detailed and well-researched book but which easily keeps the attention of its reader. We are not reading about Catherine the Great, but viewing her life through her own eyes. And what a life!

The appeal of the book was not just the first-hand experience of Catherine's life—but also that her story was integrated into Europe's history. For the majority of us that received our history lessons in American schools, we received a vivid account of the first annexation of the Crimea to the Russians in 1783 and how Poland was wiped off the map in one full sweep a decade later. Our knowledge of the rise and fall of European alliances was refreshed...and we



were once again reminded of how single personalities can shape history.

The changing person of Catherine was discussed at length. We watched as she moved from the power and influence of her ambitious and overbearing mother to that of her (step-)mother-in-law, Empress Elizabeth. The lack of respect Catherine had for her husband meant she turned her attention to enlightened philosophers of the time—or to one of her many lovers. Although at least three of her lovers were instrumental in her acquisition and expansion of power, the book gives more credit to Catherine than previous biographies, who have downplayed her power and intelligence. Toward the end of the book (and Catherine's life), the stream of lovers gets a bit too much attention, and together with the authoritarian tone of the author, makes some of us wonder if Mr. Massie is "in love" with Catherine himself. It is at times hard to determine what is fact and what fantasy on his side. (Carol H.)

An Evening with the Book Club and “My Brilliant Friend”

On February 20, several book club members had the pleasure of meeting at Carol H.'s house to discuss *My Brilliant Friend*, one book of Elena Ferrante's four part series, *The Neapolitan Novels*. Carol prepared a lovely table of appetizers and drinks, which everyone enjoyed while sharing their experiences with the book.

The much acclaimed novel, which follows the early years of a tumultuous lifelong friendship between Elena (Lenú) Greco and Raffaella (Lila) Cerullo, has been a favorite of book clubs for the past several years due to its timeless themes of friendship, class struggle, feminism, and empowerment through education set in a poor neighborhood on the outskirts of Naples, Italy. In addition to discussing these themes, a good portion of the evening was spent musing over who

Ferrante actually is, as she has kept her identity secret and maintains her work should stand on its own, going so far as to state she would stop writing if her identity was ever made public.

Of the ten people in attendance, about half had read not only this novel, but the complete set before attending the meeting. Of the first time readers, most enjoyed the book, though a couple found it a little difficult to get into at first. With encouragement from others though, including of how sweeping and all consuming the quartet is in its entirety, I think everyone was convinced to keep on reading into the next novel. I know I plan on continuing with the second book—a second time around—before diving into the HBO series already on air. Yes, ladies, it's that good! (Adelina G.)



Snitch 'n' Bitch—From the Heart

In January Susan S.-W. and Tracy M. visited “our” hospital, the Helios Mariahilf in Harburg, to deliver 25 heart pillows and 50 drainage bottle bags. Specialist Nurse Heidi Schönheit thought our talents for sewing pillows could also be used for bottle-bags. And she was right! Not only was Schwester Heidi enthusiastic about our fancy bottle bags, but also the station doctors, Herr Dr. Christoph Großmann and Frau Dr. Anna Vogt. They were very pleased with the bags that the Heart Pillow Working Bee made, and gave us positive feedback to use when making the next set. This was the first time the Working Bee made drainage bottle bags and it won't be the last. The Bee is getting quite a reputation as providers of two very important items that bring relief and comfort to breast cancer patients. We have been invited to participate in the next Mariahilf Open House Day and in an information event for cancer patients. We are pleased to be able to make things easier for those going through stressful and arduous treatments.

The next Working Bee is being planned for mid-May. If you would like to be a part of the From the Heart Team but can't make the Working Bee date, we do accept 100% cotton fabric as a donation. Contact Susan or Tracy if you are interested. (Tracy M.)



Opera Club Looks Back at the “Orphée et Eurydice” Project



Prequel: as “Orphée et Eurydice” (1762/74) is the earliest opera that the Opera Club have covered so far, it made sense to start off by going all the way back to the very beginning! And so we looked at the birth of opera with a special focus on the early opera composer Claudio Monteverdi (1567 – 1643). Happily, in January, the Hamburger Staatsoper featured performances of Monteverdi’s opera, “Il ritorno d’Ulisse in patria”. A group of us spent a marvelous evening at this show and were particularly fascinated by Ulysses, sung by the American Kurt Streit, and the period orchestra, Collegium 1704.

The Main Event: After a fascinating look at the intervening baroque period with all its glories and excesses, we were ready for “Orphée et Eurydice” as composed by Christoph Willibald Gluck (1714 – 1787). This so-called reform opera excised the overindulgences of the late baroque and returned the focus to drama and emotionally direct music. When Gluck revised the opera for dance-loving French opera audiences, he also added many intervals of ballet music.

As a great fan of this opera, Hamburg Ballet’s John Neumeier decided to do his own new “Orphée” production in the role of choreographer, director, and stage designer. He didn’t stop there, as he also designed the costumes and lighting. The Opera Club had the pleasure of attending the resulting marvelous new production in February. Here’s what some of our members had to say:



“I had never been to the ballet in Hamburg or had exposure to John Neumeier’s work, so this was a great opportunity to enjoy a wonderful opera and exciting ballet all in one evening!”

—Andrea H.

“Of course the viewing of any art work is more enriching when one knows the background. So it was with this performance – so what can I say about [the opera]? Thanks for bringing me back from the dead and I won’t look back.”

—Marilyn R.

“As someone relatively new to opera appreciation, the mix of beautiful Neumeier ballet with opera was wonderfully blended!”

—Mary W.

“For my first ever opera experience, Neumeier really surprised me with his modern twist. Simple yet elegant stage setting, beautiful dresses and impressive ghost. Thumbs up!”

—Caroline (Qiyang) Sch.

“Naturally I loved Orphée et Eurydice because it was 50% ballet and so much of the show came from John Neumeier, who is celebrating his 80th birthday and 45 years in Hamburg. I don’t really understand operas, but I immensely enjoy listening to Elizabeth explain them to me, and, once again, this visit extended my horizon, so that now I hope to see the play, Orpheus, about the same story, which will be performed at the Thalia Theater.”

—Becky T.

The Opera Club will be traveling to Prague in April to discover Bedřich Smetana’s “The Bartered Bride”. Our next regular project, Mozart’s “Don Giovanni” will begin in August. (Elizabeth R.)

Art Planning Meeting at Galeríeka

The art group gathered for an annual planning meeting in early February at Galeríeka, a café which doubles as an art gallery staging changing exhibitions every month or so. It was very nice of Shelly and Diana to organize this meeting at the time when my husband Tom was exhibiting some of his photographs in the front room there! But we met and enjoyed delicious cake at a long table in another, less busy room under quirky but clever suspended wire figures.

The meeting was great fun with about 15 women of all ages and not just Americans attending (what I love about AWCH!). So interesting to find out that quite a number of us studied and make art and/or have art history, graphic design or collecting backgrounds. Perhaps we can do a Galeríeka exhibition by AWCH artists next year!

Group coordinators, Diana S. and Shelly S., had put together great suggestions for this year's program. We've already enjoyed two of them: hand-lettering workshop offered by member Karen O'S. and a visit to well-known Hamburg art restorer, Geertje Foth, which was all the more interesting thanks to the astute questions and perceptive observations of the many artists in our group. Coming up next in March is a talk by our own New York bred and educated art historian, Diana S., about contemporary art and the art market. Plans are underway for two excursions, one to fishing villages outside Lübeck, which were frequented by artists in former times, and one to a renowned private American collection of international contemporary art in a castle. A behind-the-scenes visit to a Hamburg museum storage area is also in the making. We will also see a



brief showing of rare and rarely exhibited Leonardo da Vinci drawings in the collection of the Hamburg Kunsthalle in June. In late August we will head to Altona to the community center for arts and social groups in the old Victoria Barracks Building, where our full-time-artist member, Monique B., has a studio as an artist in residence this year. Our visit will coincide with an exhibition of her paintings at the Frappant Gallery there. We'd like to wrap up the year by celebrating our holiday party at the Museum der Arbeit (Museum of Labor), creating holiday cards on their collection of antique printing presses.

In this Bauhaus and Rembrandt anniversary year, the group had no trouble coming up with a few more ideas. Look for these activities on the AWCH calendar or ask Diana or Shelly to put you on the art group invitation list by writing to artgroup@awchamburg.org. (Holly T.)

The Fine Art of Conservation and Restoration



Coming into the cosy studio of Geertje Foth on a cold February night, twelve of us were greeted with a glass of wine and the promise of an exciting introduction into the fascinating world of art conservation and restoration. While

we sat amongst the paintings that were being restored, Ms. Foth explained to us the techniques and "tools" needed—as tiny as a cotton swab to remove grime or yellowing from varnish. Geertje Foth has spent some 20 years learning and perfecting the techniques of conservation and restoration of art

works for museums and private homes, as well as evaluating pieces to be sold at the art fairs around the world.

Ms. Foth described her work, which includes the complexities of evaluating a painting. Under ultra-violet light she can see how much an artwork has been restored and can determine if this was done professionally, or actually devalued the work. Also, sometimes restoration is not possible; for example, old paintings with crackling from age cannot, and should not, be changed. The emphasis is that art pieces are pleading for proper care, which means the proper climate, lighting, and



With Elegance and Perfection

On January 11, 2019 a nice surprise was waiting for the ladies who signed up for the Hand Lettering Workshop with Karen O'S. The table was laid out with purple flowers, a welcome card plus two pens, writing paper, and many other extra writing tools to experiment with per Karen's instructions. First of all, I have to say that I have had the honor of working with Karen on the 2018 AWCH Board, watching her whip out one amazing design after the next. Most recently, she created the beautiful thank-you cards for the Visionary Women's moderator and panelists.

Now, I must add that I was a little intimidated seeing how many of these women were not quite the novice I am, and there were several who began asking very complicated questions; nevertheless, the workshop was full of happy faces listening intently to all the secrets that Karen was willing to share. She explained how to use the different pens, papers, and online fonts that could be printed out as helpful exercises. She spoke about Instagram accounts and

competitions and gave us many examples of where we could try out our new skills. Most importantly though, she was patient and kind. She took time to help everyone, even those like myself who needed a little extra to get on the right track.



My favorite moments were when Karen would tell us stories about herself, like how she first learned hand writing in America and then had to unlearn it when she went to Germany. In the end, she decided to learn as much as possible and now has no problem doing any font. I also enjoyed her re-capping of the many *Currents* magazines that she produced on her own several years ago as editor. She is truly a creative talent who has inspired me to do my best and strive to attempt things I had otherwise never imagine doing. Thank you, Karen! I am sorry you are leaving us, but I know I will certainly keep in touch with you in your new Texas home! (Shelly S.)

Wonderous to see the brightening of colors in oil paintings, once the yellowed protective shellac/varnish is cautiously removed. A big thrill was the before/during/and after restoration photos of a high-ranking Masonic Lodge member, who had been painted over and disguised by the portrait of another lesser gentleman for protection from what would have been certain destruction during the war. (Carol B.)

environment. Several AWCH members already knew Ms. Fogt through her excellent restoration of their damaged paintings: even a hole in a canvas disappeared!

Ms. Foth has worked for the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe and the Altonaer Museum among many others, and in cathedrals. She has restored works of Anita Rée, Emil Nolde, Max Liebermann, and Paul Klee, to name a few. Her golden rule is to do "as much as necessary, as little as possible" so that the rehabilitated work is that of the artist and not the conservator.

Two and half hours simply vanished; we all left with the happy feeling of deep appreciation for this art world specialty and felt like we had also made a new friend. (Shelly S.)



Film Group Winners

Business meeting – January 28, 2019



To kick off the year, Marinell H. organized a hugely successful Film Group business meeting on Monday, January 28 at the Landesfrauenrat. Eighteen Film Group members attended to discuss goals for this year, as well as to analyze events from 2018. Topics were embargoes, copyrights, communication, as well as *Currents* proofreading and editing procedures. Christine R. will use G Suite to set up an archive of historical and current Film Group information and a shared account to collect reviews and articles for collaborative working.

Shelly S., Karen P., Diana S., Marinell H., and Birgit S. will divide the work to organize and get the three special film festival issues of *Currents* in 2019 published. Pat F. discussed putting up film reviews on the AWCH website. Birgit informed about the process involved in laying out special film festival issues and taking them through to publishing. Ericka S. informed and gave everyone a handout about formatting reviews for publishing in the monthly *Hamburg Guide*. Marinell reported on our KinoCritics website, after an interchange with our manager, Kirsten G., in Colorado. Becky announced that she would step down as manager in January 2020 and successors will be sought. Marinell and Becky will share the collection of reviews twice a month to send to the two websites.



Oscar Party – February 25, 2019

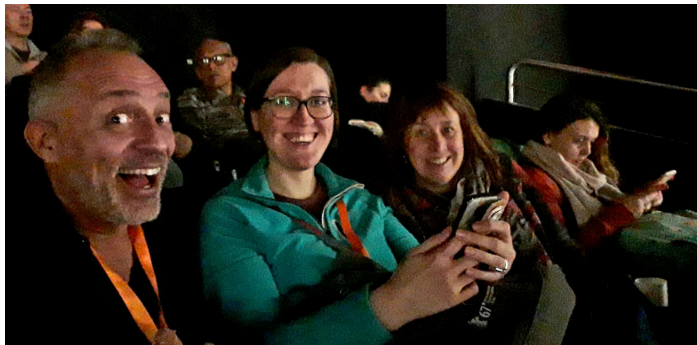
Nancy Tiltz hosted her traditional Oscar party for the Film Group on Monday, February 25. Fourteen club members met at 9 a.m. having brought food for brunch and then relaxing in Nancy's living room in front of her new flat-screen television to see a replay of the Oscar® Awards. She had additional technical help from Rose F., who had come in all the way from Berlin. The participants had no notion of which Hollywood or international actors and actresses had won during the previous night, so that they would be ready to check off their predicted winners from an Academy Awards ballot and win their own statuette. In the end Shelly S. had the most right answers, and runners-up were Rose F., Leonie H., and Adelina G. Winner of a fun Oscar® Bingo Game, donated by Tracy M., was also Shelly. She also organized a successful silent auction for which 12 people generously donated merchandise and, in the end, a total of 420 euros or \$475 was taken in from 17 people, who either bought things or simply donated money. Shelly sent the sum to Kirsten G. in Colorado to finance our group Kino



Critics website (www.kinocritics.com). Kirsten established the website in 2005 while living in Hamburg and continues to manage it in spite of having returned to the U.S.

Berlinale – February 7–17, 2019

Six Film Group members attended part or all of the 2019 Berlinale Film Festival, February 7 – 17. Shelly S., Rose F., Mary W. and Becky T. were officially accredited as journalists. Pat F. and Karen S. attended for fun. All six are now industriously compiling articles about their impressions, which will appear in a special Berlinale edition of *Currents Magazine* that Shelly will organize and take through to publishing.



So, who are the winners?
All members of the Film Group, of course, with three big events giving us a great start for 2019. New members are welcome to participate. (Becky Tan)

One of the Many Reasons to Join the Film Group: Press Perks

by Mary Nyiri Wienke

The *Berlinale* offers press screenings before the actual festival begins. Why go to pre-screenings when there are ten official days of films? Scheduling! For me, that is the most difficult issue. The festival has around a thousand screenings of over 300 films and draws close to half a million movie goers. Different rules for screenings apply for accredited press. For pre-screenings, it is possible to sit in a theater the entire day (with only ten to fifteen minute breaks) to see films in a particular category. That frees up more time during the festival for participating in press conferences, more screenings and lots of other activities. I spent three days pre-screening films in the *Kulinarisches Kino* (Culinary Cinema) program. Many of those films are shown during the festival at 10 p.m., which can challenge your stamina after seeing four or five other films earlier in the day.

Some of the benefits of press accreditation help in the process of writing. For instance, we have access to press conferences for films in Competition, and some other categories as well. This time around, I went to the press conference for the Panorama category film *The Souvenir* which featured Tilda Swinton and her daughter, Honor Swinton-Byrne. Not only is it exciting to see actors up close, it can be really enlightening to hear them talk about their roles and to ask questions. One of my favorite moments at the *Berlinale* was when Kirk Douglas told me I spoke very good English! Most embarrassing was when I asked George Michael about exposing

himself, having misstated my question in front of dozens of camera and live on the big screen outside the Berlinale Palast Theater. Conversing live with the stars is a *Berlinale* highlight!

Being a film critic at a film festival is real work and can be overwhelming. The *Berlinale* has provided bottled water, coffee, carry bags, reusable cups, and lounges for meetups or just hanging out.



This year coffee was provided if you had your own cup (*Berlinale* red bear cups available for 2€). Coffee is a good idea when you have a day of four bad films in a row, but without much time to eat, the consequences can be uncomfortable! The best perk I found this year was a press lounge on the 24th floor of the Kollhoff Building at Potsdamer Platz 1. Entrance was free with our press pass but drinks, desserts and light snacks were expensive. What was worth the ride in the world's fastest elevator was the view. This roof top café is usually open to the public (for a fee) and has a bit of Berlin history explained on one floor up as well as a top floor viewing area. There you can get a good sense of what has changed since the Berlin wall came down. Other places for press include access to the Gropius Mirror Restaurant for breakfast and the Audi Berlinale Lounge across from the Berlinale Palast Theater which provides a nice, heated place to watch what's happening on the red carpet. You just need to find some lounge time in your busy screening schedule!

Taking a Stand to Improve Gender Equality in the Motion Picture Industry: Women in Film and Television

by Shelly Schoeneshoefer

Some 10 years ago I began attending the Berlinale Film Festival; at least five years ago, the Director's Competition was my personal marker to see how many women were included. The scene was bleak. How times have changed, especially with the #MeToo movement! But it was still a surprise to me when Berlinale Director, Dieter Kosslick, announced plans to take the Berlinale Film Festival one step further before he bids adieu after 19 years. On February 9, Kosslick signed a pledge that there would be gender equality in the film industry by 2020.

This is new initiative began at the Swedish Carl International Film Festival, from which came a concept of offering financial incentives to gender-equal productions. This pledge initiative is led by the post-production house Chimney in partnership with Women in Film and Television International (WIFTI) and Women in Film and Television (WIFT) Germany. Although this pledge was signed in Cannes and Venice, the 2019 Berlinale took an even a stronger stand with 41% women directors in the program, far beyond the other two festivals. The pledge does not enforce mandatory gender quotas, but will strive to succeed by a different method. The idea is 10% rebate for 50/50: in a team of eight, four should be females in order to get a 10% discount from the participating industry companies. The categories include: director, writer, producer, departmental head and crew, lead actors, and co-lead speaking parts.

together, stay positive, and be creative. I truly felt the energy in this network and wish them lots of success as they travel from festival to festival. The good news is that they won't need to convince anyone at the forthcoming Dortmund/Cologne International Women's Film Festival!

The Alliance of Women's Networks is a new pan-European network promoting gender equality in the film industry through collaboration among national organizations in over 20 countries. Women from these networks attending the press conference were: Helene Granqvist, WIFT Sweden & WIFTI; Kissy Dugan, WIFT Italy; Susan Liddy, WIFT Ireland; Cecilia Ferguson, EWA Network; Ingebjörg Torgersen, WIFT Norway; Wilbirg Brainin-Donnenberg, FC Gloria, Austria; Laura Kaehr, SWAN, Switzerland; Dögg Mosesdottir, WIFT Iceland; Nicole Ackermann, WIFT Germany & WIFTI.

This is not the first time I've heard about WIFT, this past year they introduced the film *CODE: Debugging the Gender Gap* by Robin Hauser, in conjunction with the American Consulate, Hamburg, where we were invited for the viewing. This leading national and international network for women in creative media, WIFT lobbies for women's interests, and offers networking events, workshops, and collaborations with the production industry. WIFT also hosts events and public discussions for all crafts of filmmaking on cutting-edge topics at festivals, such as the Berlinale (<http://www.wiftg.de/>)

The sole women's film festival in Germany is the Dortmund/Cologne International Women's Film Festival. I remember seeing a flyer about it years ago and wanted to attend but never had the time. Here you can see the latest film developments and trends as they relate to women working in all areas of film production. It is not only a film festival for female directors but also for women in other categories, such as cinematographers and film-music composers. <https://www.frauenfilmfestival.eu/>



American producer Gale Anne Hurd at a press conference at the 2019 Berlinale.



Theo Lindberg and the author at the 2019 Berlinale.

"Money talks," says Helene Granqvist, President of WIFTI, who spoke boldly at the press conference. Additional speakers included Theo Lindberg, a senior editor and partner in Chimney, and Kissy Dugan, the American-born but Italian WIFT representative. They explained the importance of this initiative and that they have

several companies wishing to participate. We all were waiting for the final speaker, American producer Gale Anne Hurd, best known as the producer of *Terminator*, *The Walking Dead* and *Aliens*. Quite an amazing woman, she gave us horror stories of how she had to fight to get where she is today, and why she strongly supports this pledge. My impression was that in order to succeed, everyone must work

Martin Krafft [CC BY-SA 3.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>)]

Joy Luck Mahjong Club

Stella founded this new AWCH group and Leonie supports her with her gift for clarity and teaching. They form a dynamic duo running the Joy Luck Mahjong Club. Partners are welcome, and its monthly meeting locations rotate between the members' homes and include a potluck dinner (they also have a couples dinner club) before the games begin.

At Leonie's lovely home—the guest list of who was there read like AWC royalty, with three of our board members attending—the delicious dinner culminated with Leonie's partner Ortwin's on-the-spot cooking of a wonderful beef dish, as we watched in the open kitchen/dining area, which he designed and built.

This was my first time at the Joy Luck Mahjong, and I had never played the game. My mother did, and I inherited her set, which Stella generously said we could use that evening. This was really helpful for me, as all sets have an individual look with different drawings representing the groups of tiles on their front side. The sets also have different backs,



for example, Shelly's antique set has all the tiles backed in bamboo!

The game dates back to the beginning of the Qing dynasty (early 1600's). There are at least 136 tiles, each usually as mine, with a translucent green backside representing the more ancient, costly jade, a stone of good luck; and luck or no luck is an important concept in Mahjong. The tiles sparkled beautifully when spread across the



soft, deep green felt of the game table. Such a pleasure to move those tiles across the board. Each player chooses thirteen tiles and the fun begins trying to get rid of your last tile and say "Mahjong" before your comrades!

As I hopefully improve my game, more details

will be revealed on the joys of playing. Please contact Stella or Leonie for more information about the next meeting. (Nancy T.)

Get Up & Move!



Image by StockSnap from Pixabay

Spring is in the air and it's time to get moving. Dust off those walking, running or hiking shoes, or maybe it's yoga mats and paddles that takes your fancy. Whatever is your thing, everything is better when shared with other members of the AWCH.

Want to be part of the new AWCH Get Up & Move group? Either by starting a walking/running group in your area or joining one. Perhaps get moving with the group to Paddle Board on the Alster or Canoe Around the Canals?

Remember a little can make a lot of difference. Need a reason to get out and move it. Here are a few: lose weight, lower cholesterol, increase your brain function, reduce stress, meet new friends and get to know your area.

Interested in being part of our new AWCH group Get Up & Move?

Email Christine: fawcorep@awchamburg.org

The Name Game

(or Why I Took My Husband's Name)

It's 2019 and I just got married a couple of months ago. Being a feminist is "trendy," and if you give the hint of being anything else, you might even be considered a female demon for its gender.

So, around the time when we started filing for our marriage certificate and we had to state the future family name, people would ask me constantly which name I was going to take. Well, first of all, I was still going to be Karen... Who cares about the last name? That's only for documents and my bank, I thought.

However, Dan and I talked a lot about this issue. We were discussing possibilities. He takes my name, I take his name, he keeps his and I keep mine, I use both... It was like playing *The Name Game*: Karen Karen, bo-bar-en; Bo-na-na fana, fo-far-en; Fee fi mo-mar-en, Karen!

But with two names, each consisting of four syllables, and both tongue twisters, *The Name Game* seemed impossible—or can you think of how to play the game with Malinowski-O'Shaughnessy? Even Shirley Ellis would have had her difficulties. "There isn't any name, that you can't rhyme?" Well, I found it!

Due to our cultural background and the future we were planning for ourselves, there was only one name that we both felt was the right fit, though. It was his.

When I told people this, I got all kinds of reactions, mostly negative. In the beginning I felt the initial need to defend myself, saying that if we had kids, it would be easier—many people left it at that. Until it turns out that a colleague had a different name than her family and she had "oh, no problems at all,"... "it's so important to keep your own identity bla bla..., especially as a feminist, bla bla!" Well, good for you Darling, but not for me, alright?

First of all, I am for equal rights for anyone, I personally don't feel like I need to label it. Calling myself a feminist will not change what I stand for, not calling myself a feminist won't do that either. In my last job I had a boss, who pranced around calling herself a feminist, and used the title almost like a sash around her neck. It was very off putting.

What's the big whoop? Why the label? Especially if you feel so desperate to use them, it seems almost



like you need to emphasize you are one. I've had the experience, if people call themselves special, they usually aren't.

Feminism should advocate one thing: Everyone should have the choice. No matter what that choice should be, you can decide without being judged for that. Would anyone question a man's decision to keep his name?



Same thing with stay-at-home moms, housewives, women who decide to marry rich and not work but instead pursue nurturing their beauty, or women who decide to work in a "girly" job like fashion or decide to study chemical polymer science and develop new non-organic substances. We should all have the choice. It's important that we don't make this decision

because we feel we have to, but because we WANT to.

Being a feminist is having the choice of what you want to do, and then act on it without judgement. However, in my case, I almost felt like I was frowned upon for giving up my maiden name. I don't feel like I gave up anything, my maiden name will forever be my name. It will forever be in my passport, forever on my mind, and most and for all, forever in my heart, I will forever be a "Mali"-Diva, as the women in my family call themselves, no matter what happens in the future. No one can take that away from me.

Therefore, in the end, I took my husband's name. I want to have the same name as him, no matter which one that be, we could call ourselves the Elvis-Troupe, for all I care. I want to be a unit, a team, and a team has a name. And for me, that was the same last name. Other people can do what they want, but I did it this way—My decision. (Karen O'S.)

Fashion

Crossroads of Memory Lane and Fashion Avenue

by Karen O'Shaughnessy

I always considered myself a fashionista. From when my mom would make me wear my sisters' clothes telling me I am super cool for wearing "big girl clothes." Heck I would even start wearing clothes of family friends' sons, because I was brainwashed into thinking it's cool (and I still do!), to roaming the Goodwills of this world to find the fashion jewels of long lost decades.

In this time, I accumulated A LOT of clothes. Tons of them. Even though my closet was always neat and tidy and only contained my essentials that I wore then, I now realize I have been deceiving myself in thinking I had fashion under control. It has *me* under its control. And I have the boxes to prove it.

I am now relocating with my husband to a new continent and we vowed we would downsize. What a stupid promise to make, I realize now.

Now I am standing in front of boxes over boxes of my own personal history. No diaries required, no photos taken, just the memory lane of Fashion Avenue.



I take the leather jacket into both my hands, rub my cheek against the soft leather and remember that chilly spring night and the horrible date I had with this guy, William. Then I uncover a bright pink original Japanese Kimono I got in Amsterdam, on a trip visiting another failed boyfriend who lived there and was everything I now dislike about the Dutch (sorry guys, I know it's unfair but my emotions about this are strong.) I dig out the most fantastic high heels I have ever owned. Super comfy but



sexy as HELL. I remember the dancing nights spent in my mid-twenties, when I was convinced that I was invincible, I was a head turner and I could achieve anything in life.

Now as I look at the items, I think how my life has changed so much. I don't go on dates anymore, my dancing nights have become rare and are occasional (if one of my friends turn 50 or 60), and then I don't dance like I used to. Furthermore, I have never worn that Kimono, because, though very pretty, I still hate myself for ever having gone out with that guy, just for a couple of cheap trips to Amsterdam (I love the city, though and know the little streets like the back of my hand now!).

Well, here I am now, and I realize, the time is over, and I really don't need those items to remember all the things I have learned and suffered with them. It's all in my head as long as God allows—and if it's gone at one point, I'm sure I won't miss it, because by then I will have made room for other great new memories I will accumulate in the years, or even only the same moment, if I lose my memories entirely. So, here I am and I toss, toss, toss the stuff—and you can now find my pretty little heels on Ebay *Kleinanzeigen*, if you are interested, wear size 6.5, and love to dance...



Theater in Hamburg

AWCH at and in High Heels



Set in an exclusive dress shop in 1937 London, *Death in High Heels*, a classic whodunit put on by the English-speaking Hamburg Players, was custom made for an AWCH girls' night out. Member Andrea M. planned a terrific evening beginning at the Indian Ayurvedan restaurant, Ayuleela, for a group of 15 of us including a couple of crime-loving husbands.

With jealousy, teasing, flirting and subtle competition ending in—yes, a murder—the play was fun and the acting was very good. So good, that I did not recognize our lively member Julia R. as the stern Miss Zelda Gregory for the whole first act. I had to be told in the intermission! Teresa P. also spotted our wonderful guide from the recent tour of Montblanc, Camilo Daza, as the philandering owner of the shop, Mr. Bevan. With a couple of references to stitching n' bitching and Miss Gregory turning out to be the murderess because she was spurned by Mr. Bevan—well, it was definitely a red-letter theater night for AWCH!



Not a surprise to us, Julia is in fact a professional actor who appeared in *Hawaii 5-0*, *Rosewood*, *General Hospital* on TV and in *Hairspray* and other plays on stage before she came to Hamburg in 2017 on the RMS *Queen Mary 2* with her husband and dog, Bear. Concentrating on learning German in an intensive course with An-



drea, she'll be sitting out the next Hamburg Players production, *Calendar Girls*. But she promised to come with us so be sure to look for the invitation to what will be a very fun evening in late May.

The Hamburg Players are an amateur troupe, operated as a German club or e.V., who stage three plays every year. Anyone can join for 30€ for an annual membership which entitles you to participate in a weekly improvisation workshop and a choir and to audition for plays. If acting is not your thing but you love theater and would like to be involved with a creative, fun-loving team in a hands-on way, you can help with sound, lighting, costumes, set-building, props, hair and/or makeup. You don't need to be a member to join monthly play reading to investigate possible new plays to stage. For more information check out www.hamburgplayers.de. (Holly T.)



Theater in Hamburg

The Caged Guest Misses Nothing

by Marinell Haegelin

Beauty of the Father

by Nilo Cruz

at The English Theatre of Hamburg
with Clifford Dean directing

Nilo Cruz is this season's addition to its scope of modern playwrights staged. In this character driven piece, Cruz incorporates folklore and metaphor in poetic language. Central to the theme is Federico Garcia Lorca, Spanish poet and playwright. Between 1923 and 1927, he was a member of *Generación del 27* that wanted to experiment with avant-garde forms of expression in Spanish literature. Lorca was executed by Nationalists early in the Spanish Civil War as Republicans fought to save Spain from fascism.



Theo Bougouneau (Karim) left, and Jess Pritchard (Marina) right

The Mediterranean's rhythmic waves calm Emiliano's anxieties as he paints on the outdoor terrace. His current painting—Garcia Lorca's murder, requires concentration. Spontaneously, the subject matter of his painting appears; Emiliano welcomes the interruption to talk to Lorca's Ghost about his daughter Marina's imminent arrival, to which Lorca wryly comments, "There's always work to be done."



Joseph Rhy (Emiliano) left, and Alexander Warner (Lorca) right

Emiliano explains it's 10 years since he saw Marina and, since her mother's death, he's desperate for her to move to Spain and stay with him. Then Marina and Karim, a young man living with Emiliano, arrive full of spirit and laughter that aggravates Emiliano. That clever Paquita, companion-cum-occasional bed partner, counterbalances with liveliness and playful warm-heartedness. Disregarding the Moroccan houseboy-cum-consort, Emiliano focuses on Marina, trying to undo any discomfort from the divorce and/or his abandonment. Time ticks by. Although invisible, Lorca misses nothing: The attraction between the young adults, the friction between the lovers, the budding friendship between the women, and the burgeoning jealousies. Intermittently Lorca offers Emiliano wise council. Inevitably, Marina learns of the fickle ménage à trois arrangement at the beach house. During the almost surreal San Juan Day festivities passions are aroused, and collectively overflow: "Today I feel the devil in me." The Ghost looks on in wondrous incredulity amid tender cooing, flamenco inspired dancing, games, and abject yelling: "Humans are too complicated."

In 2001, Cuban-American Nilo Cruz wrote *Anna in the Tropics* for which he received a 2003 Pulitzer Prize; his work has been performed across the United States. He's written librettos, a musical/book, collaborated on orchestral songs, and translations including two plays by Garcia Lorca. As a New Dramatists alumna, Cruz teaches playwriting at universities, and in 2009 received the Theater Award from PEN/Laura Pels International Foundation for his distinctive voice as an inspiring playwright in mid-career.

Veteran director Clifford Dean liked the unconventionality of the family unit at the heart of this play. Emotive involvements are wildly variable because of the tilted intimate relationships amongst the household. Wanting to bring Hamburg audiences “magical realism” woven into the symbolically striking verse, Dean guides the engaging London thespians with a sure hand; they brilliantly navigate the lyrical cadence of Cruz’s exquisitely written dialogue. Learning their lines was demanding, because of the dialogue’s syntax and its poetic structure. Challenging as well is the intensity of feelings that engulf each character, and the complex emotional structure and interaction among characters. They are also aware how important their delivery is for German audiences.



Holly Smith (Paquita) left, and Joseph Rhy (Emiliano) right



Jess Pritchard (Marina) left, and Holly Smith (Paquita) right

Alexander Warner’s *Lorca* is a moral compass for Emiliano; as well, the *Ghost* is cagy about when and to whom he’s visible. For Joseph Rhy’s Emiliano, emotional and psychological effects from leaving his daughter are central to his character. Emiliano recognizes that he and Karim are duplicitous in what each wants from the other that intensifies friction between them. Jess Pritchard’s Marina wants to belong somewhere, yet is leery of Emiliano; she quickly bonds with Paquita that’s akin to a mother and daughter, i.e., experience versus naiveté. Holly Smith’s Paquita character’s sad/happy personality needed balance. Countless failed love affairs don’t deter Paquita taking risks to attain a caring, cohesive family environment. For Theo Bougouneau’s Karim it was important to learn Moroccan pronunciations and understand that culture—a theater staff member’s Moroccan

friend helped Theo immensely. Karim’s current arrangement is a means to an end, until meeting Marina who arouses deeper feelings, and happiness. Emiliano’s mistrust is stoked seeing this, tempered only by his longing to “nest.” To that end, he irrefutably levers control over the others that could be self-defeating. Still, Emiliano knows that to achieve hearth, home and relationship with daughter, it has to be on Marina’s terms.

Nilo Cruz smartly explores human conditions in all its complexities through sensually dramatic, intoxicating prose. “Ultimately my plays are about being an individual.” As desire is shamed into submission, and individual needs are superseded or misplaced, emotions swirl. Nevertheless, it’s an old soul that cautions against alleviating reality. Just as Marina’s empathetic child-woman voice strikes the deepest chord in audiences: “Just see it as another way of loving.”

BEAUTY OF THE FATHER premiered February 14 and runs until April 13, 2019. The next production is MOONLIGHT AND MAGNOLIAS, a comedy by Ron Hutchison. Premiering on April 25, it runs through June 22, 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.

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Film Reviews and more...



Vorhang auf für Cyrano (Edmond) *****

France/Belgium 2018

Opening March 21, 2019

Directed by Alexis Michalik

Writing credits: Alexis Michalik

Principal actors: Thomas Solvi res, Oliver Gourmet, Mathilde Seigner, Tom Leeb, Lucie Boujenah

In December 1897 French theater writer Edmond Rostand was experiencing a low point in his career. His last two dramas

were not well received; he hadn't written anything in two years, and he had a wife and children to support. At the same time the most successful actor of the time, Constant Coquelin, was having his own career problems, as his theater faced closure due to financial problems. Famous actress Sarah Bernhardt suggested to Coquelin that he ask Rostand to create a new role for him. Edmond Rostand, with no other alternatives, agreed, stumbling along with a three-week deadline. The play slowly came to life with help, as well as interference, from the newly assembled staff. Coquelin insisted that his incompetent son Jean play a role. The money-givers insisted that elderly actress Maria Lagault must have a leading role. Rostand was happy to give his best friend L o a main role, which impressed L o's girlfriend Jeanne, who worked in the theater dressing room. Then there was a series of letters involving the triangle L o, Jeanne and Edmond, which incited jealousy on the part of Edmond's wife Rosemonde. Amazingly, the play *Cyrano de Bergerac* opened on December 28, 1897, and, to this day, it is the most frequently performed play in the French-speaking theater world, a classic in world literature.

Director **Alexis Michalik** was 29 when he decided to compile this story—the same age as Edmond when he enjoyed this great success. Michalik studied acting and worked as both actor and director in the theater. He presented this story originally as a play; now we have it as his first, full-length, feature film. Not only does the quick pace enthrall our viewing, but also the excellent actors, beginning with **Thomas Solivi res** (Edmond). **Oliver Gourmet** (Coquelin), **Tom Leeb** (L o), **Lucie Boujenah** (Jeanne), **Mathilde Seigner** (Maria Legault) and **Igor Gotesman** (Jean) are all amazing. Almost an actor in its own right is the mustache that Edmond wears, a highlight in a film full of beautiful costumes, makeup and hair-styling, thanks to **Thierry Delette**. Naturally, *Cyrano de Bergerac* lives on today, more than 120 years since its premiere, in stunning versions of opera, musicals, ballet and film. Cyrano's large nose, his distinguishing mark, is always recognizable. Stay for the credits and see clips of *Cyrano* productions from 1900 to 2006 roll by in selected performances. (Becky Tan)



Die Goldfische ****

Germany 2019

Opening March 21, 2019

Directed by: Alireza Golafshan

Writing credits: Alireza Golafshan

Principal actors: Tom Schilling, Jella Haase, Axel Stein, Birgit Minichmayr



Oliver (**Tom Shilling**), driving irresponsibly in order to make an appointment, crashes; his car turns over eight times. He wakes up in the Tarnach Stiftung rehabilitation center in Bavaria where he must learn to live the rest of his life in a wheelchair. Still, he does not identify with the other handicapped patients; and continues his job as a portfolio manager, all quite doable on a computer while in a wheelchair, except that the WLAN connection at Tarnach is terrible. He approaches the Goldfish group simply because their computer connections are the best in the house. We meet blind Magda (**Birgit Minichmayr**), Franzi (**Luisa Wöllisch**) with Down Syndrome, Rainman (**Axel Stein**) and Michi (**Jan Henrik Stahlberg**), both autistic. Their caregivers are Laura (**Jella Haase**) and Eddy (**Kida Khodr Ramadan**), who handle the group with contrasting attitudes and expectations.

Oliver thought he had enough problems, until he receives news

that his money, secretly stashed away in a Swiss bank account, might interest the tax collectors. Even if he withdraws the money, how will he ever get it back across the border into Germany? But wait: border controllers are more lenient with the handicapped. Thus Oliver “generously” invites his four group members and two caregivers to board a bus, driven by Eddy, to a camel park in Switzerland – just about 90 minutes across the border.

I knew that *Die Goldfische* was about a group of handicapped people in a rehabilitation center, who call themselves The Goldfish. I was expecting a repeat of the French film, *Patients* (*Langer Leben* 2016), and wasn’t surprised when this film also begins with a healthy man suffering a terrible accident causing paralysis and changing his life. But that is the end of the similarities. *Die Goldfische* is very funny, all well played by the excellent actors of whom only Luisa Wöllisch is handicapped in real life. **Tom Shilling** truly is the man of the year in German films – such beautiful blue eyes and expressions. He is perfect for this role of the ambitious banker who discriminates against others for his own advancement.

Director **Alireza Golafshan** immigrated to Germany from Iran at age 12. This is his first long feature film. His graduation film, *Behinderte Ausländer*, at the Hochschule für Fernsehen and Film in Munich was based on his own father who had been handicapped before he died. Naturally, there is the discussion about whether one is allowed to laugh over the needs of the handicapped. Golafshan said, “Handicapped people do not want to be defined through their handicap. It is part of their life, but they don’t necessarily want to talk about it.” Here we experience how they want to be accepted to be as normal as anyone else, which, of course, they are. I enjoyed every one of the 133 minutes of *Die Goldfische*, and I

learned something about penny loafers. (Becky Tan)

Prinzessin Emmy ***

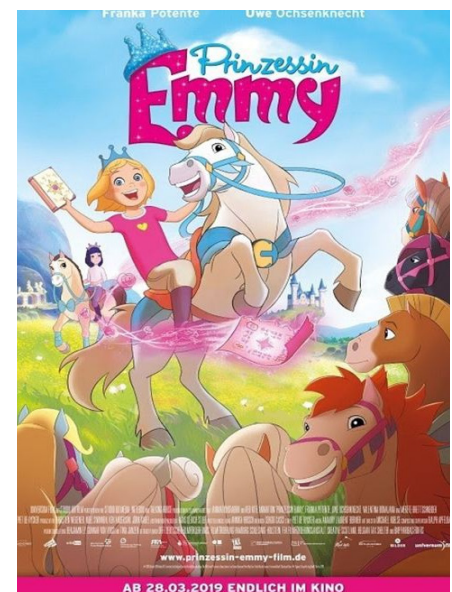
Germany/Belgium/UK 2019

Opening March 28, 2019

Directed by: Piet de Rycker

Writing credits: Sergio Casci

Principal actors: animation voiced by Franka Potente, Uwe Ochsenknecht



Eight-year-old Princess Emmy has the ability to speak with her horses, all 26 of them, including Cäsar, Rose, Xaver, Donny, and Valentin. This is a serious responsibility, because she must protect the book that holds the secret of horse talk, especially since occasionally loose pages of the book fall out and fly into the wind. As if that weren’t enough responsibility, she must take lessons with Vincenzo Massimo Cerimonata on behaving like a princess: how to smile, keep her balance, play the piano and appear elegant. She will be introduced at the princess’ ball in just 10 days. The worst problem is her snobby, mean cousin Gizana, also eight years old, who moves into the castle and takes every opportunity to make Emmy appear stupid, even forcing her to move into the attic. What if Gizana discovers the magic book?

There is always action in the life of Princess Emmy, not only among the characters, including a dance teacher Mrs. Zwickelmeier, friend David, brother Moritz and a castle ghost, but also among the horses, who act human. Emmy is not actually speaking their language; rather the horses are speaking her language: German. Perhaps this is the best decision, since subtitles would not be so appropriate for young viewers of the film! Actually, of all the characters, the cat has the most charisma. Some action becomes repetitive in the 75 minutes so that one loses concentration. Perhaps the story would be more effective if it were played by real actors and horses. Naturally, Prinzessin Emmy will appeal to young girls and horse lovers, who may recognize themselves. (Becky Tan)

The Old Man & the Gun (Ein Gauner und Gentleman) ****1/2 USA 2018

Opening March 28, 2019

Directed by: David Lowery
Writing credits: David Lowery, David Grann
Principal actors: Robert Redford, Casey Affleck, Sissy Spacek, Danny Glover, Tom Waits

Forrest Tucker was rather infamous in his day, because of two lifelong passions: breaking out of cages; and robbing banks. With some literary license, **David Lowery** bases his screenplay on **David Grann's** same titled 2003 *New Yorker* article; Lowery also directs.

Forrest (**Robert Redford**) and cohorts (**Danny Glover**, **Tom Waits**) are riding high after a string of heists cutting a swath from Texas to Missouri. En route, he meets a widow whose relaxed smile and realistic mindset 'Bob' finds congenial; he starts keeping company with Jewel (**Sissy Spacek**). Concurrently, Detective John Hunt's (**Casey Affleck**) job enthusiasm is waning, or so he tells his wife (**Tika Sumpter**).

Until that is, John's experience during a routine errand with his tykes (**Ari Elizabeth Johnson**, **Teagan Johnson**) when Forrest pays a visit. Henceforth, may the best man win.

Tucker's story is incredible, since his gall was extraordinary. Redford's performance in his last film is the essence of what audiences have found alluring for more than half a century; those twinkling eyes, and that open smile are uniquely special. Redford and Spacek's onscreen chemistry enliven their scenes that Affleck's dry, measured delivery accents. The design/art direction/set decoration teams beautifully to recreate signature products and features associated with 1981. **Joe Anderson's** easygoing cinematography matches activities unfolding onscreen; **Lisa Zeno Churgin** edits concurrent timelines, slipping in clips from past Redford films. **Daniel Hart's** touching music is accompanied by lively then-contemporary hits.



The Old Man & the Gun revel in Redford's charismatic sunny charm, alongside tugging at audiences' heartstrings as Tucker careens cross-country having the time of his life, besides audaciously taunting authorities. Rest assured, this tongue-in-cheek ca-

per is timeless, warmhearted and good-natured fun for all. 93 minutes (Marinell Haegelin)

(second option)

Old Man and the Gun (Ein Gauner & Gentleman) **1/2

A handsome gentleman dressed in a stunning blue suit and hat (**Robert Redford**) enters the bank with a charismatic smile and with a blink of an eye he turns casually, walks out to his car and drives off. It just takes moments before the entire bank staff realizes that they have just been robbed. During his escape he decides to aid a woman (**Sissy Spacek**) with a broken-down truck, all of which has the marks of becoming a long-term relationship. During one of his heists he crosses the path of detective John Hunt (**Casey Affleck**), who is bound and determined to catch this crafty charismatic gentleman by the name of Forrest Silva "Woody" Tucker. The film covers the time span in the 1980's where Tucker, accompanied by two partners John Waller (**Tom Waits**) and Teddy Green (**Danny Glover**) are baptized with the name of The Over the Hill gang (not to be confused with the Over the Hill Gang film, 1969) while their claim to fame is robbing banks from Oklahoma to California.

It's no surprise that Robert Redford slips perfectly into the role of Woody Tucker with having the past experience of playing a criminal in such films as *The Sting* and *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*. Not only does he charm women, but he charms the banks' staff while stuffing the bags full of money. This true story touches on his criminal history, which started at age 15, and that he had 18 successful prison breaks. The most famous escape was from San Quentin and done in in a handmade painted boat with the name Rub a Dub Ducks embellished on the side. The film is slow paced along with an understated music score that makes you slowly sink into the atmo-

sphere of this old fashion styled film. It is a film that an older generation viewer will appreciate but at the same time will drive the younger viewer crazy due to lack of action, energy and stunts.

The film is philosophical since it is so slow paced, and we are taken in by his wisdom on how to live life. It seems strange to accept views from a professional obsessive-compulsive convict who has an addiction to bank robbing. He was a man who forgot those who loved him but just moved on to the next job without remorse. The acting is outstanding in this film and the film is a nice exit for Robert Redford if indeed this is his last, but I am concerned as to what value this film really has, especially in these dark political times. He is portrayed as a good man because people liked him, but how would you really feel if that was your money that he took as he smiles and goes running out the door. (Shelly Schoeneshoefer.)

Willkommen in Marwen (Welcome to Marwen) *1/2**

USA 2018

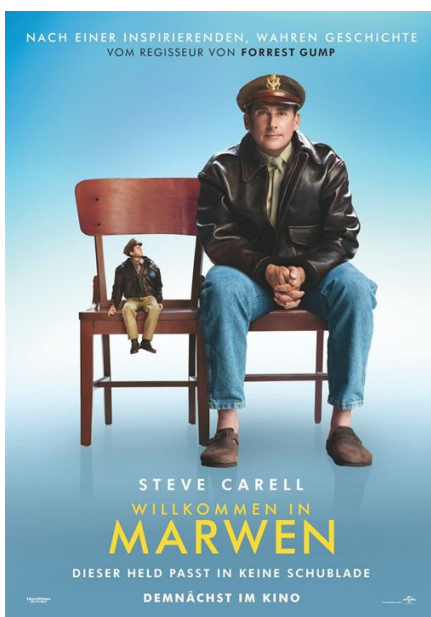
Opening March 28, 2018

Directed by: Robert Zemeckis
 Writing credits: Caroline Thompson, Robert Zemeckis
 Principal actors: Steve Carell, Leslie Mann, Merritt Wever, Gwendoline Christie, Janelle Monáe, Eiza González

Welcome to Marwen tells the true story of one man's road to recovery. Mark Hogankamp (**Steve Carell**) was brutally attacked, and, when he came out of his coma, he had lost all memory of his previous life. In trying to piece together his life, Mark realized he was an artist but he can no longer draw. So, he turns his talents into creating the town of Marwen, a WW2 Belgian village. He has meticulously created this town in miniature and populated it with dolls and photographs the predicaments he imagines his character, a WW2 combat pilot, encounters. In his imagined ex-

ploits he is continually overtaken by enemy Nazi soldiers and is always rescued by his band of women warriors.

In the animated scenes of Captain Hogie's escapades, the characters retain their doll-like physiques while embodying the essence of his real-life saviors – physical therapist (**Janelle Monáe**), co-worker (**Eiza González**), home health-care worker (**Gwendoline Christie**), toy store owner (**Merritt Wever**) and his new neighbor (**Leslie Mann**). These women not only save Captain Hogie from the clutches of the Nazis, but they encourage Mark Hogankamp in real life to overcome the obstacles in his road to recovery. They push him when he needs to be pushed but they also not only indulge, but participate in, his fantasy world. While many people would be quick to condemn Mark's fantasy world as nonsense, their acceptance of him allows him the time he needs to recover.



As Mark journeys toward tackling his real-life challenges, the rationale of his fantasy world is revealed. The animation is excellent and gives action to an otherwise quiet and quirky depiction of Mark. A heartwarming story on the power of tolerance. (Anne Crocker)

Beach Bum (The Beach Bum) **

Switzerland | UK | France | USA 2019

Opening March 28, 2019

Directed by: Harmony Korine
 Writing credits: Harmony Korine
 Principal actors: Matthew McConaughey, Isla Fisher, Snoop Dogg, Zac Efron, Stefania LaVie Owen, Jonah Hill, Martin Lawrence



Moondog (**McConaughey**) is leading the good life in Key West, Florida when Minnie (**Fisher**) beckons him home. Instead, he begs off to hangout with the other burnouts, until he is reminded that daughter Heather's (**Owen**) wedding is tomorrow. Lingerie (**Dogg**) is hosting the ceremony at his swanky estate; they agree to meet there, and Moondog manages (just!) not to ruin the wedding. Minnie is killed in an accident, and Moondog has to fulfill her will's mandates to get his share. He cuts some corners; and wheedles his way out of tight squeezes. Nonetheless, he ultimately finds a common ground with Heather.

Worth noting in writer-director **Harmony Korine's** newest film is the harmony of picture (**Benôit Debie**, cinematographer) and music (**John Debney**) throughout. Korine trademarks in this film are: decadence; and an abstractly artless storyline. Stitched

together by **Douglas Crise**, the film consists of a meandering series of sequences, with each accompanied by a theme song. Definitely unconcerned with being politically correct, be advised *Beach Bum* has an R rating in USA for pervasive drug and alcohol use, language throughout, nudity and some strong sexual content. Contrarily, its dialogue is riddled with good-context lines. So, to quote one sequence's theme song title "Is That All There Is?"—you can decide, or wait for its digital release that will undoubtedly be soon. 94 minutes (Marinell Haegelin)

Weil du nur einmal lebst – Die Toten Hosen auf Tour ****

Germany 2019
Opening March 28, 2019

Directed by: Cordula Kablitz-Post
Writing credits: Cordula Kablitz-Post
Principal actors: Documentary with Campino, Kuddel, Breiti, Andi, and Vom.



Die Toten Hosen is a punk rock band from Düsseldorf which first performed in 1982. Members are Campino (singer), Kuddel and Breiti (guitarists), Andi (bass guitarist) and Vom (drummer). All are German except Vom who joined from England in 1992 due

to the death of the original drummer Wölfi. Director **Kablitz-Post** accompanied the group on tour for seven months, collecting 180 hours of film. After just two concerts Campino suffered acute hearing loss, which set them back for five weeks and performances were cancelled. In Germany they performed in Berlin, Chemnitz, Stuttgart, Gräfenhainichen, and Düsseldorf. They go to Lucerne, Switzerland, and even to Buenos Aires, Argentina. It's too bad there is no scene of them performing in Hamburg. We are treated to 21 songs and sit with them in their bus as they go on to the next city. All of their performances, even in large stadiums, seem to be sold out. The enthusiastic fans are interesting in that there is a mix of 50-60-year olds who were there from the beginning 36 years earlier, as well as the next generation of 20-30-year-olds, and even some grandchildren. During the live performance the band members share their liberal political opinions, such as accepting immigrants, with the huge audiences. They are definitely anti far-right and anti-racism; they extract neo-Nazis and skinheads who cause trouble at performances. They believe that other musical groups with this kind of publicity, should also take the opportunity to stand up for their political beliefs. They are loyal to their long-term supporting team of producers, tour organizers, catering, security, etc.

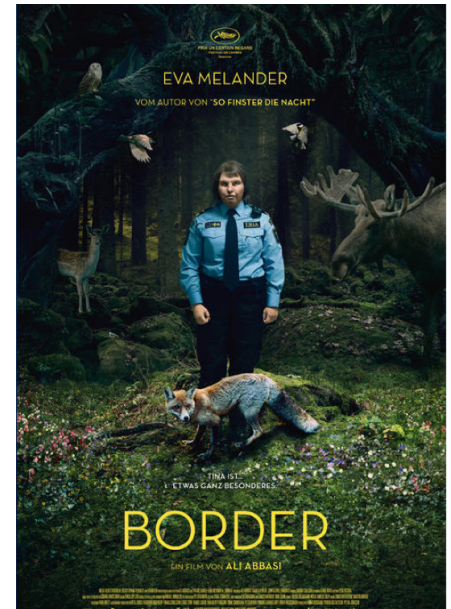
Die Toten Hosen (which my American colleague tells me are called "Dead Pants" in the USA) came to the 2019 Berlinale, in the section Berlinale Special, where their film premiered.

This film is interesting for anyone interested in the current music world. I'll admit that, although I've been around as long as they have, I did not recognize any of the music, except "You'll Never Walk alone," which is not their original song. All others are their own original creations, and definitely worth experiencing. (Becky Tan)

Border **

Sweden/Denmark 2018
Opening April 11, 2019

Directed by: Ali Abbasi
Writing credits: John Ajvide Lindqvist, Ali Abbasi
Principal actors: Eva Melander, Eero Milonoff, Jorgen Thorsson



Tina (**Melander**) is a customs officer in Sweden. Her unique ability to sniff out people who are hiding something comes in handy for her job. When Tina sniffs out a suspicious looking man (**Milonoff**) she is challenged in more ways than she could have imagined.

This is a love story; it is an exploration of being different and finding where you belong. And if that isn't enough, it is about questioning the bases of your being. It was nominated for an Oscar 2019 for Makeup and Hairstyling and it has won 16 awards and has had 23 nominations in the 2018 awards calendar.

If you are looking for something different and enjoy Nordic folklore, go. But be prepared for an unusual exploration of being different. 110 minutes (Christine Riney)

At Eternity's Gate (VanGogh—
an der Schwelle zur Ewigkeit)

France/USA 2018

Opening April 18, 2019

Directed by: Julian Schnabel

Writing credits: Jean-Claude
Carrière, Julian Schnabel, Louise
Kugelberg

Principal actors: Willem Dafoe,
Rupert Friend, Oscar Isaac, Mads
Mikkelsen, Mathieu Amalric,
Emmanuelle Seigner

There has never been a painter like the Dutch artist Vincent Willem van Gogh (March 30, 1853 – July 29, 1890), who came from a simple middle-class pastor's family to create over 2000 art works, which have a profound influence in the world today and are both timeless and universal. In *At Eternity's Gate*, American director **Julian Schnabel**, with the help of the award-winning French cameraman **Benoît Delhomme**, has created an odyssey of the trials and tribulations of Vincent Van Gogh's struggle with mental illness and his drive to paint. The film moves with incredible energy as the leaves in the trees move, as the grass moves and as light jumps from one object to the next. We, the viewers, can feel why the subject matter is so captivating to him and why living in this small town of Arles was not always a safe place for him. Delhomme's use of special lens in this film makes us see how Vincent might have seen the landscape as well as give us a chance to feel the craziness that he must have felt. With the use of blackout cut spaces we see this artist's internal struggle not only with his community but within himself.

The most outstanding decision made in this film was the choosing of **Willem Dafoe**. Dafoe looks the part with or without make up. It is incredible. More importantly, he manages to dive deep into the soul of Vincent to pull out an outstanding performance, one enough to be nominated for Best Actor at the Golden Globes, as well as the 2019 Oscars.

The film covers the time period when he makes the decision to move to Arles to paint because of the light. We see his strong connection that he has with his beloved brother Theo who kept him financially afloat and to his companion Gauguin who tried to give him advice but had a completely different theory on how to paint. The film has theories and surprises on how Vincent led his life, a life that didn't have many choices since he was driven to do what he did: Paint! (Shelly Schoeneshoefer)



(a second opinion)

At Eternity's Gate (VanGogh—
an der Schwelle zur Ewigkeit) *****

“I paint so I don't have to think.” Vincent Van Gogh (**Willem Dafoe**) is a genius, but yet has a troubled mind; both are source of his inspiration to create some of the most famous paintings the world knows today. However, Van Gogh longed for this recognition during his life, only selling one painting until his death and always dependent on the financial support of his brother Theo (**Rupert Friend**).

The story of *At Eternity's Gate* is known—we won't find any grand revelations in this film, and to reveal that Van Gogh will cut off

his ear and hand it to the girl in the tavern across the street is not in the least a spoiler. But this is not what this is about. Schnabel's depiction of the last years of Van Gogh, which the painter mainly spent in south France's Arles, is a beautifully orchestrated, almost meditative experience of sound and picture, mirroring what we can only imagine may have been going on in Van Gogh's mind. When we watch Vincent take off his dirty boots and starting to paint them in a fit of inspiration, the experience can only be described as sensual with the wind rustling through the trees, with no other sound but the paintbrush grazing the canvas in thick ductus.

The primarily used point-of-view shots pull the audience into the colorful world of Vincent and the to-eternity reaching landscape of Arles, where Van Gogh is pursuing his calling to paint, despite people misunderstanding his art as “ugly” and disturbing.

The calmness of frames with minutes of no sound but the wind rustling is time passing in serenity. Watching this film, I was there, right next to Vincent. I felt like I was accompanying him like a little devil on his shoulder, challenging him to a brighter, more powerful yellow for the fields. “Not that one Vincent, more orange!” I would almost find myself whisper.

Willem Dafoe did a brilliant job in his portrayal of Vincent, the wonderous mind, the worried look, you suddenly even see that every single wrinkle in his face resembles the self-portraits of Van Gogh, you can forgive that Dafoe is almost 25 years older than Vincent was when he died.

A lovely film for anyone interested in art or just a lover of beautiful landscapes. (Karen O'Shaughnessy)

Wenn du König Wärst (The Kid Who Would Be King) ***

UK 2019

Opening April 18, 2019

Directed by: Joe Cornish

Writing credits: Joe Cornish

Principal actors: Louis Ashbourne Serkis, Denise Gough, Dean Chaumoo, Tom Taylor,



Writer-director **Joe Cornish** repackages the classic tale of King Arthur, the Knights of the Round Table, and the mythical Excalibur sword for this modern family-friendly adaptation. Now in high school, Alex (**Serkis**) and Bedders (**Chaumoo**) soon realize their friendship may not be enough protection against older students. When Alex helps defend Bedders against the bullies, Lance (**Taylor**) and Kaye (**Dorris**) take it personally. Then in quick succession: the bullies and Alex tangle, Alex extracts Excalibur from stone, a friendly game morphs into a make-or-break deal, the new student (**Angus Imrie**) gets involved, and Merlin-cum-wizard (**Patrick Stewart**) leads the troupe to Cornwall in search of Alex's father. Meanwhile, the sorry state of the world is waking wicked sorceress Morgana (**Rebecca Ferguson**). Unless the four teens unite,

and adhere to the Chivalric Code rules, evil will prevail. The problem is: too many habits to change too fast, and a celestial eclipse's timetable radically shortens.

The lead characters are worthy, but the scene-stealer is Angus Imrie as the great and indispensable younger Merlin-cum-owl. Production values are sound; the animated opening sequence showing the background legend is outstanding. *Wenn du König Wärst* packs a lot in its two long hours; some of it is overindulgent overkill, whereby any message(s) becomes confusing. The quest may have been decided, but to secure the film-kingdom, unsparing editing (**Jonathan Amos, Paul Machliss**) was needed. While appealing to adolescents, for younger children this film's length would be overwhelming. (Marinell Haegelin)



Ayka ****

Russia/Germany/Poland/Kazakhstan/China/France 2018
Opening April 18, 2019

Directed by: Sergei Dvortsevov

Writing credits: Sergei Dvortsevov, Gennadiy Ostrovskiy

Principal actors: Samal Yeslyamova, Zhipara Abdilaeva, Sergey Mazur

Ayka (**Samel Yeslyamova**) lives a miserable life alone in direst poverty on the back streets of Moscow. She illegally shares backroom quarters with other needy residents, each thankful just to have mattress space. She shivers through the snow, looking for jobs such as plucking chickens, helping at a film studio, washing cars, or even shoveling snow for some pennies. She lost one job due to absenteeism; another boss disappeared with the workers' earnings. Her work permit has expired. Most successful was a job in a veterinarian's office, where the animals were better off than she was. Here, she befriends another worker who feels compassion, but who draws the line at lending money, as does her sister. Money already borrowed is impossible to repay in spite of daily, threatening reminders by Urmat (**Kenzhebek Karybaev.**) With her Asian looks, she identifies as a minority, a member of the Kyrgyz group. But that's not all. She gives birth to a baby boy, hides in the clinic bathroom and then escapes out the window, leaving the child behind. The depressing results of this decision are not as obvious as the afterbirth bleeding, and breasts full of milk, susceptible to infection.

This is just five days in the life of Ayka. Perhaps it could go on forever. Perhaps there is just a glimmer of hope at the end. Talented Samel Yeslyamova is present in all 110 minutes and definitely deserved her award as best actress during the 2018 Cannes Film Festival. This is her second full feature film. *Ayka*, which was filmed in and around Moscow, also provides a chance to experience many other international actors, who might have been unfamiliar. Interesting is that no matter how destitute one is, a mobile phone is always the one affordable item, even to the point of paying for new numbers when one wishes to remain incognito. (Becky Tan)

Tea With The Dames – Ein unvergesslicher Nachmittag (Nothing Like a Dame) *****

UK 2018

Opening April 25, 2018

Directed by: Roger Michell

Writing credits: Documentary

Principal actors: Eileen Atkins, Judi Dench, Joan Plowright, Maggie Smith

Once a year four irascible friends get together. Most recently, **Roger Michell** and filming crew joined them, whereby we tag along. There may be nothing like a dame, until four grand Dames of theatre, film, and television have tea in the garden of a cottage: Dames **Eileen Atkins**, **Judi Dench**, **Joan Plowright** and **Maggie Smith**. Shared recollections characterize their camaraderie in the warmth, honesty, and understanding of uncomplicated candor and no holds barred confabulations.

Maggie and Judi met in 1958 while performing in Edinburgh, Scotland. Starting dance classes at three, by seven Eileen danced regularly for dancing club audiences, whereas trained at London's Old Vic (Theatre School) Joan recalls director Michel Saint-Denis. Two of the Dames express amusement about not waiting for the Sixties to sanction rebellious behavior. Reminiscing navigates playing Cleopatra, i.e. being sexy, marriages, critics, naturalizing Shakespeare's language, Laurence Olivier (Peggy's husband), religion, swearing, and times at the "half way house" cottage with "very small people running around." The crème de la crèmes' word play, and implied innuendos by nuanced vocal inflections displays phenomenal command of English language subtleties. Game to tackle any topic, only when Roger ventures "age" does Judi's response hit a timbre of exasperation. While talking about their appointments to Dame Commander (DBE), we see BBC archival footage.

Editors **Mark Bell** and **Joanna Crickmay** nicely mix footage, stills and archival material, natural sound (**Andy Hoare**), and the music (**Anne Miller**) is balanced, embracing. **Eben Bolter's** camerawork is inclusive and temperate. Fascinatingly informative, witty yet reflective, *Tea with the Dames* is smart, delightfully brilliant, and too short—I cannot remember ever laughing aloud so much; and so hard during a film. Just as the British monarch bequeathed each great lady her title, Michell is bequeathing millions with this jewel of a documentary. 84 minutes (Marinell Haegelin)



Murder in the Cathedral!

by Carol B.

Not the T.S.Eliot drama, but at a concert in the glorious St. Michaelis Kirche. WHAT do you do with a subhuman who pulls out his cell phone in the midst thereof? The distracting light was horrible. I tried a couple of pointed stares at said phone. No reaction.

I held up my hand to shield it from the offending light. It didn't alter his rudeness, and I'm quite sure that he was NOT supposed to be recording the music, but it at least got rid of the glare.

"Murder in the Cathedral"? Fitting; after all, we were seated in "der Michel".

Alas – I had no deadly weapon other than a murderous glare.

Dumplings and More

My first DIM SUM in Hamburg



Year of the Pig 2019 CC0 Public Domain

A jolly group of 19 gathered for Dim Sum on January 13, 2019. We enjoyed a variety of small delicacies, chrysanthemum tea, and superb company at the Dim Sum Haus, which is so conveniently located across from the Hauptbahnhof.

My all-time favorite, shrimp wrapped in a soft noodle blanket called Cheung Fan, was specially ordered just for me by our leader, Stella Kwong. Other selections included Chow-Yuk-Bao (dumplings), Har-Gao, Siu-Mai, and for dessert Ma-Lai-Gao, a spongy yellow cake.

I must say, after moving from San Francisco and the fabulous Asian dining options there, I was not too confident about finding a REAL dim sum place in Germany. But you know, I am impressed. My husband enjoyed himself, too. And he is a picky one... Thank you! (Monika B.)

Dinner out with Good Friends

On a Sunday night in January, five couples went to the Peking Enten Haus near the Messe grounds in Hamburg. The evening started with drinks and appetizers. The broccoli, spicy bamboo shoots and chicken with peppers were not the typical appetizers I would expect to have with a Peking Duck dinner.

When the four ducks came out to the table, we were prepared with a camera to take a video. The chef, with his ever so sharp cleaver, sliced away paper-thin slices of duck skin and meat that was roasted to perfection. Thin rice flour pancakes, which are traditionally with Peking Duck, were also brought to the table along with sliced spring onions, cucumbers and Hoysin sauce. The duck, onions, cucumber and sauce are all wrapped up in a roll somewhat like a taco. Yum is the word and we ate so much!

The chefs were all Chinese, but the funny thing about this particular restaurant is that the service and bar staff all seemed to come from the Middle East. However, the service was great and attentive. With great drinks, delicious food and wonderful catching up with friends, the evening came to an end too soon. We will have to come back for another feast for a different occasion.

Keep in mind that there are other restaurants in Hamburg that serve Peking Duck dinners with traditional appetizers (soup from the skin, meat with



Peking Enten Haus
 Laufgraben 18
 20146 Hamburg

 Dim Sum Haus
 Kirchenallee 37
 20099 Hamburg

 Ni Hao
 Wandsbeker Zollstr 25
 22041 Hamburg

pancakes) followed by the main dish with duck meat. Afterwards there is usually a dessert. Listed in the box are some of my favorites. All serve a good Peking Duck dinner for two and groups. Enjoy! (Stella R.)

Weibin's Dumplings—Yum!

Eight lucky ladies, armed with aprons, cutting boards, and knives, were welcomed at Weibin's lovely home at the beginning of February. We were the highest bidders for a Dumpling Making Course auctioned at the AGM, for which proceeds went to the FAWCO 2019 Health Project.

Just like a TV cooking show—everything for us was prepared, with the dough made the evening before and all the ingredients for the three different meat and vegetable fillings in little bowls. Weibin explained that all the ingredients were available at local stores—except the Chinese chives and Szechuan peppers, of which there are two sorts (literally, numbing and more numbing).



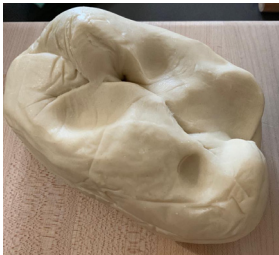
These peppers were the base of her "special water" that was added to the different fillings to give the right texture and spiciness. It was at this point that I realized that my dumplings would never taste as good as hers.

After getting acquainted with our ingredients for the filling, the instructions for making the dumplings began. I counted eight steps (see photos): 1) preparing the dough; 2) "tubing" the dough; 3) slicing the tubes with a twist; 4) rolling out the rounded sections into flat circles (using a Chinese rolling pin); 5) filling the circles using chopsticks; 6) pinching close (also with a twist); 7) boiling (or frying) the dumplings; 8) ENJOYING.

For dessert, Weibin's husband had prepared tiramisu und Stella, chocolate cake, a great ending to a fun and enlightening afternoon.

A special thank-you to Weibin and her family.

Incredibly, Weibin made 200 of these delightful treats for our Visionary Women event in March. Needless to say they disappeared quite quickly. (Carol H.)



Art in the City

Hamburger Schule

Das 19. Jahrhundert neu entdeckt

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



Victor Emil Janssen (1807–1845) *Selbstbildnis vor der Staffelei*, um 1828, Öl auf Papier auf Leinwand, 56,6 x 32,7 cm ©Hamburger Kunsthalle / bpk, Foto: Elke Walford

Discover 19th century art from the viewpoint of the “Hamburg School,” as the Hamburger Kunsthalle and the University of Hamburg celebrate a double jubilee (150th and 100th anniversaries, respectively.) Approximately 120 paintings, drawings and graphic works are on display, giving a representative overview of the entire art spectrum of this century.

As there was no art academy in Hamburg at the time, aspiring painters trained in academies in other cities, in particular in Copenhagen, Dresden, Munich and Düsseldorf. Study trips to Scandinavia and Italy also provided stimuli and lasting impressions. The exhibition examines the productive interactions of the artists with these places and analyzes how the new experiences continued to have influence the artists even after their return to the Hanseatic city.

The main protagonists in the exhibition are artists who spent most or a significant proportion of their careers in Hamburg, and include Philipp Otto Runge, Erwin Speckter, Jacob Gensler, Valentin Ruths and Thomas Herbst. The exhibition starts with works from the 1800's, influenced by both Classicism and Romanticism, two movements with contrasting aims. The rapid change in industrial and social conditions in the first half of the 19th century brought about a new movement—Realism. With works from the 1820's and onwards, the exhibition shows how Realism transcended from Naturalism to Impressionism and Art Nouveau, and then the gradual emergence of the Avant-Garde in the last third of the 19th century. Next to well-known artists, the exhibition brings to light many artists who have been unjustly forgotten.

World in Transition: Art of the 1920's

Bucerius Kunst Forum
www.buceriuskunstforum.de
 Through May 19, 2019

“Dancing-on-the-volcano” aptly describes the mood of the 1920's; an era rife with extremes and contrasts, hope and misery, light and shadow. This is the spirit in Europe during the brief time between the world wars and which is reflected in the art of the period. As artists strove to differentiate themselves from Expressionism and Pictorialism, a modern style was established that became known in painting as New Objectivity and was dubbed New

Vision in photography. This new mode of expression aimed at a more objective and realistic rendering of the subject.

The exhibition juxtaposes the paintings and photographs of these movements, underlining their interdependency and dialogue.

Over 40 paintings and more than 115 photographs on exhibit are divided into five sections. Featured are works by artists that include Otto Dix, Hannah Höch, László Moholy-Nagy, Albert Renger-Patzsch, Christian Schad and August Sander. Together they reflect a period rich in innovation but which also heralds the cultural decline soon to be ushered in by the Nazis.



Albert Renger-Patzsch (1897-1966): Glasses, before 1928, Universität der Künste Berlin, Universitätsarchiv, ©Albert Renger-Patzsch/Archiv Ann und Jürgen Wilde, Zülpich/VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2019



Georg Scholz (1890-1945): *Werk disgraces*, 1921, Staatliche Kunsthalle Karlsruhe

Lauren Greenfield: Generation Wealth

Deichtorhallen

House of Photography
www.deichtorhallen.de
Through June 23, 2019

The exhibition GENERATION WEALTH by the prize-winning filmmaker and photographer Lauren Greenfield (*1966) shows today's ubiquitous quest for status, beauty and wealth. In her projects, Greenfield portrays both super-rich and famous people, as well as people who do everything they can to get closer to this supposed ideal.

The documentary photographer Lauren Greenfield grew up in the 70's and 80's in Venice, Los Angeles and first worked as a press photographer. In the early 90's she began to photograph children of private schools in Hollywood, whose lives are filled with sumptuous parties, expensive cars and designer handbags, which eventually define and shape their futures. Lauren Greenfield's early work quickly reveals itself as prophetic—the American dream of wealth and success has become a global phenomenon. Through media such as MTV, these materialistic ideals and obsession with ones body, as well as the celebrities that promote them, have become more and more important; media personalities such as Kim Kardashian or Paris Hilton have become role models.

Greenfield quickly realized that the desire for money, prominence, beauty and sexual appeal has become an all-encompassing obsession for people



of all ages and every class, regardless of nationality. Greenfield leads the viewer into the houses of Russian oligarchs, resorts in Dubai, and private yachts of the Chinese *nouveau riche*, but also to Magic City, Atlanta, where the dream of fast money comes true. Greenfield's photographs are alternately humorous, touching and shocking.

The exhibition GENERATION WEALTH is the result of more than 25 years of work by Lauren Greenfield and comprises over 200 photos and interviews from the USA, Brazil, Canada, Dubai, the Philippines, France, Hong Kong, Ireland, Iceland, China, Mexico, Germany and Russia. GENERATION WEALTH is not about the rich themselves, but about the desire to be rich at any price.

Lauren Greenfield: Jackie, 41, and friends with Versace handbags at a private opening at the Versace store, Beverly Hills, 2007. Lauren Greenfield/INSTITUTE © Lauren Greenfield

Pure Luxury. East Asian Lacquer

Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe
www.mkg-hamburg.de/en/
Through May 26, 2019

Lacquerware—brilliant black, intense red, shimmering gold, and mysterious mother-of-pearl. A new exhibition at MK&G looks at another trend of luxury and materialism that has prevailed in China, Korea, and Japan over generations—the art of lacquer. It is and has been used to enhance all areas of life for the society's elite—dining, writing, travel, music, jewelry and tea culture. Lacquerware was also much admired in the European courts in the late sixteenth century, attracting many collectors and imitators.

Justus Brinckmann (1843–1915), the founding director of MK&G, established the museum's lacquer collection during the heyday of Japonism around 1900. Based on a selection of exquisite bowls, combs and jewelry, as



well as boxes for cosmetics, writing utensils, games and food, the present exhibition gives insights into MK&G's acquisition policy and the international collecting scene for East Asian artifacts between the 1873 World Exhibition in Vienna and the outbreak of the First World War in 1914. The show also presents the main lacquer techniques, characteristic motifs, individual masters and their paintings, as well as color woodcuts. Modern and contemporary artworks, such as insect specimens and lacquer chairs, complement the presentation of historical hold-

ings and demonstrate the reciprocal influences between lacquer aesthetics and European design.

Cosmetics box (tebako) with squash tendrils, 2nd half of 19th, century, Black and gold lacquer with mother-of-pearl inlays on wood, Photo: J. Hiltmann / MKG



Visionary Women

