



A Magazine for UniL Students of English Issue No. 1, October 2009

Editorial

Sarah-Jane Moloney

Hi there all you UniL students of English! Welcome back to your favourite department (don't lie)! From what I've heard, you've had an eventful, fun and sexy summer, but let me tell you – we here at MUSE have been working hard to bring you the English Department's *first ever* magazine! That's right! And it's bursting with interesting tidbits, trifles and trivia – oh, and some serious things too.

We plan to bring out two issues per semester, packed full of fascinating, free-floating articles, as well as regular topics. We have a top-notch, dedicated team – but that doesn't mean we don't need your help! We're always looking for new contributors. Please don't be shy – we'd love to read your submissions. You can send these to info.musemag@gmail.com - or just email us with your questions, if you'd like to know a bit more about us.

In the meantime, enjoy your first issue of MUSE! I'm sure you'll relish reading about: Kirsten Stirling's appointment as MER; which trendy bars you should be hanging out in right now; TV shows and books that have charmed our writers; a poetico-philosophical discussion about death; and what happens to dwarves when they fall in love – amongst many other things!

Happy reading!

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Upcoming events

compiled by Sarah-Jane Moloney

ENGLISH SECTION PARTY!!!

The first English section party of the year will take place on Tuesday, October 13th at Zelig, from 8 pm onwards!

Bring your grooving shoes, piglets!

International conference

Cruzar las Américas

October 29th to 31st, 2009

This conference aims to depolarize and explore the terms for conceptualizing contact between and among the existing Americas from the double perspective of Hispanic and North American Studies. The longstanding circulation of people and goods in the Americas is not sufficiently reflected by current cultural maps and the combined skills of these two disciplines are necessary in order to identify, decode and analyze both historical and new intercultural formations. Hopefully, this conference will be the occasion to establish a network of researchers interested in the Americas and able to stimulate and form students working in this field in Swiss universities.

Three invited guest speakers will discuss specific contact zones (to borrow Mary Louise Pratt's term) and cultural intersections, and an artist will present a performance addressing the issue of "border effects" and inter-cultural exchanges.

Organisers: Agnieszka Soltysik Monnet (University of Lausanne) and Valeria Wagner (University of Geneva).

Editor's note: a detailed programme of the conference is available at www.unil.ch/angl

WANTED!

Wannabe actors willing to devote a part of their academic year to gaining an incredible insight into Elizabethan theatre, by enjoying and performing Shakespeare with a bunch of fun people!

After *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, the famous USC (*Unil Shakespeare Company**) is putting on a production of Shakespeare's best-loved comedy, *As You Like It*, and they are looking for lots of actors and helpers! So if you would like to be a part of this incredible project, please send an email to Victoria.Baumgartner@unil.ch

* "funny and sexy" - Neil Forsyth

Facebook much?

The English section is fabulously popular on Facebook. You might consider joining any one of these groups (because you don't spend enough time in front of your computer already):

English section - UNIL

English Section Parties

The Medieval Translators

Fan Club Peter Winington

Zelig

Did you miss Neil Forsyth's *leçon d'honneur*?

A free recording is available on iTunes (go to: iTunes U / Universities and Colleges / Unil / Lettres / Leçons d'honneur).

An interview with Kirsten Stirling

"Teaching at university is the best job I can imagine"

Raphaël Iberg



Kirsten Stirling has just got a MER (Maître d'enseignement et de recherche) position in Lausanne. She talks about her two countries, her job and her motivations after more than ten years spent teaching at UniL.

You're from Scotland. How come you ended up teaching here in Lausanne?

I came for the job actually. I had nearly finished my PhD at Glasgow. I was looking for a job and Neil Forsyth was looking for an assistant, just for one year at the time, and it was advertised in my department. So I applied, he interviewed me over the phone and I ended up here. People always ask me if I knew anything about Switzerland before I came. Really, I knew very little about Switzerland, quite embarrassingly little. And I just thought it would be a fun thing for one year.

And it's been more than one year...

This is now nearly eleven years. It's all worked out quite well. I eventually got a regular assistant position and then I finally finished my doctorate at Glasgow and now I've just got the permanent position.

Is Lausanne a final station or do you plan to go back to Scotland or teach somewhere else?

At the moment I'm really happy. I have a life here and I like the department. You never know what might happen in the future but certainly, especially now that I've got this permanent job, I'm staying for the next few years at least. I don't know if I really want to go back to Scotland strangely. It doesn't really attract me.

I have a vague dream of working in New York but it's probably never going to happen. But if not New York I'll probably stay in Lausanne.

So Switzerland has become a second home country?

Definitely! I've been in this department for longer than I've done any one thing in my life before. Although I lived in Glasgow for 24 years I've been here for a big part of my life so it's a second home country and I'm becoming metaphorically Swiss.

What was your academic curriculum before coming here?

I worked mainly on Scottish literature before I came here. Well, my first degree was both literature and history. In Scotland it's very like Lausanne in that you do kind of two and a half "branches". And then I specialized in Scottish literature and my doctorate was in 20th century Scottish literature. And it's really since coming to Lausanne that I've changed direction and broadened out to other things but I still do Scottish literature.

You were talking about your permanent job here. You have now the rank of MER, what does it change for you?

The big difference is that it's permanent. Now I'm at the end of my maître assistant position and that was limited to four years. So the big difference is that, if all goes well, I can stay here till I retire, if I choose. I don't need to worry about jobs anymore. That's quite a big difference.

If you hadn't got this job...

Next year would have been my last year and there would have been not much chance of me staying in Lausanne. So it's just that it's stabilized me in a way that I don't need to worry. I could go somewhere else but I now don't have to. If I go somewhere else it will be a choice.

Do you have a specialty, like Peter Winnington with Mervyn Peake?

At the moment my specialty is John Donne, a 17th century poet. I taught a seminar on him last semester. Especially his religious poetry and especially his religious poetry linked to religious

paintings and religious imagery generally. I've published a couple of articles on that and I'm working on a book project. In my curriculum, I started with 20th century Scottish and especially a gender studies approach. I'm still interested in that but after I finished my doctorate I thought I needed to do something different. I was inspired to change direction by a seminar I taught in Lausanne in 2001, I was teaching a second year class on John Donne, pretty much as the one I did this year, and just something in that class gave me the idea for the first paper that I wrote and it all happened from there. So I owe that to my seminar group.

So somehow teaching is linked to research?

Always. In both directions. All sorts of things happen in a class discussion. I'm also going to work on a book on Peter Pan, in which I'll have to write a big dedication to all the students that did the Peter Pan seminar with me because so many ideas come out of these class discussions.

So what do you enjoy most, teaching or doing research?

Both. I can't answer that question. I used to say that I enjoyed research better but now, really, I couldn't do one without the other. I love teaching, I love when a class goes well, when I have a good discussion, a good interaction with the students and like I said it's creative for me as well. I could do without exams

maybe, but teaching at university is the best job I can imagine. But I need the research as well. I'm now really looking forward to the exams being over and I have two months in the summer just to work for me. And then I'll come back and I'll look forward to the seminars.

What do you like most in teaching?

It depends on the seminar. I really like it when the class discussion gets so creative in a way that you could never do just on your own. The interaction between students or between me and the students can create something new or some new approach to some text than the ones I've done before. And it happens more often than you would think and I get very excited when it happens in class, that's wonderful. The other thing I like maybe is more the case in the first year classes, it's when you really see students getting better, improving in their work or in their approach or even when they're coming to like a subject that they didn't really like before. And I really love it when you can see by the end of the class that students have changed in some way – in a good way, I mean – and that makes me feel very good as a teacher to know that I've actually helped. I love it when I feel the students have actually got something out of it and their written English or their approach to texts have improved. And that happens every semester.

Thanks Kirsten!

A book review

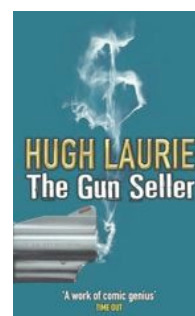
***The Gun Seller*, by Hugh Laurie**

Tatiana Peneveyre

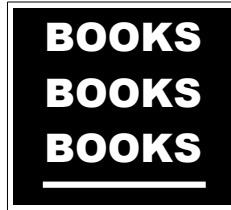
I can already hear those sceptics saying that being a famous actor is not enough to write a good book. If the book has only recently been translated into French, it was actually written in 1996, before Laurie was known as “Dr. House”. The humour is similar to that of the TV show though, the witty but nonetheless sarcastic and ironic comments give the novel its rhythm. A clever plot completes an astonishing style! Thomas Lang, the protagonist, goes through amazing complications – involving, in the end, the international arms traffic – just to rescue a damsel with really “beautiful tendons”.

When a very common though practical and cynical Englishman gets involved, under cover, with some revolutionary organisation travelling all around Europe and pretending to be American, the result is

rather explosive – in both the actual and metaphorical senses! The little plus for us Swiss readers is the visit to the Swiss Alps, where the reader learns that all Swiss people hope “money-making will become an Olympic sport”... Enjoy!



Bring your copy of MUSE to BooksBooksBooks and get 10% off your copy of The Gun Seller!



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The English Bookshop, Lausanne

A book review

***The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*, by Sherman Alexie**

Céline Girardet

Survival = anger X imagination.

Poetry = anger X imagination.

Consequently, poetry is survival. Survival through poetry, through imagination, through writing, through humour; this collection of short stories, *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*, addresses the issue of survival and is a way of surviving in itself.

The two main characters of the stories, Thomas Builds-the-Fire and Victor Joseph, live on a Spokane Indian Reservation. Victor, his “friend”, is a very good basketball player who became an alcoholic to avoid his problems, thus following the path of his parents: half of him was “formed by [his] father’s whiskey sperm, the other half formed by [his] mother’s vodka eggs.” The stories follow these two characters and their fellow Indians through their relationships in a surprising mixture of prose, poetry, flashbacks, storytelling and jokes. The stories are all connected to each other, as they treat the same subjects and are based on the same characters. But each story is also unique and original.

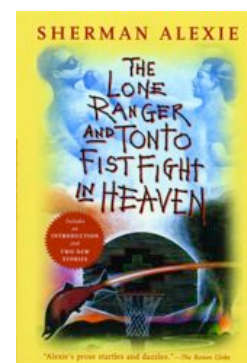


Sherman Alexie was born in 1966 on a Spokane reservation. He is the author of several books, which have won numerous awards, and also wrote the award-winning screenplay for *Smoke Signals*, a film mainly based on “This is what it means to say Phoenix, Arizona”, one of the short stories from *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*.

His collection of short stories, first published in 1993, has roots in the Native American oral tradition and explores many themes, amongst which are the importance of story telling, the importance of women, drinking problems in reservations, the importance of tradition, relationships between family members, and the gap between Native Americans and American settlers. Alexie uses humour to bring up important issues, which most people just shove under the rug and ignore. His way of raising these taboo issues makes them all right to talk about. Alexie uses humour in defiance of stereotypes, social injustice and adversity. It also serves as a unifying device between individuals and culture. Moreover, Alexie shows us how humour is a survival mechanism for Native Americans, like it is for himself in his various writings. Humour has the power to turn poison into medicine, to help people survive, but also to help external people feel the flavour of the community and thus to bridge cultures, as it is a language that everyone shares.

Sherman Alexie really moves us in these short stories, with his amazing lyrical style that makes us laugh at almost every page, although he addresses important and sad issues. Through Alexie’s words, we hear the voice of people who avoid facing the difficult reality of their problems. Through this amazing collection of short stories steeped in irony, we become aware of the Indians’ struggle to survive in a society that tried for a long time to make them disappear, and sadly almost managed to do it.

This is truly a dazzling culture-bridging collection, which I encourage everybody to read, were it just for pleasure or to learn more about the Native American people.



A TV review

Dexter

Karim Khouw Zegwaart



In a time when new television series are maybe created too often, trying to watch all of them can really become a chaotic experience. Moreover, some are really not worth watching while others really deserve to be checked out; the show *Dexter* belongs to the second category. *Dexter* is based on Jeff Lindsay's novel "Darkly Dreaming Dexter" and even if the plot diverges from the original book, the bases stay the same. Dexter Morgan (Michael C. Hall) is a blood spatter analyst for the Miami Metro Police Department with a very special "hobby". Indeed Dexter has an addiction for thrill killing that obliges him to become what we can call a serial killer. But unlike every killer, Dexter has been taught a sort of moral code from his father, a police officer, who had rapidly recognized Dexter's sociopathic tendencies.

The aim of this code is to allow Dexter to channel his addiction by killing other murderers who have never been arrested. Furthermore, because he claims to have no feelings, Dexter has to wear a "mask" in order to hide his dark secret to others. In a nutshell this is the starting point of the show. Because of the code, Dexter could be compared to a kind of dark superhero who applies the Talion law, that is to say who applies the principle of "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth". Like every superhero Dexter kills only to protect the innocent, but the show points out a relatively controversial question: is it really moral? Indeed Dexter kills only the ones who "deserve it" but can one decide of who should live or die? Besides one must not forget that these killings are principally there to channel Dexter's need for blood, and the show often points out the pleasure Dexter takes when killing somebody.

Still he is the hero of this story and the viewers tend, in a quite disturbing way, to get attached to him. Watching Dexter trying to live a normal life with his girlfriend, while discovering that maybe he is not as emotionless as he thought, matches perfectly the disturbing effect of having a serial killer for a hero. Moreover, being in the head of a psychotic is clearly a weird experience that cannot leave one indifferent. The first season, without spoiling it too much, is probably the most exalting one with a brilliant face-to-face between two serial killers and some unexpected new twists in the plot. Seasons two and three perfectly continue the bases the first one has set, developing Dexter's problems trying to live a normal life and doubting about that "code" he has been taught.

Season four premieres on the 27th of September 2009 in the USA, so by the time you read this article it should have started, and with already 36 episodes of roughly 50 minutes *Dexter* should keep you busy for a while. Psychologically disturbing and graphically accomplished, *Dexter* is a little masterpiece in the world of television series. But beware: violence and blood are omnipresent in the show, so if blood is not your cup of tea, *Dexter* is maybe not made for you.

A book review

Mayflower : A Story of Courage, Community and War, by Nathaniel Philbrick

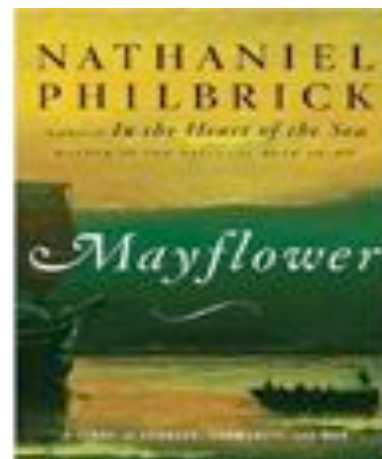
Nathalie Favre

In *Mayflower*, the American writer and historian Nathaniel Philbrick offers his account of the incredible story of the group of English Puritans — commonly known as the *Pilgrims* — who, fleeing their native England and the persecutions they had endured there because of their extreme religious beliefs, sailed to the New World aboard the *Mayflower* in 1620; they founded Plymouth Colony in the area which was known at the time as New England, and managed to survive through their first winter, thanks to the Native Indians who were living in the area. The Pokanoket Indians and their chief, the sachem Massasoit, came to the newcomers' help, accepted to trade with them and taught them how to plant the food and the corn that would allow them to survive. Having fled their native country, the Pilgrims had hoped to reconstitute their spiritual, self-sufficient community in the New World. But once they set foot on the soil of New England, they quickly realised that this unknown wilderness was not as empty as they had supposed or hoped. It was a land where there were "*still plenty of Natives, and to ignore them or anger them was to risk annihilation*" (347). In other words, the Pilgrims understood that their survival depended on the help and assistance of the local populations. In this spirit, they readily traded and interacted with the Indians and were able to rebuild a dynamic community in their new country. As for the Indians, Philbrick argues that the exchanges initiated with the English newcomers had a tremendous influence upon them, their customs and ways of living. Philbrick argues, quite convincingly, that this compact between the native Indians and the English Puritan newcomers allowed "*a new, dynamic culture full of Indian and Western influences to come into being*" (347).

However, in 1675 — 55 years after the arrival of the *Mayflower* — things had dramatically changed. Departing from their deceased parents' strong spiritual and moral ties, the Pilgrims' children and grandchildren had started gradually to buy Indian lands, thus driving the Natives off their own lands. Feeling themselves threatened, some Indian tribes started a terribly deadly, bloody war against the English colonisers. The Indian tribe that started the war against the English were the Pokanokets, who had welcomed and helped the Pilgrims back in 1620. The English were backed by other Native tribes that were hostile to the Pokanokets; on the Pokanoket side, Philip, the misguided and uncharismatic Pokanoket sachem and Massasoit's son, tried and

failed to form a Pan-Indian force against the English. This war ended in the defeat and death of Philip and his allies in 1676, and in the enslavement and deportation of the "rebel" Indians to the Carribean. The victory of the English, Philbrick argues, was a definitive turning point in the history of Plymouth Colony and of New England. This victory destroyed the balance and equilibrium of the native population in the area... and left the English, who were now "*without friend Indians to buffer them from their enemies*" (346), vulnerable to many other attacks from Northern Indian tribes.

Using the written materials and sources of several English witnesses and actors of this period — such as William Bradford, Benjamin Church and Mary Rowlandson, among others — Philbrick charts over a 54-year period the incredible story of the Pilgrims, their children and grandchildren in America, of the beginning of their shaky colony and, subsequently, of the other New England colonies, and of these colonies' fruitful interactions with — and then annihilation of — the native tribes. Reminding the readers that the arrival of the *Mayflower* has been granted strong, almost mythological status, Philbrick sets out to retell the true story of the coming of the Pilgrims in America, of how their relationships, contacts and exchanges with the Native Indians "*turned them into Americans*" (347), and of how their children and grandchildren were to put a brutal stop to this kind of English-Indian "civilization".



Studying Abroad

An interview with Victoria Baumgartner

Tatiana Peneveyre



Victoria Baumgartner spent the 2nd semester of her 2nd year in Dublin. She talks to Tatiana about her eye-opening experience there.

So Victoria, you studied in Trinity College Dublin for one semester, right?

Yes!

Let's start with the practical boring things, what can you tell me about accommodation in Dublin?

Be patient and prepared to wait for the university to answer! They're selective, so you're lucky if you get to stay on the university campus, but it's the best possible accommodation (if you have it): you save on bus money, and your local roommate will have lots of tips to share with you. If you're not on the campus, you can go to www.daft.ie and you have everything on the website. It's quite easy but wait for the Erasmus meeting, where you will meet students looking for accommodation, so you can find a nice-looking flatmate (*laugh*). And go to Dublin 3/4 days before classes begin so you can visit flats - count between 3 and 10 places to visit before you find yours. Choose them as close to the city centre as possible or you can also bike at your own risk (don't forget cars drive the other way around!)

So you can actually find everything once you're there. But is there any preparation to do before leaving for Dublin?

Yeah! The bad weather is not a myth! Bring lots of warm clothes! And life is really expensive so you have to save a lot-- and don't expect to find a job there... it's the recession!

Okay... and what about the Erasmus system, equivalency for credits, etc?

About credits - it's pretty easy to check classes, everything is on the internet and quite clear! If you have questions the Erasmus advisor is very competent too. But don't expect all your credits to be valid in Lausanne; you're going to have to take some classes out of interest more than out of academic greed.

And these classes, are they very different from here?

They're always grouped: one lecture, one tutorial (*i.e seminar*). You choose your tutorial, timetable and teacher - so that's pretty much the same. But a whole lot more is expected concerning reading! It's one work, per week, per class! So 5 classes are only 10 hours but that also means 5 works - plays, poems or novels, sometimes pretty long, so... don't try to do it! Don't try to buy them all! Go to the library and if the book's not available, it's a sign! Read another one! (*laugh*) The library's awesome but they have a weird system for undergraduates... you can't take most of the books out, but have to read a lot, so be prepared to stay a lot in the library! And pack the books you can, when you know your programme!

Lots of work to do... are the essays representative of that gigantic course load?

About the essays--- don't expect to get good grades, they're not giving them out! Here the 1.1 (*i.e 6*) is *not* given. Except if your essay could be published within the week. Forget it! You're aiming for a 2.1 or 2.2 (*i.e 5-4*) and you don't have a 2nd chance for essays...

You mean, if you fail one essay you just fail the whole thing?

Yes, you fail, you don't have your credits and if you don't have your credits, you can't take your exams... It doesn't happen often, though, if you work enough (enough means "a lot"!). Also, essays are longer and you are expected to have a very good vocabulary and grammar: more than 5 misspellings and the teacher won't read the paper! And you have to read a lot of secondary criticism. That's a lot of work but classes are very interesting! If you go between your 2nd and 3rd year *do* take "Writing Ireland: nation, nationalism and identity". Even if it sounds barbaric, it's the most amazing Irish literature experience you can get! Go for it, you won't learn it outside Trinity!



Trinity College

With all that work, I hope you still had time to enjoy your stay... What about living in Dublin? What's public transport like? And what are the prices?

Really expensive. And buses don't have a timetable or proper routes: find someone nice enough to indicate which bus you have to take. That is... if you're lucky and the bus comes... You have to know where to get out. There is no stop name. Buses are definitely an adventure. And as for going out...restaurants and pubs are really expensive as well. A pint costs on average 5 euros.



Euros ?

As opposed to English pounds? —Don't do or say *anything* linking you to England or that could imply you like England! They're not crazy about the English – they're the horrible people who invaded them a few centuries ago.

Not a safe thing to do... On the subject of safety, where should you *not* go out ?

Stay in the city centre and follow the students! Don't try to go out and find weird stuff... *George Street* and *Near St Stephen Green*: that's the places you want to go! All the cool pubs are there, it's mostly pedestrian, it's also quite a maze but once you get used to the place it gets pretty easy.

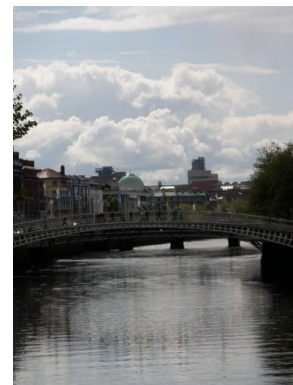


Temple Bar on St Patrick's Day

What about parties and clubs?

People drink a lot! Be prepared to *not* catch up on the drinking, don't even try. "Let's go for a pint" means "let's go for 8 pints". Yay!

Oh and absolutely avoid eye contact – it is taken very seriously, they think it's flirting! It's not a thing they do - not on the street or in pubs or anywhere except, of course, if you are sure it's the signal you want to send out... And a piece of advice for girls: the "going-out uniform" is a mini skirt and high heels. If you want to conform to the standard, it's up to you, but remember - it's cold out there!



Studying Abroad

A “Where To” Guide to Dublin

Victoria Baumgartner

Where to Have Coffee

- **Lemon** (South William St; Dawson St)

This very friendly pancake and coffee shop will definitely help you get through a rainy day. Enthusiastic young people will serve you crêpes and pancakes with a choice of various savoury or sweet toppings, sauces and fillings. The ambiance is fun and the music good.

- **Queen of Tarts** (Dame St; Cow’s Lane, Temple Bar)

Simply the best pastries in town—this crush of mine is ideal for breakfasts or/and afternoon teas. Tasty crumbles dwell beside soft cheesecakes and fruity scones. You’ll surely find something to quench your sweet tooth there!



Irish coffee and cheesecake

Where to Eat

- **Gruel** (Dame St)

Be it for midday or evening meals, Gruel provides organic food to enjoy either to go or inside its venues-posters-decorated interior. Their speciality is the roast-in-a-roll: delicious bread filled with meat or fish and various homemade sauces and vegetables. In the evenings, the seasonal propositions of couscous, chicken, fish, bangers and mash and other tasty desserts can be read on their blackboard.

- **Market Bar** (Fade St.)

Hard to find, this sausage factory turned into a restaurant is well worth the effort.

Excellent choices of tapas are offered alongside the traditional (but tasty!) burgers, meatballs and pies. A pint of Guinness goes very well with whatever you choose on the menu. Perfect for evening meals with friends.

- **Avoca Handweavers** (Suffolk St)

You won’t find it unless you know it: on the top floor of what is apparently a clothes and bric-a-brac shop is a well-lit charming restaurant and café. A very agreeable staff serves you good organic food, shepherd’s pies, roast lamb and couscous, scrumptious salads and homemade desserts. Be careful, the timetable follows the shop’s so it’s only open for lunch. The shopping crowd is very present also, and you’ll be lucky to find room. A Sunday lunch is your best bet—and a very good and healthy way to spend your resting day!

- **Eddie Rocket’s** (Duke St; Dame St; O’Connell St)

One of Ireland’s many fast-foods but probably the best: a *Grease* and very familial ambiance where jukeboxes stand alongside retro posters. The hamburgers and hot dogs are huge and their meat is well chosen and tasty. Fries can be accompanied by a huge choice of sauces, and don’t forget to try the chocolate malt!

Where to Go Out: a weekly planning of Irish goodness

- **Monday nights: Shebeen Chic** (Georges St)

This new bar is very popular with young people and tourists: live sessions are held there daily, and the pint is some cents cheaper than elsewhere. On Mondays, Freddy (the red-haired bearded barman) plays bódhran with his fluctuating band: on some nights they’re 4 or 5, but the number of musicians can go up to 10 when they decide to include people—or when people include themselves—but it’s always a nice mix between young and less young music amateurs coming from Cork to Galway.

- **Tuesday nights: Grogan’s** (South William St)

For a more quiet night, this pub is my favourite: eclectic paintings (from a modern version of Dracula to a landscape painting to an elaborate conceptual one or a picture of the pub itself) cover

the walls of this small split-into-two-halves pub with a warm atmosphere. Students sit there alongside older customers and other businessmen or artists. As a fellow student recommended to me (and she wasn't far from the truth): they serve the best Irish coffees in town. Come in early though because the afterwork rush starts at 5 p.m.



Inside Shebeen Chic

- **Wednesday nights: South Williams** (South William St)
This recent bar is very popular amongst the young population and students. A large choice of drinks and cocktails alongside groovy music and a modern ambience makes it a good choice for your nights out—and there's a dancing ground downstairs.
- **Thursday nights: Devit's** (Camden St)
An excellent spot for Irish music played by young musicians, Devit's is frequented by a happy few and genuinely Irish amateurs of good gigs: those take place upstairs Thursdays and Fridays from around 10 to 12 p.m. (don't bother trying to read the sign on the door advertising the gigs—it's in Gaelic).
- **Friday nights: Whelan's** (Wexford St)
After Thursday's quiet (but amazing) night you'll sure want to party on Friday and there's no better spot than Whelan's, my all-time favourite. Concerts and venues take place there during early evenings so if you arrive before 10.30 the admission is free (but you have to wait at the bar for some time). Various famous Irish artists such as Damien Rice, Glen Hansard & The Frames or Paddy Casey started their career there. The club's music is simply the best rock, sometimes old or new, you'll get.

I leave Saturday night to your good taste and discovery spirit: Dublin is full of good music and pubs! And I hope you'll chill out on Sunday night...

Where to... Places to Visit, Discover & Enjoy

- **The National Gallery** (Merrion Square West & Clare St)
With its amazing collection of Irish paintings, the National Gallery is a visit you'll have to do. The entrance is free (as are all the State-financed museums), so it's nice to buy a postcard at the Gallery shop of a painting you liked in the collection or in one of the temporary exhibitions—taking place very often these exhibitions are always worthwhile. The programme of conferences is also very interesting.
- **Chester Beatty Library** (Dublin Castle)
This foundation holds one of the greatest collection of ancient books in the world. More than 20'000 manuscripts, statues, clothes and various objects are excellently presented by floors and sections: a room will make you discover Sir Alfred Chester Beatty's life (1875-1968) and expeditions, another has an impressive collection of Asian art and miniatures, and let's not forget the famous collections of Qurans and Egyptian papyruses.
- **St Stephen's Green** (St Stephen's Green)
Dublin's most popular park is ideal for a picnic on (luckily) sunny days—it's a reasonable enough walk from Trinity College. Ponds and flower beds stand alongside little paths and commemorative statues: great for reading a book or enjoying the sun with some friends!
- **Abbey Theatre** (Lower Abbey St)
Ireland's famous national theatre was founded by W.B. Yeats and Lady Gregory. Classic and contemporary Irish playwrights are put on seasonally. There's always something interesting on the programme, such as J. M. Synge, Samuel Beckett, Sean O'Casey, Shakespeare or W.B. Yeats.



The National Museum on Kildare Street

An experimental essay

Harold and Maude discuss death

Ann Droz

Harold: Hi Maude, what are you reading? Poems by William Carlos Williams and Wallace Stevens?

Maude: Yes Harold. I particularly like these two called *Death* and *Death of a Soldier*. Do you know them?

Harold: No, Maude, but you can't say it's a subject I'm not interested in, can you? Tell me more!

Maude: Well, Harold, you could say they encourage us, each in their own way, to face up to death so that it becomes ordinary and approachable.

Harold: Really. How do they do *that*?

Maude: Well, for Williams, one way of doing it is by using violent language and images from modern life. He starts off by making us think it's a relief that the person in the poem is dead. He says "The dog won't have to/sleep on his potatoes/ any more to keep them/ from freezing" (2-5). It gives the impression that the dead man was a tyrant and that the dog will be better off without him now he's gone. I mean, think of the dog! He's seen by most people as man's most faithful friend. And imagine how uncomfortable it must be to sleep on a sack of potatoes. That's not the way to treat your most loyal friends! And just in case we're still not sure what to think of him, he then goes on to reinforce the negative image by calling him an "old bastard" (7)

Harold: Hey, it isn't respectful to speak about dead people like that, is it?

Maude: Well, Harold, that's what our culture has led us to think. It's true that classical poetry, as opposed to Modernist, put death on a kind of pedestal. This made it seem very far away and inaccessible, though. And we're often afraid of what we don't know. So, what Williams does is to shock us and in so doing, he "defamiliarizes" us with our traditional notions of how death should be approached. Stevens achieves the same objective, but uses the Romantic mode for ironic effect. Instead of objects, he uses metaphors from nature to express his ideas. He says "As in a season of autumn,(8).....The clouds go...in their direction." (11-12). His vocabulary also meets up to traditional poetic expectations, like when he exclaims "Life contracts and death is expected" (1) or "Death is absolute" (7). However, the heroic tone would not sound right in the twentieth century when many felt

that the deaths caused by the First World War had been senseless. In this way, his manner of expressing death encompasses as much violence and engenders a similar sense of revolt, as does Williams' more modern style.

Harold: Speaking of style, have you noticed the speech patterns in the two poems? The speaker in *Death* strikes you as talking mumbo jumbo, while Stevens' speaker appears well structured and controlled.

Maude: Well, I think that expresses something about the state of mind of the speaker too. Williams throws little fragments at us all through the poem. We have the impression that he hops from one way of seeing things to another and we feel lost. For instance, after calling the corpse a "bastard,"(7) he explains the literal meaning of the word in line 8, therefore contradicting our first impression of the words as being an insult. However, just as well there's "because" at the end of line 8 to reassure us that an explanation follows, even if it turns out to be different from expected - a definition rather than a justification. In fact, in modernist poetry, conjunctions, prepositions and the like, which aren't normally emphasised in everyday speech, come into their own. They actually become essential in joining the pieces of the "puzzle" together. Ultimately, Williams plays with our expectations and forces us to think about words and their meaning (-lessness) when isolated. Notice that he even goes a step further and actually separates the words he wants to stress from the flow of the text. Sometimes he uses enjambment so that when you arrive at the end of a line, you're in mid-sentence, wondering what's going to come next such as the example I've just given you. At other times, a line contains only one or two words such as "he's" (14) "the liar" (37) or "which" (42) and this makes them stand out in the physical shape of the poem. In this way, even the pattern of the poem on the page expresses disarray and confusion as much as the actual words themselves.

Harold: You could say that even the form of the poem becomes an image of death, couldn't you?

Maude: Spot on, Harold. On the contrary, I'm not so sure about *Death of a Soldier* being quite as measured as it looks. Try reading it out loud! There are no rhymes, no established meter. It may have punctuation at the end of each line to make it look

neat and well organized, but in actual fact, the full stops and the commas just make it discordant and abrupt. As does the very distinct rhythm caused by each stanza starting off long and getting shorter and shorter. The last line of each stanza is cut off abruptly, like life itself. "The soldier falls,"(3) "Calling for pomp." (6)

Harold: Or rather, *not* "calling for pomp." Stevens seems to want to desacralise death when he compares the dead soldier to Christ. The latter's resurrection, it would appear, was just a way of getting people to speak about him, something the soldier doesn't ask for. He implies that religion is for show only.

Maude: Williams seems to illustrate the same lack of faith in religion when he says the dead person is "godforsaken."(16) Taken at face value, it means abandoned by God, although most people use it as a simple expletive without ever thinking of its meaning.

Harold: Yes, he even invents words like "sick-dead" in line 13. Never heard that expression before? Have you?

Maude: No, I certainly haven't, Harold, but it's just another way Williams has of deconstructing our perceptions of things by juxtaposing words that we don't expect to see collocated. To put it another way, he gives new life to language patterns and kills off our old habits of using language without thinking. Makes you think, doesn't it? It maybe isn't just a poem about the death of a person, but of a way of communicating - a linguistic death! And do you see how in line 40 he no longer uses the pronoun or the verb? He just says "Dead" as if he was dissociating himself completely from who or what is dead. It becomes impersonal. He then says, "just bury [it]/and hide [its] face" in the closing lines.

Harold: Well, the use of "bury" (45) for a dead person certainly seems appropriate, but why "it"? Syntactically, it would be more logical and it would fit in with Williams' constant reversing of the situation?

Maude: So, in that case, perhaps it's not so much death that's a "shame"(46) as love's failure to overcome it.

Harold: That said, Stevens also plays around with the language structure, like when he uses the active present for everything that pertains to life, whereas he uses the passive to portray death. It gives the impression that death is unaffected by change and time and stresses its inevitability. Life on the other hand, is described with verbs of movement or change like "falls" (3) "become" (4). The wind and the clouds too "go" (11), giving an impression of here today and gone tomorrow. What's more, the rhythm of the lines

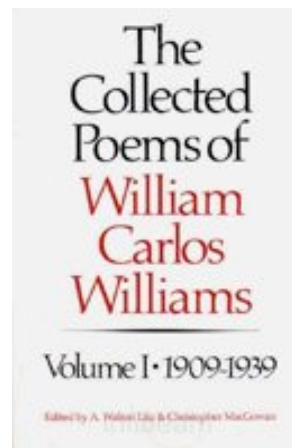
Makes you think of a *métronome* ticking away with cruel regularity as if the passage of time is oblivious to suffering. Sounds fatalistic, doesn't it?

Maude: Yes and no. Have you noticed how Stevens draws attention to the adverb "nevertheless"(11) by making it stand at the end of the line, surrounded by commas? Like Williams, he makes us notice "secondary" words and we discover their full impact? Never the less. Always the same. Unchanging. Life goes on in spite of death.

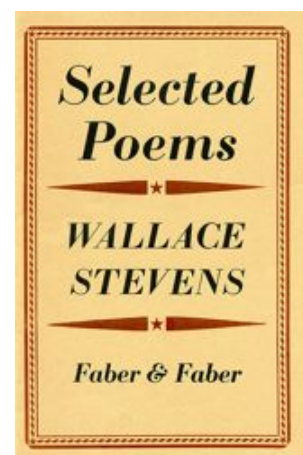
Harold: And suddenly, the message doesn't need to be so fatalistic after all. It's up to us to decide.

Maude: You couldn't have said it better, Harold. Our journey through these poems has prepared me to meet death face in the face.

Harold: And me to face up to life for the first time! Isn't it amazing the effect poetry has on us, Maude?



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A Tale

The New Underground

Victoria Baumgartner

I was running in the streets of Dublin. Running in Dublin, if you ever tried it, is a pretty difficult exercise. Generally, you just tend to bump into even more people than when you're simply walking. As a matter of fact, you don't even go that much faster either, due to all the bumping and excusing yourself that is taking place.

But I had no choice. I was late. I wouldn't have missed today's lecture for the world. Today was a Thursday, and my American literature teacher was giving a lecture on Gothic Avant-Garde Castles and Ironies in Poe's Early Children's Stories He Wrote Even Though He Had Heard None As A Child Himself.

You'll understand my enthusiasm. Especially if I tell you my other American classes are generally boring; to take only one example, you wouldn't want to end up in last week's lecture: Ichabod Crane's Studies in Native American and English Nordic Witchcraft Applied to his Understanding of Bird Studies Throughout Irving's *Oeuvre*.

So when I finally saw the yellow and red sign I was looking for, I walked even faster. I stumbled upon the staircases that led into the station.

I gave one of my tickets to the machine, and the latter ate it greedily. The machine I chose had quite a funny look going on: it winked at me. A rather nasty wink, but a wink still.

"Thanks for the attention." I mumbled to myself.

The ticket system had changed a few years ago due to constant complaining of customers who always had to carry around the exact amount of change for a ticket. But the machines got greedier and greedier and kept asking you for more than the actual price you owed them. That, beside the fact you always had to go and get some change from strictly Gaelic-speaking merchants of small magazine-selling caravans quickly became a problem. Tourists just couldn't get around the city in any sane way.

So the government, or whoever was in charge of the Underground Stations buildings, changed the ticket system: from then on, machines were only allowed to eat paper tickets. Prices became more regular as machines became meaner. They never greeted you to the Underground anymore, except with a grunt. After I got through the glass doors, I went down a few more steps and found myself waiting on a pretty crowded quay. The trains still had no decent timetables—not because the electronic world could not offer them but just because people got used to simply coming along and waiting for a train. They found it less stressful.

After all, you cannot change decades of habit that

So I waited some more. An old lady with a crocodile-skin bag and a green umbrella smiled at me. She was wearing sunglasses, even though it was pretty dark down there. Seeing my bemused look, she commented:

"It's for later on, darling. When we'll get outside. My old eyes cannot keep up with change as fast as yours, darling."

And she kept smiling and looking at me. I nodded, and faintly smiled back.

The train arrived at some point during this weird exchange and the crowd rushed in. I couldn't get to sit down right away because many people were travelling from this station: "The Gate. Please come in", said the official Underground voice.

I was waiting and looking through the window at the series of multi-coloured Georgian gates we were passing by. Then I found myself staring at the dwarf sitting next to this window and laughing his heart out. I rapidly looked the other way.

You know these situations where you find yourself trying to concentrate on finding a place approximate to "nowhere" and looking at it with all your might—because everyone else in the train is staring at their own "nowhere."

A few whistle notes and the guttural voice announced: "O'Connell Street. Post office and Administration. War heroes and Sculptors. Pub owners and Joyce fans and tourists, please descend." When the crowd cleared, I got a seat next to the window, facing the dwarf. I still tried not to look at him directly. He didn't seem to notice my non-looking efforts, because he was still staring out the window. He seemed to be actually looking at "something."

I noticed his boots mainly because mud was dripping off them—fresh countryside mud. No better start for your nose's day.

The train gave a quick *thud*, and started off again. We stayed a few seconds in the dark of the tunnels. Then our wheels' own echo gently faded away as we made our way through the bigger caves.

The Underground Way was descending along the sea. The tide was always low down there, except at night once a month of course. The Company built the railway accordingly. They did not have much of a choice; the city desperately needed some means of fast-transportation. You had to concede they did a pretty good job out of building rails on sand and digging through these wet caves bordering the sea. Plus the view was of course amazing, which made it worth the mean-ticket-machines trial.

When the sea retired every full moon some natural

lakes—or what may rather be called ponds—were left until the next month. The sand was dry in some places, wet in others. The submarine caverns formed a beautiful roof that covered the wild and huge beaches created half out of hand and half out of nature's will. I always wondered what Van Gogh would have painted if he got the chance to see the view—a lunar and submarine mad place.

There seemed to be several suns lighting this beach: the natural holes in the cave's roofs allowed light to rush in like a proud carriage. Or, as was more often the case, the rain to fall and come smashing and rolling down the train's windows—and then drops would go chasing each other around like madly galloping horses.

I was starting to get quite proud of my “nothing” reflections by now.

Today was a lovely sunny day.

The old sunglasses-wearing lady was knitting some kind of woollen shape you couldn't identify for yourself. And she was humming “Unchain my Heart” so loudly I could hear her from the other end of the wagon.

I directed my attention to the window again. You could see a bird or two standing on some forgotten wooden pile or rock formation and watching the metro pass. That certainly was a nice change to watching sheep.

The dwarf began to laugh. Again.

“Hu, hu, hu.”

His was a very deep, very cheerful laugh.

“Do you see that bird over there?” he said.

Was he actually talking to me? I wondered. He was breaking every Underground “nothing”-based rule.

“The blue feathered seagull?” I answered shyly, after a look.

“Yes, yes of course. That one and only.”

“Yes.” A pause. “Do you happen to know it?” I asked yet more shyly.

The dwarf turned his sparkling blue eyes at me: “As a matter of fact, I know him quite well. It's a *him* you see, not an *it*.”

“Oh.” I began to forget to sound shy, and actually became interested.

“It's my cousin Liam.” He stated. As a sign of the statement's emphasis, he struck his boots together. Part of the mud ended up on the blue chest he had put next to his seat, part on my pants, and a small part remained on the floor.

“What happened to him?” I inquired, deliberately changing the subject to divert his deeply sorry look and the excuses that were about to follow.

“Hu. He fell in love.”

“What?”

“Oh, milady, don't tell me you don't know what happens to young dwarves who fall in love.” He was looking at me teasingly.

“Well, I'm afraid I don't, Sir.”

“Sir? Tssss. Call me Owenric. A pretty young girl like you, doesn't know what happens to dwarves? Be careful not to make one fall in love with you if

perchance you meet one.”

Well, this statement would make you start too. But wonder and curiosity took over me. It's not often you find a talkative dwarf.

“Oh, I'll try not to, Owenric. And please don't call me “pretty young girl.” I'd much prefer Thea.”

“Well, Thea, us dwarves are not really made to fall in love.”

“I know darn well that I don't stand a chance!” the old lady suddenly crooned louder.

“You see, continued Owenric, there were no female dwarves in the beginning, when all of this World-Creation thing happened. But after a while, the Gods got weary of creating dwarves over and over again. You see, they had planned a female species for all the other guys out there, but dwarves were essentially supposed to concentrate on mining and carving and all that stuff. No woman's jobs. So after a while, when the Gods wanted to take some time out and stop worrying about always creating new dwarves, they finally decided to put some women in the middle of all that. Ah! Good job it was. We were all quite happy. One problem was, dwarves were not used to women. They didn't have the experience the other folk got.” Then he started to murmur to make sure only I could hear him: “Oh, and if you mind my opinion, even with all their pretty experience, they're not much better than us in general at dealing with women. Begging your pardon, Miss Thea.”

His long and pretty amazing speech was punctuated by nods and “ho”s and “hum hum”s from my part. It was all rather fascinating.

“Oh, it's fine you know. I neither think the world's a place that's old enough to have got all those gender relationship problems dealt with yet,” I diplomatically answered.

“Well you see Miss, when they sent us women dwarves we just didn't know how to deal with them. And so as a side effect and all that, dwarves started to metamorphose themselves when they fell in love.”

“Metamorphose themselves? Into birds you mean? Seagulls?”

“Oh, not only, Miss Thea. Not only. We metamorphose into whatever our personality and our love - hu, hu - suits it best and all.”

“That is actually a pretty nice thing to do.”

“Pffffffa, I don't know. It doesn't last long, you know. Just the time it takes for a dwarf to get how it works for other species, and then he gets back to his normal shape.”

He turned to the window.

“When you don't care a bag of beans for me! Unchain...” She was singing quite well.

The blue seagull was following the train. It - well, *he* was flying in the river's direction, probably to follow it to the sea. Or maybe not, actually. If this was a real dwarf he was most probably only trying to visit as many of those caverns as possible. Most probably out of personal and professional interest. You see, you

cannot get off the train at any point to admire the landscape—it's too dangerous.

Owenric suddenly laughed again. One of the buttons on his jacket popped out. *Thud*. It went to lie there in the mud.

"My cousin's so stupid, you see. He changed into a seagull, which is the last animal we would ever like to change into."

"And why's that?"

"Oh, Miss, dwarves don't like the sea and all that very much. We consider all that pretty frightening and dangerous and too big. Way too big, it is. You see, we never go swimming or boating unless we have to. Boating! Rivers and lakes under the mountains are nice. But the sea! Pffff! Tell me about it!" he grumbled. "Oh, I get it now. It's so funny because he's a seagull..."

"By then, I wasn't quite sure I had a dwarfish sense of humour.

"Hu, hu! Yes, Miss. But to crown the King Under the Mountain's hat, the idiot's blue! *Blue*! He was always wearing a blue hat and all, and now he's turned into a ridiculous blue seagull. Tell me about it! Hu, hu, hu." Liam the Temporary Seagull went flying past us, and landed on dry sand in the middle of some lingering seawater pond. Owenric gradually stopped laughing. He took his little black hat off.

I suddenly noticed why. Another seagull came flying from where the sea embraced the horizon. The bird was of a beautiful red.

The sun was shining and the waters left on the underground beach seemed to become alive. It was as if spotlights were lighting a theatre scene, only the sunlight made everything sparkling and wonderful, hiding small rainbows in sea's lost streams.

"My heart... You worry me night and day." The old lady's soft voice. Her knitting was starting to look like it could serve as a unicorn's armour—only woollen.

The other seagull landed near Liam the dwarf. They chanted for a minute or so with their rash seagull voices. It was rather like hearing a drum and nails-on-blackboard symphony. But somehow, you'd still have managed to find it beautiful. After all, we're all mortal fools in love.

Owenric smiled gently. The seagulls took their flight and gracefully went out through one of the caves' holes.

I couldn't help myself: "Isn't it beautiful, though?"

"Hu." He agreed.

"They must be pretty happy. I bet they'll go back to their former shape soon?"

"Well, yes. I'm quite happy for him, no mistake. But I'd still like to laugh a bit, you know, and imagine their children all dressed up in blue and all." And he smiled again.

The train went back into a tunnel, and the weird voice announced "Trinity College. Scholars and shoppers. Medieval knights and Book Conservation. Coffee makers and Tale-tellers, please descend."

"That's my stop, Owenric."

I paused.

"Thank you very much for this voyage. I definitely learned more about dwarves."

He clapped his boots together, and laughed again.

I laughed too. Maybe dwarf humour was starting to get to me by now.

"That's alright, Miss. All the merriment was for me."

And then he stood up and bowed, and winked at me. I smiled and curtsied in answer. He returned to his chair and resumed his staring through the window.

The old lady went out at the same stop. She still had her sunglasses on.

I asked her politely: "Hope you had a good journey, Mam'."

"Oh, yes, thank you darling. Lucky I had these on, though. They very nicely dimmed the sun. Oh! And did you see those two dwarves, darling? How lovely it was."

"How did you know they were dwarves?"

"Well darling, not only were they blue, but they were singing. Oh! And of course... I was in love too, once. You know." She replied dreamily.

I helped her go up the stairs back into daylight. We emerged just out of the base of Mr Moore's statue. Traffic was awful today.

"Too many statues in this old city, darling." said she, "but it's nice to have some of the old friends around."

She gently tapped my arm with her old hand. She smelled of orange and cinnamon. She smelled of Christmas.

"Have a nice day, darling."

"You too, Mam'."

"Hope you'll never have to wear sunglasses, darling."

I watched her make her way through the crowd. Her little silhouette disappeared within seconds. I felt good this Thursday. Nothing would be able to stand between Poe's children's stories and me. I turned my back to the Underground sign, and ran across the street, feeling somewhat more blue than usual.



A short story

The Phonograph

Marie-Noëlle Wurm

The vinyl rotated vacuously in its small space, its voice lost in the silence.

"I know you like it. I'm sorry but I'm still taking it."

They both looked at the floundering disk, rotating vacuously in its small space, on its small shelf.

They both looked at it, wanting yet unable to give it voice or put it out of its misery.

She took a long drag from her cigarette and crushed it, slowly and forcibly. It lay there, surrounded by six other similarly fated stubs.

He didn't much like the smell of smoke. Never did really. You got used to it though, after a while. He did.

"I watered the plants yesterday; they're looking pretty good."

"Yeah?"

She stared into space, pensive. Then got up, the chair screeching against the crispy clean tiles, and clicked the water boiler on - covering the persistent painful scratch of the vinyl with the soothing hiss and bubble of water. She looked at him, eyebrows questioning. He looked at her, at the boiler, out the window.

"No I'm good thanks."

Outside he saw a little boy, maybe five or six, playing on the grass. He liked watching his innocence, his "insouciance" as she would say. She had a funny way of switching to French once in a while, as though one language wasn't enough to say what you meant.

She looked at the tealeaves leaking ocher into the translucent water. Made her think of smoke. She sat down again, staring slowly, forcibly, at him. He kept staring out the window. Out there, far down the hill that sloped gently down with the curb, a bike with a man on it. Possibly a postman.

Metal cranking against metal; mechanical music creaking its way up the hill. Under the man, the magic music machine, his bike, atonally symphonied on, oblivious of the faint irritation it could provoke. To Tristan, it was a reassuring sound. In the beginning it had bothered him but he had gotten used to its little bumps and quirks, forgot to oil it, and so it stubbornly clanked on.

Ben Hera was Tristan's brainchild, his creation, and thus a part of himself - albeit detached. He had built

her almost 10 years ago - or was it 12? Her frame was the first thing he came across, one day as he was walking by the junkyard near his place. He had stopped in his tracks, unsure of why, had hesitatingly looked around and seen it: green with a red streak highlighted by two cream ones - a yesteryear look that reminded him of his first bike back in the 50s.

The memory was so fresh he could almost hear it crunch under his teeth: the sensation of being carried by the wind like a dandelion seed, the exhilaration of going anywhere he wanted, even the bloody, gritty hands which stung with the pride of his first fall.

So he released the frame from its tortuously gnarled wheels, its decaying saddle, and brought it home, like others would an abandoned kitten. It took him 4 months to fix the bike up, working on her on and off between jobs: finding her some solid wheels, unsullied brakepads, derailleurs, gear shifters, brake levers, pedals and a worn leather Brooks saddle.

Their connection flowered, bloomed and he sometimes now wondered whether the next thing he did was an idea that had come from him or, somehow, from her. He found himself looking into his atlas more and more often, tracing a network of roots across the green fields, the high mountains, the deserts, even the seas. The intricacy of the colorful sloping lines and the minute writing was something he always found fascinating but he sometimes had trouble connecting them with palpable heights, lengths and spaces. More often, he imagined he was looking at a living organism, like those pictures of the neurons in your brain that knitted paths under over through in out between each other, or like an accelerated sky shot of the city, cars, people, cats, roads, a crazy mumbo-jumble of movement becoming one static snapshot of sinuous life.

So it was that, on Ben Hera's first birthday, they set off on an adventure. It started out pretty simple - a one-month bike ride along the Californian coast. But his uncut salt and pepper beard grew in length, the single month grew into several, and the bike trip sprouted branches off into Arizona, New Mexico, jumped over the border into Central America, and

continued on, diving farther and farther South. In the beginning, when Tristan had told his friends about the one-month trip, they didn't really take him seriously. He was already 50, much too old for this energetic-youth-type craziness. But he left, and so they switched to thinking he'd be back a week later: hey guys, that was exhausting, and darn I missed the good old Redwood City, guffaw and knee slap, can you imagine I was going to ride a bike for a month long without a bed to sleep in or a fold-out chair to relax in?? Hand me a beer. When he didn't come back and time stretched itself out like putty, they were surprised, shocked, mildly annoyed, angry, worried and then fatalistic. Everyone had their theory about what he was doing, where he was going, how he had died, been abducted, raped, fell into a hole, starved, broke a leg, fell in love, committed suicide or became a drug lord. It became the communal guessing game, until the novelty wore off, people settled back into their lives, and slowly people forgot him. 11 years was a long time.

He loved South America, traveled through all of its cracks and crevices and learnt Spanish. Sometimes, when he found a place and people he liked, he settled down there for a little while, until the urge to bike would overwhelm him again. Once, in Chili, he was sitting on the sidewalk, at the top of one of the steep roads that characterized hilly Valparaiso. He was looking down at the colorful houses, the blue sea, the city's funicular "elevators". Ben Hera was propped up against a yellow wall covered in black Escher-like graffiti, the worn leather bike bags basking in the morning light. A 30 year-old woman walked by, staring at the bike and the surprisingly muscular suncrisped man sitting next to it. She liked his silver-white flowing beard and his wrinkles, the only indications of how old he really was. His eyes were a striking green, and smiled perpetually. They darted from house to sky to sea with the fascination of a frog about to flick out its tongue at flying insects. She thought it was beautiful. Suddenly, his eyes skipped playfully to hers, connecting, and she was about to turn away, embarrassed for staring, when he smiled, splaying a youthful grin at her. She laughed involuntarily, then,

"¿Hola? ¿Qué tal?"

He grinned at her sideways, wondering at her accent: "¿De dondé vienes?"

Where indeed was she from? Her hazel eyes flashed, and her short dark pixie hair trembled as she cocked her hair, smiling.

"De Canada, Québec."

Canada. That was a place he'd always wanted to see. The sun rose higher and heat began to simmer under the skin. She pulled out a cigarette and lit it. They smiled at each other.

It always bittersweetly hurt to think of her, of the two weeks they had spent around each other, telling stories, laughing, enjoying each other's non-words. She was there and then gone. All he knew was her name, Lucina Baillargeon, and that of the small town she came from, back in Quebec. He rode on with Ben Hera, but he always had a thought for Lu - how she would switch in the flap of a wing from raucous laughter to a sudden seriousness, lost in herself. He found it touching, raw, true. He knew that he loved her but chose not to admit it to himself.

So when, 6 years later he ended up in Quebec, 60 kilometers away from her hometown, he just thought: imagine that! When he got there and he realized that the town was a bit bigger than he had expected he thought: oh shoot. And when he found out that the post office was looking for a new postman for Sector 5, he just thought: well, it's about time I get a job. The idea that he was actually seeking her out flurried on the edge of his consciousness; sometimes furtively trespassed into it but immediately got punched back into place with the efficiency of a sledgehammer.

At the bottom of the mug, a puddle of tea, cold, unfinished. The clock clicked. Chairs pushed back, the absence of her, invasive. He stood in front of the space where the phonograph had lain, helplessly spinning its vinyl around. Above it, a window. Outside, a man on a bike stopped in front of the house and the little boy on the grass.

The man was curious-looking, with a long silver-white beard, sun-crisped skin, and powerful legs. He got off his bike, opened his postbag, rummaged through it and pulled out 2 letters. He checked the number on the mailbox, looked at the address on the letters, and then looked at it some more. His eyebrows ducked down quizzically. The little boy looked at him, eyes as big as wheels.

"Are you a pirate?"

He sure looks like a pirate! I've always wanted to meet a pirate before! Pirates can fight and they've got swords and pirate hats and a big ship with a black pirate flag and they go arrrrrrrrrrrr and they have swords and teeth that shine and they're cool!

Tristan looked at the boy, then snarled into a pirate-

looking grin:

“ARRRRRR! Indeed I are!”

But the child was not one to be duped.

“But you don’t even have a pirate patch...”

“Well, not all pirates have patches.”

The boy looked at him, dubious, decided the man was useless, and continued playing with his matchbox cars. The man looked at him intently. And then:

“Um... hey little man, do you live in this house?”

“Yeah.” He didn’t look up.

Tristan looked down at the address again, the carefully written letters becoming blurry with comprehension. The mail dropped from his hand, two white rectangles shocking the green space around them. He got up on his bike and sped away as fast as he could. On the green space, on the white rectangles, on the black mailbox with its red flag down was: Lucina Ashby. *Ashby*.

The man at the window wondered about the strangeness of the man on the bike. Then he decided that the silence, the absence, no, the non-presence of her was too much to bear, opened the window above the space where the phonograph had lain just a half hour ago, helplessly spinning its vinyl around, and called with a voice on the pain-breaking point:

“ Hey Tristan, come inside now!”

The little boy looked up, grabbed his matchbox cars, and ran into the house. Out there, far down the hill that sloped gently down with the curb, Ben Hera creaked on.

A poem

What if ?

Umbrella Feet

There – I missed the bus, again.

And yet the idea of this particular bus

Buzzes in my head insistently,

Knocks against the window-panes of my mind,

Snakes through my day

Like Ariadne’s thread, elusive,

Ungraspable.

Then my heart begins to whisper

I cannot (dontwantto) decipher

Its barely audible murmur –

(A redolence in the air

Brings a flash of recollection,

A fragrant melting-pot of you

skin

hair)

YOU!

You are some kind of

Maddening melody I cannot

(dontwantto) stop humming,

Your irresistible presence

Burning my tongue -

so delicious!

A poem

O'Connell Bridge

Victoria Baumgartner

I forgot my umbrella
Once before tomorrow
When I stopped on the bridge
Crowded and narrow
In between the smoking
Alleyways and forget-me-knots
An old whispering

I leaned on the cold silver stones
Pearls were in the sky
Fire in my eye
Tale of Neverever
As life went by
And gently bye
Through our hands full of thrones

Whales in the river
Sang their melancholy hymn
Sparkles on the water
From flowers of the rain
And echoes
Of rainbows
Long gone
That flew away to Spain

I leaned on and over
I flew on the lullaby
Of the waterway
And cried for you
My friend
Because you did not look
Stop nor breathe
But you only thought
And drank and ran
As busy as you can

When I stole a drop
Of eternity's dawn
You passed me by
And forgot
To understand why.

A poem

December Morning

Umbrella Feet

The snow fell last night,
A herald of his departure.
Earth and sky are white –
In my dreams his face is perfervid, red.

Through my window
A crane splits the stillness
With its deliberate strides,
Its neck swaying like a confused pennant.

Lonesome creature!
Do you bewail your fate?
Or do you bear it proudly
Like a trophy?

A comic strip

The Chilean Chronicles

Marina Popea



Marina, a UniL student, is currently doing a year abroad at the University of Santiago de Chile. Look out for a new instalment of her adventures in every issue!

New Students' Guide

Get started at UniL!

Suzanne Balharry

More than half of the students on the campus don't come from the canton of Vaud...

... so sometimes it's good to have an accomplice who can give you tips!

You've just arrived in Lausanne, got your flat, know where UniL is, but this is still a whole new world for you. How come everyone except you seems to know how to use the photocopying machines? Are there really improvisation classes on the campus? Does some place at UniL really sell coffees for only 1 franc? Where are the bookshops? And where in town are you going to take your first local date? Don't worry; MUSE thinks maybe a tip or two will help you feel at home...

One thing to know about UniL, is that there is one man in the Anthropole who'll help you out with nearly any practical problem, including closed doors (he's got every possible key) and crazy photocopying machines. That's Mr. Martin and he is hiding on level 2 of the Anthropole, in room 2042. Once you know you can ask for his help, you'll feel like you know how things work as well as anyone else.

Teachers really seem to think you've taken the time to know the campus before classes have started, because in less than a week they've told you to go to the *unicentre*, to the *bureau des photocopiés*, and to the *printunil*, and you've got no idea what you're supposed to do there. Now MUSE can help you out of this. The *unicentre* is mainly the place where you solve your university card problems, and it's in the building next to the library. The *bureau des photocopiés* will sell you course supports and though it's not open between 11:45 and 13:30, you'll find it the rest of the time on the second level of the Anthropole, in room 2088. Finally, the main *printunil* is on level one of the Anthropole, where you can print out whatever you want, including course documents, from the internet. Before you go there, open the document on one of the building's computers and command the print. You can find more infos about all these confusing locations on the university website.

There are plenty of activities on the campus, physical at the sports centre by the lake, as well as cultural. There are two film clubs, one for the whole UniL and one for the English section, where you'll mainly see great movies adapted from classic books. There are plenty of other associations that organize events you can go to, or help put together by joining their team.

Some meet up on the university side of the campus, while others are found around the EPFL, like the theatre and improvisation group. In the Anthropole, there is a place called *Zelig* where you can relax and meet people around coffee or tea for 1 franc only, or even around a beer. You'll find that on level 1.

Next to all those, you'll find several shops on the campus. The first you'll hear about is *Basta*, the bookshop on level one of the Anthropole. But there also are kiosks, stationary stores, a travel agency and even a hairdresser. Of course, you'll also need to buy some of your books in town. You'll then be looking for *Payot* or *Les Yeux Fertiles*, but most of all you need to go to *Books Books Books*, known for being "the first and only dedicated English bookshop in Lausanne". You'll find it on Rue de la Mercerie 12, on the top floor of *Globus*.

Once you're finished going through all this, you can turn to our guided tour...

Student Budget Town Tour

The craziest description of Lausanne you'll ever read!

So here you are, comfortable at UniL at last, ready to survive any day in its maze. Now you can upgrade to exploring the town. This is where you'll need to go in order to buy vital resources such as food and books, impress your date in the nicest places, and find the English After-Party. But if knowing every corner of the campus takes time, you'll find that discovering Lausanne never truly ends. Anyhow, here are some tips that will help you get started in that big world.

You'll probably want to start your town tour in the center, which you've heard is the Place St-François. But before you get to know where that is, you'll find yourself where the two metros stop, which is the Flon. There, between the shoe shops, you'll find a small *Migros* where you can buy food, and a French library called *Les Yeux Fertiles* which shares its shop with a video game and role playing store, *MixImage*. On the next corner, you'll find an elevator that will take you up through the Fnac, where books, games and hardware are sold. The top level will open on an area called Bel Air, where you can find one of the only food courts in Lausanne, *Easyfood*. There, you can eat

Chinese, Thai, or Indian dishes for a very good quality/price rate. If you like sushi, you can get some further on the same street, at *Sushi Express*. Then cross the bridge, and you'll arrive at St-François, where you can have occidental meals in *Manora*. This buffet restaurant has all sorts of food, with a 10% discount for students.

From St-François, you might want to walk down the *Petit Chêne* towards the train station. This is the street on which you'll find the cinema *Galleries*, where films in their original version are played. Below the station, you'll find the cozy *Café de Grancy*, and if you're looking for another restaurant, you should head up the Avenue de la Gare and enter the Italian *Bruschetta*. Above it is the refreshing *Bar Tabac*, which has a "parisien" style. At the top of the Avenue de la Gare and across the road, you might like to know there is a place where you can ask for medical advice called the *Planning Familial*. Around the corner, you won't be able to pass by the Opera without having a close look at its programme, and just above it, you'll find *La Clé*, a little bar where you might see a table near the ceiling.

At the top of the street on which the Opera is, you'll find yourself back in Place St-François. There, you can take the little street heading uphill. The *Rue de Bourg* conceals several shops you need to pass by at least once, such as a chocolate store called *Blondel*, a must, and *Cardas*, a place that will instantly transport you to another continent. The top of the street is worth a close look at nighttime, as it is a good place for clubbing, so before we get there you had better cross the bridge you'll find a little higher called the *Pont Bessières*.

On its other side you'll find a summer open air bar called *Bourg Plage*, and two restaurants: *L'Evêché* and *La Chandeleur*, the latter being dedicated to pancakes. Further ahead, hiding under the road, there's another bar called the *Barbare*, where you can taste the best homemade hot chocolates. At the end of this street is the *Brasserie du Château* (see photo), where pizzas are served until 4 am. Under this bar is the Place du Tunnel, around which you'll find a nice bar called *La Couronne d'Or* and another pancake restaurant called *Les Crêpes de Maria*. But by now, you're probably so fed up you don't want to read about this, which is good since now you're going to start drinking.

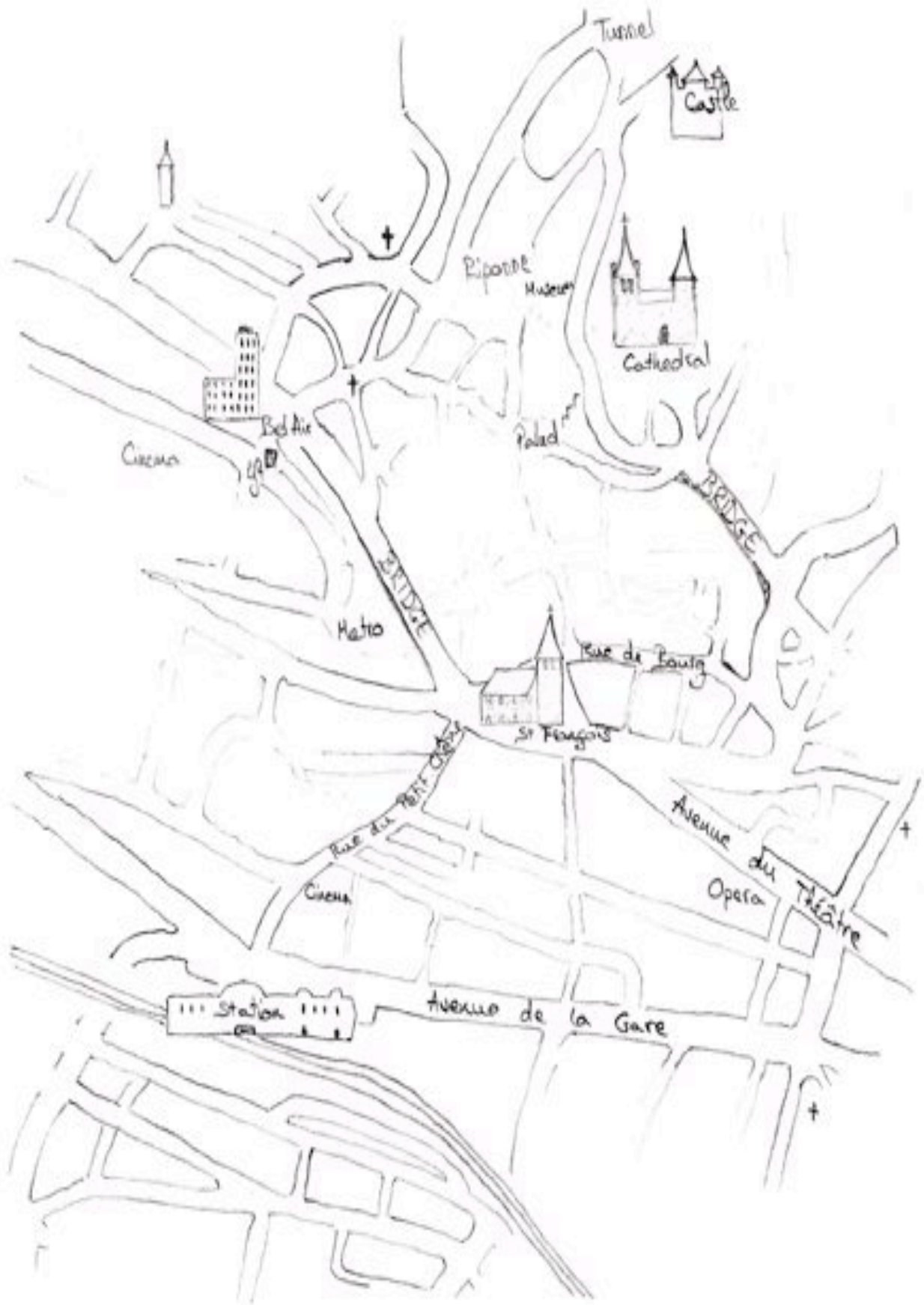


So this is when you have to start worrying about your night sport. There are numerous clubs in Lausanne, but our student prices will restrict us to presenting three of them. Before you head toward the area where they are, you should stop in one last bar. The *Great Escape* is a smoky, loud music bar, where all sorts of drinks are served and free entrances for the *Buzz* are distributed starting at 1:30 am. Of course, you might feel like skipping this experience and heading directly back on the other side of the *Pont Bessières*, where you'll find the *Buzz*, the *Jaggers*, and the *Darling*. The first two are the usual destinations of the English After Party, while the last's particularity is its free entrance. You'll find it on the lower part of *Rue de Bourg*. Your evening will probably finish around 3:30 am, and this is when you'll need the most useful information we can provide you with. From midnight to 4:00 am, several "pyjama" buses will take you from Lausanne to your home. They all leave from the Flon, which is where this tour started, but depending on the course of your evening you'll maybe need to get there with some friends. Also make sure you still have the 2.- fr. it will cost you to take the bus, and all that's left to us is to wish you a good trip home.



Now, before you start running around the town trying to understand our wobbly directions, we might suggest you turn our guided tour into a personal tour, and simply be inspired to find your own way through Lausanne. You'll discover it hides thousands of nice spots where it is enjoyable to land randomly, so all you need to do is have fun!

Editor's note: turn the page for Suzanne's customised map of Lausanne!



Editor's note: distances in real life may not be quite as they appear on this artfully hand-drawn map...

Dos and Don'ts

How to survive your first English Section party

Diana Volonakis

DO come fashionably late

The party starts at 19:30, so at around 20:00 make a grand entrance. English Section parties are free, so bring your friends along. Tell your friends that you don't need to speak English to come to the party. You don't even have to be in the English section. As long as you're willing to follow the next steps, you are one of us.

DON'T dress up

The dress code at English Section Parties is relaxed. No need to rush home after class to change into something classy. Besides, chances are that some drunken fool will decide to splash his beer all over your shirt, so keep the brand names at home.

DO dance

To some people, dancing is a painful, downright shameful experience. The rhythmically-impaired may want to start slow: a little ankle movement here, a little head bobbing there, and before you know it the whole body will be riled up into a full-fledged booty shaking frenzy. You're mouthing the words to ABBA. You're striking the Saturday Night pose. Come tomorrow, you know your gyrating hips will be tagged on facebook, but that's cool.

DON'T be a wallflower

This is sad. There's always that one kid who's too shy to mingle. Instead he stands alone at the buffet, absent-mindedly popping peanuts, wishing he too had the courage to mingle. Our tip? Suck it up, kid. No one likes a whiner. Get out there and strike up a conversation. Even if it means talking about the wart on your toe that won't go away since last Christmas. It's better than being the sad peanut kid.

DO bring food

There seems to be a slight misunderstanding here: by food, we the committee mean tasty and homemade taboulés, roasts, pastas and cakes. Yet at every party the buffet offers a dismal selection of greasy chips

and ready-made sweets. If you didn't bake it, fry it or steam it, then don't bring it.

DON'T talk about school

So you're at the party. The beer has given you a nice little buzz, you're feeling nice and loose. Then some loser comes up to you and asks: "Hey, so have you been studying for that medieval English exam? In what room is it taking place? Have you read the secondary material...?". Seriously, don't. Many subjects can be discussed during English Section parties: you can talk about your new kitten, your favourite band, your love life, you can even talk about the political correctness of eating veal. You can talk about class in the classroom.

DO attend the after-party

The Zelig will close promptly at 24:00. Seeing that this is just about when things really get started, at 24:05 our merry band of party-goers will continue the festivities in a nightclub in the centre of Lausanne. Did Paul end up kissing Karen? Did Fabrice really streak naked through the club?... If you weren't there, then you'll never know...



Poetry competition

Sponsored by **BooksBooksBooks**

We here at MUSE would bet our mother's left ear that at least half of our readers have tried their hand at writing poetry (hey, it was night-time, it was raining, you'd just gotten dumped, and your cat was sick – it's ok, we understand).

That's why MUSE is organising a **poetry competition!** We want to bring to light all those hidden rhymes and pentameters lurking about in your dark, forsaken drawers. Interested? Read on...

The theme of the competition is **SERENDIPITY** (a.k.a. "a happy coincidence"). Your poem should be no longer than 200 words. Other than that, feel free to format it as you want, use rhymes or not, etc...

Entries should be sent to competitions.musemag@gmail.com with your name and details (phone number, etc). We will contact you if you are on the shortlist. If you would like your poem to be published anonymously, please state so in your email (but that would be a shame, now, wouldn't it?). The deadline for submissions is **November 15th**.

Oh yeah, we almost forgot...

1st prize: a **50 franc voucher** for BooksBooksBooks

2nd prize: a **30 franc voucher** for BooksBooksBooks

3rd prize: a **20 franc voucher** for BooksBooksBooks

And of course, everlasting fame!

See you in December!

Deadline for submissions: November 15th

Thoughts or comments? Please send us your feedback to info.musemag@gmail.com