



## EDITORIAL

Welcome to a modern forum for Australian Studies. This newsletter is a bilingual platform to inform members of the Association for Australian Studies about academic and professional activities in their fields of study and research. The newsletter will accept relevant information on conferences, publications, lectures, scholarships, awards, research projects, institutions, and web links to Australian resources. The editor welcomes contributions which will help build a vital network in the field of Australian Studies, including essays, news, critiques and constructive commentary on specific subjects of research. We encourage a liberal and creative approach to the topic. The editor urges every reader to help launch this professional news forum to reflect the spirit of Australian Studies in timely information, memorable dialogue, and innovative ideas. We need new ideas and colourful frames of presentation.

Yes, we can: Thanks to all contributors! Together we present an extraordinary survey of recent Australian Studies and public relations work. And now: Enjoy our new layout! ... And another highlight of this issue: The presentation of Libor Mikeska's novel *Neurotically Yours*. We urge publishers to contact the author: Thanks!

Contributions (in German or in English) to:

Dr. Henriette von Holleuffer: [adfonteshistory@aol.com](mailto:adfonteshistory@aol.com)

Prof. Dr. Adi Wimmer: [Adi.Wimmer@uni-klu.ac.at](mailto:Adi.Wimmer@uni-klu.ac.at)

Newsletter Nr. 6, December 2011



*Best wishes,  
Henriette v. Holleuffer*

*By the way: Australians travel worldwide. They are eager to learn about different cultures. Travellers from Australia are pragmatic: they pay with their last dollar! It happened in Meknes/Morocco: A Moroccan attendant in a mosque asked me how much he could get for an Australian dollar. Well, I do not tell you a tale from the Orient.*

*It is a true story: Australians are everywhere! Watch out!*



Kalbarri National Park (Western Australia) © Henriette von Holleuffer

## Issue

EDITORIAL.....	1
NEW NOVEL .....	4
<i>Neurotically Yours: Disparate Excerpts</i> .....	4
NEWS TICKER: ENVIRONMENT .....	22
The Australian Floods 2010/11 .....	22
NEWS TICKER: ECONOMY .....	23
A special relationship: Australia and China .....	23
NEWTICKER: PEOPLE .....	24
Last-known combat veteran of World War I died in Perth .....	24
THE OTHER SIDE: ANOTHER PORTRAIT .....	25
'In Solitary Witness': The life and death of war resister Franz Jägerstätter (1907-1943) .....	25
VIEW FROM THE DESK.....	32
Reading Les Murray .....	32
REVIEW: EXHIBITION .....	36
Aborigines-Kunstaussstellung im Museum Ludwig in Köln: .....	36
PROJECT .....	40
Begegnungsreise mit Aborigines im August 2011 .....	40
ABOUT OUR MEMBERS .....	42
Wir begrüßen die neu gewählte stellvertretende Vorsitzende der GAST: Prof. Dr. Renate Brosch .....	42
Ein tragischer Todesfall eines Mitglieds unserer Gesellschaft: .....	43
CONFERENCES .....	44
Gesellschaft für Australienstudien .....	44
Labour History and Its People.....	46
The 11th Australasian Urban History/Planning History Conference.....	48
CALL FOR ART.....	49
CONCERT .....	49

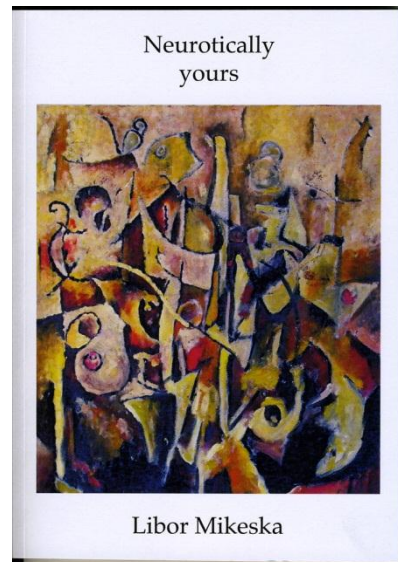
PUBLICATIONS .....	50
Literature .....	50
Cultural Studies .....	50
Anthropology .....	51
History .....	52
BROADCAST(ED).....	53
ON THE AIR: Professor Adi Wimmer – Universität Klagenfurt.....	53
MULTIMEDIA .....	54
NEW DVD - History.....	54
EXHIBITIONS.....	55
ABORIGINAL ART & FOOD .....	55
ART AT THE EMBASSY .....	55
ONLINE EXHIBITION .....	56
FACULTIES OF EDUCATION: PROFILE & COOPERATION .....	57
NEWS FROM THE EMBASSY.....	58
BRÜCKE NACH AUSTRALIEN: GEMEINSAME GASTPROFESSUR.....	59
DANCE DOWNUNDER.....	60
BANGARRA DANCE THEATRE .....	60
SOMETHING FOR DESSERT: .....	61
AUSTRALIAN GINGER – The History of <i>Buderim</i> Ginger.....	61



A link to Australia © Henriette von Holleuffer

## NEW NOVEL

### *Neurotically Yours: Disparate Excerpts*



Libor Mikeska

Disparate Excerpts with a distinctively Australian flavour taken from Libor Mikeska's novel *Neurotically Yours*. Libor Mikeska has been teaching English at Saarland University for over 15 years. Apart from his academical work, he has written a French play and more recently a novel, which is currently in search of an appropriate publisher. The author may be contacted at: [Ljmikeska@yahoo.com](mailto:Ljmikeska@yahoo.com)

Although *Neurotically Yours* is initially structured around three intrinsically different Australians, who are still overwhelmed by a farrago of hopes, naivety, desires and uncertainty, only one of them, deciding to leave familiar shores, takes the plunge and sets out to discover life in mystical Prague. However he gets more than he'd bargained for when various twists of fate and chance encounters make everything possible in this intriguing city, where he not only learns of the unpredictability of life itself, the impermanence of *ideal* love, but also the truth about Kafka's secret trip to Australia! A plethora of amusing anecdotes taking place in Prague are contrasted against inimitable carefree Australian life. Real life scenes are intermingled with recurring dream sequences which unveil different layers of reality: A witty novel of intelligence, wisdom and mystery, weaving its story with humour, charm and intellectual depth.

All excerpts from *Neurotically Yours* are copyright ©Libor Mikeska  
Publishers please contact: [Ljmikeska@yahoo.com](mailto:Ljmikeska@yahoo.com)



\* \* \*

*I've surpassed myself yet again, Emily dear, discovering that I am capable of harbouring feelings akin to homesickness for mother Melbourne! I long to breathe her eucalyptus air on a suburban morning or take a stroll along Elwood Beach on a balmy evening and other such nostalgic nonsense, the novelty of which usually wears off after a few weeks down under! A propos holidays, I probably won't make it over for Chrissy this year – just to let you know. Yet feel free to come and visit me in Prague anytime. Ok, take care, oh and please send more Vegemite as supplies are running drastically low!*

*Sentimentally yours...*

*René*

It wasn't like René to show undue signs of emotional disequilibrium, so what did actually keep him trapped in Europe in the first place?

“Pernicious magnets under this part of the world no doubt!” was his usual response to inquisitive European souls wondering when he was finally going to return to Australia. All the tea in China to anyone who could answer this unfathomable question, for René was a fatalist who would obediently go where life cared to take him.

Australians are like that. They are everywhere! They are good at that kind of thing. Undaunted they venture off to the far corners of even the most remote and insignificant regions of the globe just to get a glimpse of something vastly different from Australia.

\* \* \*

It was also a time when many of René's friends were leaving Prague, having either found seemingly irresistible foreign partners or coveted jobs abroad or had just grown tired of the place altogether. The need for a *change of wallpaper* was what Czechs attributed to their general discontentment with life in their home town. They could never understand how anyone in their right mind could possibly find Prague so appealing as René did – especially coming from Australia – their idea of the epitome of paradise on Earth, amen! In contrast, René thought *his* country was only ideal for those who didn't mind spending most of their time trapped in suburban limbo, prosaic jobs and unbearably sweltering summers. Of course he was cynically generalizing, only dwelling on the fates many of his fellow students had resignedly succumbed to. René shattered many Czechs' illusions about their preconceptions about Australia being one big idyllic haven by giving discouraging visions of waking up to a warbling orchestra of hysterical magpies, cantankerous galahs (who have a propensity for shrieking well before your alarm clock has that privilege), neurotic dogs barking away incessantly, obstreperous broods of children and extroverted lawnmowers carrying out their weekend obligations in front of their double-garaged brick veneer prisons in the likes of Glen Waverley, Bundoora and Doncaster... This was the kind of Australian realism that René found daunting. Still, he loved and missed the beach immensely, even the

quainter Melbourne varieties along the bay – it had always been his bastion of freedom and hope, his inspiration, his ritualistic Sunday promenade and source of indispensable spiritual sustenance that would appease his exaggerated negativity. So why did René leave Australia in the first place? Well, apart from having just finished his studies and in no mood to begin any career no matter how lucrative, he was still bathing in anarchist illusions, scorning convention and desperately longing to see and experience something else, anything really – as how much of life's rich pageant does really cross your path at the humble age of twenty something? So seeing that not much was happening in his life anyway, a disillusioned, yet adventurous René forced himself to become enamoured by all that was Europe, naively endowing his preconceptions with the most positive of qualities. Accordingly he came to see it as something alluring, owing to his general disenchantment with his life until then. So in desperate need of a change of wallpaper, René adamantly fled his sunburnt country, girt by sea, etc. in search of indulgence and hedonism...

\* \* \*

An older greyish Datsun 240k slowly made its way along Punt Road in Richmond, heading towards the bridge that crossed the Yarra River into the chic inner city suburb of South Yarra. It was a place René always had a soft spot for, as his parents had lived there in the decadent seventies.

“So, what are you going to do after your studies?” Emily's question was hanging like thick fog awaiting access to his undivided attention, yet he was treating himself to a ritual that he had developed over many years of travelling this way. His mind would always contemplate the tall Nylex Plastics silo with the interchanging time and weather display: 2:47 pm, 18°C. This ritual never ceased to both, intrigue and thrill him at the same time, as he wouldn't take his eyes off that tower until both time and temperature were alternately shown, and then he would concentrate on the traffic again!

Slowly coming out of his introverted adrenalin kick, his mind was still too absorbed with the pleasing thought of spending a day out at the seaside to ponder over his future.

“What was that?” pretending he didn't hear the question that he couldn't have otherwise been bothered to answer.

“I was just asking what you wanted to do after you leave university,” she rephrased and continued to critically elaborate, “I mean you can't keep on doing postgraduate studies all your life, relying on academic grants and all just to stay out of the workforce.”

Since they had crossed the bridge, there was neither the silo clock nor anything else to distract him from her sudden need to discuss in the future tense, so he eventually gave in, seeing that the mundane, albeit autumnal urban scenery was going to be a routine drive until they got to cosmopolitan St Kilda, one of their favourite bayside places, being a suitable escape from the suburban decay of the North, as he often called it.

"Have you ever thought about applying for a few jobs?" she persisted. René's thoughts gave way to reality:

"I've been thinking about going to teach English in Europe. There's a programme on for recent graduates to teach at an overseas high school for a year in Germany. I just have to choose three regions where I'd prefer to go."

"Do you think you'll ever be able to make up your mind?" she began carpingly. "I mean, you have to admit, you're so incurably indecisive at times, you know!"

"Oh time and destiny will tell, as they always do. I'm sure it'll all work out for the best." Then noticing the disapproving look on Emily's face concerning his shrugged shouldered attitude, he quickly added, "Anyway I was chatting to Jim the other day and he came up with some very convincing points about a place called Saarbrücken."

"Isn't that in Norway? Sounds rather Scandinavian to me. Has it also got a stroke through the *o* too?"

"That's what I originally thought. Actually there is no letter *o*, just a double *a* and two funny dots on the *u*."

"You're so impressionable at times, but if your opinions on that choice concur, then by all means tempt fate and go there!"

"I was really astonished about Jim's knowledge and insights into obscure German regions; he also said it was roughly about the same size as Greensborough, yet with a bit more flair."

"Then I'm sure you'll feel at home!"

"But I don't want to feel at home any more, that's why I'm emigrating! I don't want to deprive myself of my indubitable need of experiencing something meaningful," René blurted out in desperation.

"What other options do you have then?"

"Nothing is static in life; we are constantly being inundated with a myriad of possibilities that would inevitably and directly influence our lives," declared René as if he had just discovered one of life's big revelations.

"Don't be so dramatic! You're raving on like a lunatic!"

"Jim invariably changed my fate!"

"You've been eating too much organic tofu and miso soup together again, haven't you René?" she continued teasing him.

"Listen. Had I not bumped into Jim that fateful day, I would have already posted my application containing my original three choices, which would have consequently been on its way to the Ministry of Education in Bonn. A school would have been allocated to me and that would have been a part of my life. Yet now, they are going to receive a different application, due to my three new options whereupon an entirely different outcome will result. It'll probably now land on some other official's desk from the Ministry of Education and then..."

"...he'll probably change your destiny too!" Emily suddenly interrupted him, chuckling while she did so.

"I'll now be assigned to a high school in a completely different town! My life has changed forever!"

“God, it's like listening to Liszt's piano sonata in B minor with you! Do try to be a bit more positive rather than look for fictitious obstacles.”

“Looking for fictitious obstacles, hey I like that expression, wherever did you come up with that one?” inquired René.

“Oh, I'm not quite sure but I believe it's from Kafka of all people!”

“Well there's something positive that emanated from him!”

“Still, I'll never understand why everyone is so obsessed with Kafka these days,” bemused Emily.

“Oh, I don't know, even I have been toying with the idea of writing a thesis on his infamous book *Journey to Mount Kosciuszko!*”

“Never heard of it! Anyway, perhaps you should just go where life takes you and stop worrying about something so far away as the future, which is so amorphous anyway.”

“Just like Kafka himself!”

After they had reached Elwood beach, René parked his car off a side boulevard called *Broadway* so as not to have to buy a parking ticket, which had become commonplace in practically the whole of St Kilda due to its increasingly alarming yuppification.



©Libor Mikeska

As it was a rather windy day, Emily stylishly put on her dark green beret that she had once bought at an op shop in trendy Brunswick Street and they cheerfully set off on their Sunday stroll. The breeze scattered their contemplations about the future as did a flock of seagulls that began to hover majestically above them, each trying to emulate the other. Emily and René were left to absorb the calming effects of the undulating waves. As if in some hypnotic trance, they compliantly followed a path along the esplanade beginning at the hexagonal ice cream stand at Elwood beach, the sides of which were covered with fading *Peter's* ice cream advertisements, one of which depicted a mother and her two children indulging in their ice creams.

“I wonder where Daddy is?” asked Emily disdainfully, thereby implying her disapproval of the depiction of the classical role of the mother in society.



“Well, it is Sunday Emily, so he's probably mowing the lawn of course!”

Suddenly appearing out of nowhere, two hyperactively exuberant dogs (of a mixed undefinable terrier type with their tongues hanging out) seemed to enhance the ostensibly happy family licking away at their ice creams. (It should be noted however that the recurrent cynical mocking of the fate of the likes of such families neither stopped people like Emily and René from succumbing to a similar fate nor from buying the very ice cream the objects of their mockery were devouring). Sunk in self-induced reveries, their tongues now preoccupied with delicious yoghurt ice creams rather than with words, Emily and René made their way towards St Kilda and finally reached the mythical pier almost an hour later. Countless times they must have walked along this pier pondering its magical allure. Life was all about being lured away from reality, tempted away from what one should do into something one should not, and you couldn't do a single thing about it!

“Have you noticed that we always take the same path, ending at the pier café,” remarked Emily, suddenly breaking their silence whilst giving René the same sidelong glance, as she had done so many times before. Never-ending eyelashes!

“The pier must have some aura around it that lures innocent passers-by to the café at its end. In any case no Sunday stroll would be complete without a cappuccino and scrumptious cake there, would it now Emily dear!”

“Wasn't it built at the turn of the century sometime?” asked Emily in genuine curiosity, as they approached this Victorian architectural jewel.

“1904 it says here on this sign. Wow! All these years it has withstood the rigours of Melbourne's weather!”

“Then it can withstand anything!” Emily stated as they entered the café and ordered cappuccinos and two pieces of moist mudcake.

\* \* \*

Years later René's destiny was about to change again. By nonconformingly overstaying the period of one year stipulated in his visa, he forfeited his right for health insurance, but stayed on regardless, threatening the local foreign authorities that he would marry his then girlfriend if need be. Only catch was that she herself was not a German citizen and apart from that, was quite hesitant about remaining in a relationship with René, let alone marrying him! Although their love story was marred with disillusionment, they nevertheless remained a couple until René eventually left the country. However before he did so, René was so intractable in his wish to outsmart the authorities, he discovered paragraph 28, section 3 on visa regulations for foreigners, thanks to which he cleverly decided to enrol for his doctor's degree in Slavonic studies with the avid intention of writing about the fates of German avant-garde writers stranded in Prague, which he thought would be a good enough reason to enable him to prolong his visa. They in turn retaliated by finding a nasty loophole in another subsection of this law, preventing the extension of such a visa on the grounds that a vocational change had taken place concerning the original purpose of his stay.

Although it was indeed possible to issue a new visa in such a case as well, a period of one year had to elapse before it could be legally issued. I'll get even with you nasty public servants, plotted René vengefully to himself, but in the end René decided to jettison his recalcitrant attempts at fighting uncompromising bureaucrats armed with preposterous rules and punctilious regulations, which was probably due to the fact that his eagerness to move to Prague for a year was stronger than his wish to stay in Saarbrücken. So just like the authors he had planned to do research on, he also found himself stranded in Prague, as if following some irrepressible instinct, and seeing that it was unavoidable to burn bridges once again, he successfully applied for a teaching post at one of Europe's oldest universities and decided to stay there. So he cheerfully returned to a country his parents had spent their entire lives desperately trying to escape.

\* \* \*

The early morning sun shone unremittingly through René's kitchen window at Chodská Street in Prague's charming Vinohrady quarter. He spitefully drew the curtains and settled back to breakfast, squeezing the last awkward grams of Vegemite out of the tube, the last of three that Emily had sent him some time after Christmas. It was there for him alone to enjoy as most Europeans found this spread made from yeast extract quite repugnant. It was indeed an acquired taste that no one having grown up on it could ever go without again. Whether for that reason or out of pure nostalgia, René was addicted to the stuff and always made sure he had it in his pantry.

**From:** René [rene.koala@praguni.cz]      **Sent:** Monday, 7.03.05, 11:45  
**To:** Vera Jahodová      **Re.:** Grr!

A whole weekend has passed without a word from you, dear Vera, grrrr! From what I can see from my window, the clouds have darkened and it looks as if unearthly demonic spirits have appeared to cast spells upon our confused souls, for I have been coughing and sneezing all weekend! I have actually been bedridden despite having drunk umpteen litres of tea and slivovice! I am feeling slightly better today, as the energy slowly fills my body again and the deleterious demons are being expunged, expelled, extirpated and exorcised! (Now there's some evil alliteration for you!) Hope your week was less harrowing! Awaiting your words,  
René

No words came and there were still some demons left hovering about, probably treating themselves to the hypnotizing melody of the first movement of Janáček's *Violin sonata* that René was listening to.

René tried to work, but in such a desultory way, that he couldn't finish anything. His life wouldn't be the same again, he thought to himself, after having met such an

enigmatic creature like Vera. He was obstinately smitten with her, yet at the same time dreaded the possibility of unrequited love. The ensuing days only brought frustration and delirium provoked not only by an increased consumption of ginger tea, lemons, slivovice and honey, but also of an exaggerated intake of echinacea drops together with a cocktail of several homeopathic substances, which only exacerbated his flu. And so, overcome by giddiness, he laid down on his sofa and began to drift away...

\* \* \*

The sonata still echoed in René's mind, distracting him from both Vera's silence and his lingering cold.

Images of a copper brown quokka hopping in time to that very hypnotizing sonata may have seemed just as inconceivable as the sight of four black-clad musicians feverishly playing it. Yet rarely does one question the plausibility of one's dreams, especially in the very midst of them!

This mysterious quokka, which is one of the lesser-known smaller marsupials, categorised as belonging to the kangaroo family, never explicitly divulged the future to a sleeping René, preferring only to reveal minute segments that only his subconsciousness could fleetingly register, perhaps so as to put him on the right track. René's limited intuition would only recognise this as a déjà vu experience later on once the future became reality, thus in due time confirming the quokka's omniscient wisdom. Perhaps this little creature that sporadically appeared in his dreams was his anthropomorphic guardian angel that somehow saw it as his inevitable task to guide René by either advising or warning him or giving him cryptic previews of his life's journey. He suddenly saw events flash by as if fast forwarding a video. What he saw both intrigued and elated him, yet as soon as one scene appeared, another would immediately take its place, making him feel helpless in his attempt to capture the scenes in order to make some sense of them, yet they only lasted for a fraction of a second! Images of Vera, her new hairstyle, rapturous kisses, Vera flooding him with incomprehensible words, Vera peeling off stockings, a plethora of unknown faces, more incomprehensible circumstances, raindrops, seagulls, string quartets, snow storm, another man, another woman, all intermingled with hundreds of other images showered in mystery that escaped René's consciousness just as quickly as they had appeared. Blank!

Even the quokka suddenly disappeared, leaving the string quartet to continue to infiltrate René's dream.

Then the music stopped abruptly, as the 2<sup>nd</sup> violinist had apparently played a wrong note.

"No! Not C flat, but C sharp! It's an enharmonic note! Oh! I'm so sorry, I'm always mixing up this part," confessed the culprit.

"Well I'm glad it wasn't me this time around," exclaimed the viola player slightly relieved. Then added, "I've been practising hard you know!"

"It seemed to be fine during our last rehearsal," declared the cellist.

"Still it's your fault all the same," snapped the 2<sup>nd</sup> violinist at the cellist.

"Why should it be my fault if you haven't learned your part properly?" he questioned.

"Well, it was you who transcribed the violin sonata for a string quartet with all these fiendishly difficult and unnecessary purple passages, wasn't it! How can you expect one not to make mistakes!" he reproached the cellist, hoping this would excuse his mistake.

"I am fully aware that we've been grappling with this adaptation for quite some time now, but isn't that reason enough to persist until we have fully demystified the overt complexity of it!" reasoned the cellist.

"My mind boggles at the thought of what was going on in Janáček's mind when he wrote this nefarious part!" retorted the 2<sup>nd</sup> violinist. "I always said that Janáček was beyond us! We always end up mixing up sharp, flat or augmented notes."

"I can understand what you mean, all the subtle and unexpected changes and these extended intervals really make your fingers ache!" agreed the 2<sup>nd</sup> violinist.

"I remember once, in a state of ebullience and thinking there was a repeat sign during my jovial solo passage, which in fact there wasn't, I continued to play rumbustiously while you all began playing the next passage, which duly brought the Allegretto to an abrupt end!"

"Yeah, you must have been so bedazzled by the beauty of the music that you just forgot yourself!"

"Oh come, we simply must make an effort," disagreed Maruška, the 1<sup>st</sup> violinist vehemently.

"Yes, she's right, let's try it one more time," conceded the cellist before adding, "We have to play this tumultuous passage with exaltation and more rapturously... Janáček's *Violin sonata* is the most delightful he ever wrote."

"Well, it was before you adapted it for a string quartet!" complained the viola player in his usual acerbic manner.

"I still think we should have chosen something by someone more conventional or traditional, less contemporary, like Dvořák or Smetana. In any case we've never played Janáček this way before!" added the 2<sup>nd</sup> violinist.

"Well, there's always a first time for everything!" stated the viola player.

"It's like riding a bike or having sex," claimed Maruška.

To which the cellist deemed fitting to add: "A propos my ex-girlfriend once told me she actually had an orgasm while listening to Elgar's Cello Concerto!"

"What's her telephone number?" inquired the viola player, suddenly interested.

Maruška interrupted them. "Look, gentlemen, we'll just have to concentrate a bit harder! It's too late to start practising a new string quartet from scratch. The concert's in a week's time!"

"We could try playing something by Elgar," suggested the viola player again.

Maruška raised her eyebrows and frowned, but didn't say anything. She folded her arms in cold silence while the others petulantly continued to discuss the sense of continuing their endeavours of the cellist's chosen reworked piece.

During the ensuing squabble, René gave the quokka an incomprehensible and somewhat reproachful look, wondering why his furry little friend always had to

obfuscate the meaning of his dreams. Awaking muzzily from his nap, he decided it was time to drop Emily a line.

*Prague, Spring, 2005*

*Dear Emily,*

*after an enduring spell of ambivalence about every possible aspect of my life, things seem to have settled down a little and I even have the time and energy to write to you again. It must also be the spring that's awakening me from my lethargy and general dissatisfaction. Seriously, I could spend hours on end just watching the scudding clouds from the window of my office, which all proved to be an egregious waste of time of course. Yet I had neither the patience nor will to cope with the fact that I was condemned to teaching nothing but grammar at university. Luckily there was a change in curriculum last semester as the old departmental coordinator, a bit of a bureaucratic dinosaur really, who had never welcomed any significant changes since 1976, was unexpectedly replaced by a more open-minded professor, and I was asked to take on more interesting subjects. However it's not just academically that things have been coming up roses lately, I now find myself brimming with happiness because of a new woman in my life. It's astounding what a difference one person can make – now even the dreary prospect of having to correct a pile of exam papers, all whilst subjecting myself to the further massacre of the English language doesn't dishearten me!*

*Hope things are fine with you.*

*Take care until we see each other (which won't be too long, as I've managed to save up enough crowns for a another trip to familiar shores)*

*René*

Meaning to write to Jim as well didn't quite manifest into a real letter, but some reminiscing about bygone days...

Sipping his cappuccino, René gazed contentedly at the upside down lamps hanging from the high ceiling. Ah, familiarity! Green, brown and gory orangey gods of light: remnants of the late sixties providing the café's original interior with necessary illumination as well as embellishing it in a retro sort of way.

While René was admiring all the old jazz record covers decorating the huge walls of the Black Cat Café, he took another reverent sip of his coffee as if he were partaking in a holy ritual. His attention then turned to the old clocks on the main wall next to the 3-metre wrought iron Brunswick sign, wondering for the first time in all these years that he'd been coming here, where on earth the owner of the café must have found it. Before René could wonder any further about the sign's origins and the dubious ways of procuring such a heavy object, he noticed Jim riding past the café's front window. He hopped off his bike and attached it to the bike racks before entering the café.

"Oh, you're early!" exclaimed a surprised Jim, as he was the one who usually had to wait for René.



"Yeah, I thought I'd do a bit of work before you arrived, but my mind had been wandering too much to concentrate at all. How did your job interview in Perth go?"

"Good, they were actually quite impressed! Probably more so by the fact that anyone would travel so far for an interview rather than by my qualifications and teaching experience. I don't think they appreciated my attire though!"

"So, you'll be leaving Melbourne?"

"No, as although the interview went rather well, at first I wasn't sure that they'd actually consider me and didn't know which fate would be worse: getting the job and having to go to Perth or remaining unemployed here! Yet I found out a few days later that they had decided to give the job to my competitor, who had only recently embarked upon the long road to postgraduate studies," Jim pointed out, emphasizing the last part of the sentence.

"Why's that?"

"Well, even though I seemed to be more aptly qualified than her, what with my PhD and all the other feathers in my cap, they thought she would prove to be more suitable in their plight to propagate the dissemination of the received accumulation of knowledge of their institution. I think they felt I would have been too much of a troublemaker for them, had they given me the job."

Incidentally, it wasn't long though before Jim landed a permanent university post that he had longed for and could thus propagate in his own way the dissemination of the received accumulation of his own knowledge.

Back in Prague once again, René had no choice, but to propagate the arduous realities of English grammar, tormenting his students with seemingly arbitrary laws governing the tenses, the gerund, spelling and prepositions which differed so vastly from Czech ones or the lack of them.

\* \* \*

Melbourne, May 2005

Dear René,

*thanks for your last letter! I've had quite a lot to ruminate over myself, being forced to just sit through certain life changing periods of my life, only to end up assertively challenging them. So, sorry I haven't written you a single word in ages, yet which single word could possibly describe everything I've been through over the last couple of years? Stagnancy? Temptation? Upheaval? Constraint? Hiatus? Serendipity? Synthesis? You see I need at least seven words to summarize what I have been going through lately. Yet I'm sure you would have felt quite flabbergasted if I'd sent you a letter with these very words complete with exclamation marks, simply followed by Yours, Emily! I'll tell you all about my personal and professional roller coaster ride when I see you again in August!*

*Am also looking forward to hearing more about the new love in your life!*

*Till then,  
Curiously yours,  
Emily*

*P.S. They've started to rebuild our beloved Pier café that some pathetic moron had burned down two years ago.*

\* \* \*



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The tallest of the grey kangaroos was grazing unsuspectingly in the paddock close to the barbed wire fence, as Emily and René gazed surreptitiously in its direction hoping to get as close to it as possible without startling it. It was the second day of his holidays down under. There was a flurry of excitement when they were about fifteen metres away from it on one of the largest paddocks among many finally designated as an official area for wildlife after determined residents had successfully thwarted attempts by shrewd local council members to sell off the land for further housing after plans for a golf course had failed. In addition they had also been keen on building a cemetery of all things not far from one of the remotest streets in the north-eastern suburb of Greensborough.

As if sensing that the several hectares of land were being benevolently bestowed upon them, dozens of country kangaroos pragmatically appeared out of nowhere. Their numbers gradually increased to several hundreds within a few years. So, the furry symbols of Australia now occupied land that had been sporadically and indifferently shared by horses, cows and rabbits. Astonishingly there weren't many tourists, just the people from the neighbourhood walking their dogs, always acknowledging their presence, except in the summer months when they were otherwise too busy looking out for snakes to notice them.

\* \* \*

Quite unfair of her, Vera thought to herself after hanging up, making René needlessly worry about her, probably causing him to sleep badly that night. She sent him an apologetic email the next day and wished him a wonderful last week down under, wisely omitting her need to describe the emotional tornado that was still running amok in her mind. She decided she had no choice but to endure it all until René returned to her arms. Until then there was no one around to allay the doubts that continued to excruciatingly plague her, to reassure her that there was nothing to worry about and that no danger was lurking (i.e. no other women out there to coax René into staying in Australia and consequently plunge Vera into a state of forlornness). Logically she knew everything would return back to normal in a week's time, and despite all the *what ifs* stirring uneasily in her mind, she managed to distract herself. There was her thesis for one which had become somewhat of a full-time occupation. She was intent on exhausting all her resources, so that between work, meals and sleep, no time would be left to think. Reflection had to be avoided at all costs if she wanted to keep her sanity.

\* \* \*

Still in a state of drowsiness, so many thoughts whirled around in René's mind, provoking a jungle of blurred contradictory visions of Vera's hypersensitivity suddenly merging with his own speculations about the feasibility of returning to live in Australia. Waving his hands and arms above his head frantically – as if trying to shoo away an irritating blowfly – didn't do much to sufficiently scatter his thoughts, so he finally decided to go jogging in the fields behind the house.

Once dressed and outside, he yawned and stretched, breathing in the eucalyptus air as he opened the back door of the house. His father Mirek was watering some plants and greeted him cheerfully, yet not without a touch of irony:

“Oh, up so early this morning, are we?” he teased.

“It's the fresh air that we don't get any more in Europe! It has a valerian effect on me.” He opened the back gate, continuing to take long deep breaths, knowing too well that his lungs would miss this privilege soon. Time becomes precious when it's limited and this fact made him appreciate the little things he had taken for granted in his younger years.

As he yawned and stretched, the galahs, magpies and a solitary kookaburra looked on in bewilderment as they perched in the trees around him, taking a brief pause to ponder the stranger and his quizzical movements before reverting back to their daily instincts. An hour later, he set off to meet Emily, as they had agreed to spend the day together. After much deliberating on various tempting possibilities, they unanimously decided to spend the day at the seaside, so they cheerfully drove down scenic Beach Road to whichever beach attracted them first.

“How about Dendy Street Beach?” asked Emily beseechingly as she didn't feel like driving any further.



"I feel like something more audacious, let's go to Portsea or Sorrento," proposed René, eagerly raising his eyebrows.

"Get real! That's miles away, René! You won't get me past the Mornington Peninsula today, and besides it's already 2 pm!" So in a way of compromise, she asked, "hey how about Half Moon Bay, that's a delightful haven, there's a pier, an old shipwreck and huge rock formations, very soft sand and all! What more could you want."

Having never been to this beach before, René agreed and they soon arrived at their destination, welcomed by an almost empty parking area (well it was a weekday and winter after all), a subtle breeze, boisterous seagulls and a hyperactive Dalmatian whose owner wasn't far off buying ice cream for his imploring daughter.

"Now don't eat it too quickly or you'll start coughing and lose your voice again Cassandra! We wouldn't want that now, would we!" said the father to her, while she began to lick away voraciously at her creamy reward for having accompanied Dad and a dog called Tiffany on their daily walk.

"Now who in their right mind would call their daughter *Cassandra*?" wondered Emily.

"Well while we're at it, *Tiffany* isn't much better! Poor dog!" added René.

"With a name like *Cassandra*, she's bound to bring doom to all the men that will cross her path sometime in the future," continued Emily.

"Do you think names have such a destructive influence on one's life? Anyway a lot of people gave their children such names in the late eighties. Names like *Felicity*, *Justine* or *Madeleine*..."

"Couldn't they simply have given her a more suitable name like *Jenny*, *Fiona* or *Belinda*?" Emily complained.

"No, that was more common for our generation; she looks more like the *Rebecca* type, if you ask me! Just look at that hair and those freckles!" elaborated René.

Both Emily and René couldn't help but laugh as ice cream ran down her fingers, forearms and across her chin. The dog barked and ran a facetiously clumsy course through the sand after losing its balance before resuming its intrinsic elegance on the hardened wet areas near the water's edge.

It was about up to here where Emily and René's perceptions of reality concurred. Then they suddenly went off at vastly different tangents. Whereas René was amused to simply watch the juxtaposition of the black and white dog and the colourful scenery, as the family disappeared into the distance, Emily's soaring imagination brewed up a scenario of the tonnes of ice cream that little *Cassandra* would insatiably devour before she started dating men, which would subsequently replace her need for ice cream!

René took some photos of several seagulls that were either hovering in the wind or carrying out incomprehensible acrobatic manoeuvres in the sky above them. They found an agreeable spot on the sand near one of the huge rocks, so huge in fact that it reminded them of the boulders typically found in a *Flintstones* cartoon. They spread out a picnic blanket that Emily had brought along – she was always prepared for picnics! René told Emily briefly about his concerns about Vera and their recent telephone call.

“She's got you worried then, has she? I'm sure you two lovebirds will work it out in the end,” she reassured René, before taking a book from her handbag and opening it at a dog-eared page. Delving into her own world, she resolutely indicated to René that ponderings on the problems of the heart would have to be postponed till further notice...

\* \* \*

Emily and René made their way through the impressive four metre-high main entrance gates of the Botanic Gardens, whose Victorian lattice work always left Emily in awe.

“I always feel like I'm being swallowed up every time I walk through these gates,” admitted Emily.

“Now there's some Freudian food for thought for you,” teased René.

Yet the thought of being swallowed up by the Botanic Gardens wasn't as exclusively Emilian as René thought.

There was indeed a motley selection of some evil looking cacti in the cactus garden, which despite their demure exterior, could be rather treacherous. Perhaps there were some other carnivorous creatures secretly waiting to seize an unsuspecting victim, such as giant conniving Venus fly traps lurking in the inextricable maze of the sandy path they serendipitously followed.

“Feel like a cappuccino near the lake?” René suggested after an uncomfortably long period of silence, yet Emily was too captivated by this daunting display of *cactusses*, as she liked to call this desert plant, admiring their fleshy structure and carefully feeling their sharp prickles.

“Ouch!”

The lake near the tea rooms was a sorry state, half-emptied with majestic black swans plodding along the scattered little islands of sludge – a far cry from the extravagant water liliated oasis as he remembered it from his last holiday. Yet the seagulls were having a ball, fighting over sandwich crusts, biscuits and cake crumbs that were being thrown at them by countless children, whose loud cries were increasing in severity. Whilst mothers looked on cautiously from their picnic blankets, calling out their little bundle of joy's name, fathers either snoozed away or enjoyed the chance to become temporarily engrossed in an alluring work of fiction so unlike their own realities.

“Simon, stop throwing lamingtons at Timothy or I'll smack you! Simon, will you listen to me for once! What are you two fighting about anyway?” grumbled one mother.

“He started it!” claimed Simon.

“That's not true, you rotten liar! It wasn't my fault, he called me a smelly monkey!” said the boy defensively and threw another piece of cake at him.

“I don't care what he called you, and you're not to throw food about like that! Do you hear me?”

While the two boys continued to be scolded by their mother, their father, after having devoured another lamington, sought further refuge with Hemingway, burying his head in the novel's confines to escape the pandemonium all too near to him.

Meanwhile as Emily and René ambled towards the tearooms, they were overtaken by a group of uniformed teenage schoolgirls noisily prattling away as their teacher excitedly gave them a lecture on the robust nature of rhododendrons. They suddenly stopped in front of clusters of colourful flowers.

“Now girls, note the bright pink and purple flowers of this evergreen ericaceous shrub. Not to be confused with *erinaceous*, mind you, which is a term related to hedgehogs. Jeanette, are you paying attention? And what's more girls, another remarkable feature is the fact that as opposed to deciduous shrubs, their leaves which incidentally can be either oval or oblong shaped, can withstand the withering effects of winter...”

\* \* \*

*Inimitably Prague, 28<sup>th</sup> October, 2006*

*Dear Emily,*

*the semester is plodding along and the weather has turned decidedly malicious and not showing any signs of abating until well into next year! I am therefore impatiently awaiting my forthcoming trip down under. Vera's also coming along this time, so, you'll finally get to meet my chosen one.*

*Hope things are fine with you! Can't believe we haven't exchanged any news since my last trip, which I can only put down to my shameful lackadaisical mood and complacency. The searingly painful reality that I've already allowed too many projects to fall by the wayside will have to be amended. Sometimes I feel like I've just been treading water all along, waiting for things to come along, afraid to initiate or make the most of opportunities as they arise. All this has to change.*

*Looking forward to catching up.*

*Penitently yours*

*René*

*(sorry for the undue whining, as I'm actually quite happy, I think!)*

\* \* \*

A crow that was perched on one of the four wires of the utility pole nearest Emily's bedroom window rolled its head from side to side as if suffering from severe neck pain. It raised its beak high up into the air before gazing blankly into the distance. Emily first thought about doing some cleaning, but she just sat at the open window musing for hours. The air was warm and fragrant. Time to procrastinate. The day before, she had spotted a possum. Her eyes followed its movements as it ran along a neighbour's telephone cable before it reached their roof. Emily was bored.

Just after Christmas Day, overnight gale-force winds had already upturned quite a few palm trees near Luna Park and even some from front gardens in more residential parts of St Kilda. The gods and the elements were obviously not very amused. Yet they

weren't the only ones. Vera was in one of her faraway moods again and René was lost in thought as a result of being lost for words! Emily didn't appear to be herself either, choosing her words carefully, as if she were holding something back that she had trouble expressing in Vera's presence. The conversations between the three of them seemed somewhat too impersonal and even strained at times.

Even the Esplanade had something unnaturally foreboding about it as they made their way from the Pier café, where they had just *enjoyed* coffee and cakes.



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"I honestly think that the original had been less green in colour as far as I can remember it," observed René as he took one long look back at the legendary structure, as if it were for the last time.

"Stop complaining, will you! At least we're getting a glimpse of what it must have looked like a hundred years ago. Yet, if you're really intent on seeing it as you last remember it, then wait another twenty years or so, and the weather will see to it!"

While Emily and René lagged behind, reminiscing over the Pier café, black clouds had gathered on the horizon and their attention soon turned to the distant, yet sinister smell of burning in the air. Although the recent bush fires were over four hundred kilometres away, the air was becoming increasingly hazy as they made their way towards Elwood.

The three walked on as if in their own worlds, tuned to different wavelengths. The sea breeze dispersed their thoughts somewhat unexpectedly as did the sight of two men unfurling a sail near the shore. An exchange of words in a language neither René, Vera nor Emily could make out suddenly turned to paroxysms of anger. The noise and excitement subsided as one of the men angrily dropped his part of the sail, turned around and just left the other man standing there in disbelief. Their attention then turned to a flock of bickering seagulls, who after having scurried about erratically in the

sand, fighting over sandwich crusts, suddenly began to take flight after the one who had managed to snatch the biggest piece. The absurd theatre of these irrational creatures drew to an end and the three continued their way in silence.

Somehow it all felt wrong, thought Vera, who on the one hand, welcomed the opportunity of discovering another continent, yet three weeks in Australia had sort of thrown her well-ordered world into disarray, and now here they were dawdling away their time on yet another pier, looking out into an empty sea. It wasn't just on this day that Vera was at a loss as to what to say to Emily, but to all the people she had been introduced to over the past two weeks from René's past. It just wasn't her world at all. She also hadn't counted on it being so cold in December where it was supposed to be summer in Australia! She felt a cold coming on after temperatures had plummeted from 30°C to a chilly 16°C in just one day. Even though she had started coughing, she didn't forgo the chance to savour an ice cream when they finally arrived at the hexagonal ice cream stand.

"Do you remember that time we had bought ice creams here before you left for Europe for the first time?" asked Emily nostalgically as Vera ordered her ice cream.

"Apart from the posters and prices, it doesn't seem to have changed much!"

"It'll probably still be here when we're not," presumed Emily rather prophetically. The words: *when we're not* resounded disturbingly in René's head on their way home.

Far from the insouciance that usually typifies a summer holiday in Australia, theirs was pervaded by an unnerving tension that something inauspicious lay ahead.

**All excerpts from *Neurotically Yours* are copyright ©Libor Mikeska**

## NEWS TICKER: ENVIRONMENT

### **The Australian Floods 2010/11**

**compiled by  
Henriette von Holleuffer  
(Source: *The Wall Street Journal*)<sup>1</sup>**

December 30, 2010:

"Unprecedented rainfall across large stretches of eastern Australia is hampering exports from the country's US\$51 billion-a-year coal industry, closing rail lines, blocking access roads, flooding mine sites and putting upward pressure on global energy prices."

"We're seeing well-above-average rainfall throughout the state,' said Brett Harrison, a senior forecaster at the Bureau of Meteorology in Brisbane, which has seen its wettest December since 1859."

January 11, 2011:

"Flooding in Australia worsened Tuesday as the death toll mounted and waters threatened the major city of Brisbane, while the nation's currency fell over concerns about the rising costs to the economy. In a sign of increased worries about the economic impact of the floods, the Australian dollar lost 0,7 % against the U.S. dollar as investors downgraded their outlook for the country's economy. "

January 12, 2011:

"Brisbane's normally bustling downtown was deserted and locals rushed to buy bottled water from shops. Police said Caboolture, a suburb of 170,000 north of the city, had been entirely cut off by rising floodwaters."

January 13, 2011:

"Floods turn Brisbane to ghost town – The Australian government's handling of devastating floods across Queensland, which have displaced thousands of people and killed more than 20, came under greater scrutiny Wednesday as the Brisbane River's muddy waters began swamping the nation's third-largest city."

"Opposition lawmakers have so far shied from apportioning blame, but questions over the government's preparedness for the flooding – one of the worst environmental disasters to hit Australia – threaten to add political strain on Prime Minister Julia Gillard's minority Labour government. (...) At the same time, Tony Abbott, leader of the main opposition Liberal-National coalition of center-right parties, has pushed for more dams to be built, accusing policy makers of 'dam phobia' over the past two decades."

January 25, 2011:

"Residents of a string of towns in the northwest of Australia's Victoria state were evacuating their homes Monday as flood defences failed in the face of waters flowing toward the continent's largest river. At least 60 towns across an area larger than Denmark to the northwest

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<sup>1</sup> Issue as cited below.

of the state capital, Melbourne, have been hit by floods as heavy rain from recent weeks makes its way across broad floodplains to the Murray River."

"A cyclone that hit the Pilbara coast on New Year's Day caused ports to cease operations and forced bulk carriers to weigh anchors."

"Record rains that began in November left huge parts of Australia's northeast Queensland state under water, killing 30 people, damaging or destroying 30,000 homes and businesses, and causing at least A\$3 billion in damage to crops and lost coal exports. The flood disaster is now moving across southeast Victoria state. The State Emergency Service has warned that a vast inland sea about 90 kilometers long northwest of the Victorian capital of Melbourne will continue coursing inland for the next week until it spills into the Murray River."

March 10, 2011:

"The damage done by Cyclone Yasi to the Great Barrier Reef, Australia's top attraction, will take decades to fully mend, according to a growing number of scientists – which could reduce both visitor numbers and the local fishing industry's catches. In the worst-hit areas 'there was hardly a coral to be found left alive,' said Paul Marshall, a reef ecologist who coordinated a survey on the storm's impact for the Great Barrier Marine Park Authority: 'Big piles of coral rubble and broken plates had been ripped off the reef and tossed about or dumped at the bottom of the reef in piles. That was pretty heart-wrenching to see.' Category 5 Cyclone Yasi slammed the northern coast of tropical Queensland state in February. It hit at a particularly bad time for the reef, which scientists say suffered from the outflow of freshwater as well as pollution from devastating floods that washed across the state and threatened the regional capital of Brisbane. The center of the cyclone toppled heavy coral bombooras or *bommies*, large isolated pieces of reef up to four meters wide and centuries old."

"'I don't hold any hope for a return of fish in the near future,' said fisherman Terry Must: 'The amount of coral damage out there is unbelievable, we've never seen anything like this.'"<sup>2</sup>

## NEWS TICKER: ECONOMY

### A special relationship: Australia and China

"In the 2009 to 2010 fiscal year, China was the third-largest source of foreign investment into Australia, while two-way trade totalled around 90 billion Australian dollars. The world's second-largest economy accounts for some 25% of Australia's exports, up from just 4% a decade ago."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> See also: "Wie lange noch? Das Great Barrier Reef kann gerettet werden – wenn wir schnell handeln", *National Geographic Deutschland*, Mai 2011.

<sup>3</sup> *The Wall Street Journal*, April 26, 2011.

## NEWSTICKER: PEOPLE

### Last-known combat veteran of World War I died in Perth

Claude Choules was the last surviving Anglo-Australian to have served in both world wars.<sup>4</sup> Choules, who held dual British and Australian nationality, was born on March 3, 1901, at Wyre Piddle, Pershore, in Worcestershire. He dropped out of school at 14 to join the British navy in 1915. Claude witnessed two historic events at the end of the Great War; the surrender of the Imperial German Navy at the Firth of Forth off Scotland's east coast, in November 1918. He also was present at Scapa Flow in the Orkney Islands in June 1919 when German Admiral Ludwig von Reuter ordered his interned fleet to be scuttled. In early 1926, Claude was part of a group of Royal Navy instructors seconded to the Royal Australian Navy. He decided to stay in Australia and to transfer to the Australian Navy. On his voyage to Australia he met his wife.

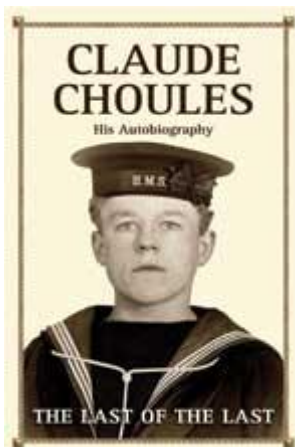
During World War II, he served as the RAN's senior demolition expert in Western Australia. Early in the war, he disposed of the first German mine to wash up on Australia's shores, near Esperance in Western Australia. He remained in the RAN after the war until 1956. After his retirement he lived south of Perth. Despite his military record, Choules became a pacifist. He was known to have disagreed with the celebration of Australia's most important war memorial holiday, Anzac Day, and he refused to march in annual commemoration parades.

He was also the oldest man living in Australia when he died on May 5, 2011.

**Claude Choules** presented a readable account of his life and times:

*The Last of the Last: His Autobiography*, Victoria Park, WA: Hesperian Press 2009. 160 pp. AU\$ 25

ISBN 978-0-85905-480-5



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<sup>4</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald Online*, May 7, 2011: "Last post for final veteran of WWI".



## THE OTHER SIDE: ANOTHER PORTRAIT

### 'In Solitary Witness': The life and death of war resister Franz Jägerstätter (1907-1943)

Adi Wimmer

As a result of Nazi terror, Australia became the country of exile for several thousand German and Austrian Jews between 1938 and 1948. It could have accepted more. Manfred Brusten's article on the fate of 'our' exiles in Australia (KOALAS 3, 71-94) which I recently re-read, made me aware that many did not return because they well knew that their former neighbors would not welcome them back. From the vantage point of view of the year 2011 it is difficult to comprehend the lack of regret and sorrow, the absence of collective shame. And if you really want to know, in Austria it was even worse than in Germany, so I am not pointing my finger anywhere. Austrians were not forced to watch film footage on the liberation of death camps, and after that weird and wonderful Hollywood extravaganza *The Sound of Music* (Musical: 1959, the film: 1965) we were as white as a 'Persil' washed sheet. In a letter to his friend dated Dec 24th, 2011, Ernst Broch wrote: "Und kaum einer ist wahrhaft erschrocken; die Inhumanität war ihnen kein Schreck, erst die Kohlennot wurde ihnen einer" (Hardly anyone was really shocked; the inhumanity was no shock to them, only the scarcity of coal became one (cit. in Wimmer 14). Similarly Alfred Polgar in 1962:

Sie verloren kein Wort über die Schrecken der Nazizeit, und nervös wurden sie erst, als Bomben ihnen aufs Haus fielen (...) Aber den Morgen anklagen, dass er so grau ist, das sollten jene nicht tun, die sich so gut zurecht fanden in der pechschwarzen Nacht, die ihm voranging. (Ibid.)

*(They did not breathe a word about the terror of the Nazi era, and became nervous only when bombs began to rain on their houses ... but to accuse the morning of being so grey ill becomes those who found their way around so very well in the pitch blackness of the night preceding it.*

The community of St. Radegund lies 40 km to the north of Salzburg, in rural Austria. When you drive into this sleepy village of not more than 700 souls, a sign will direct you to the "resting place of Franz Jägerstätter". Entering the graveyard, which in the local tradition wraps itself around the church, your eye is immediately captivated. The grave sits right against the walls of the church. A bronze plaque donated in 1968 by a Christian community of Missoula, Montana (of all places!) tells you that here lies a man who paid the ultimate price for his conviction. The inscription reads: "Thank God for Jägerstätter: he knew that we are all brothers and that the command of Christ is essential for everyone. He has not died in vain." Whatever the season, the grave is always covered in flowers.

### *Who was this man?*

Oh no, he was not your traditional saintly person, earmarked for a life of asceticism from an early age. Jägerstätter was a farmer's son. Before he started to work his father's 50 acre farm he labored in the steelmills of Styria, a day's journey away, and the working class culture that he found there introduced him to drinking and womanising. Returning to St. Radegund after his father's early death, he was considered a good marriage proposition by the womenfolk, and acquired a bit of a reputation for his conquests. He was the first young man in the village to own a motorbike! There was a child born out of wedlock that he tried to adopt later, when he got married.



His choice was Franziska, a kitchen girl from a neighboring community. They married in 1933. His wife had strong religious feelings and he was receptive to them. For their honeymoon they embarked on a train journey to Rome, the holy city. Surviving letters from that journey, as well as from the early years of his marriage, show that Jägerstätter was deeply in love with his wife. "What fine thing matrimony is" he wrote to a friend, "I never thought such happiness was possible." And there was a spiritual dimension to that union too. Jägerstätter started doing voluntary work for the local church and became its sexton. He derived a great deal of satisfaction from the various religious duties this work entailed. To add to his bliss, three healthy girls were born in rapid succession.

Then came 1938 and the annexation of Austria by Nazi Germany. Crowds of jubilant Austrians lined Hitler's triumphant journey to Vienna. But the ones who did not cheer, who cowered in their rooms behind drawn curtains were not caught by the cameras.

My own father, who was almost the same age as Jägerstätter, told me that when the news of German troops crossing into our country came over the wireless, he said to my mother. "You know what that means don't you. It means that the best years of our lives are behind us." Something like that was felt by the Jägerstätters, too. They hated the Nazis not so much because they were bullies and autocrats, but because Hitler, who had no religious affiliation and tolerated no criticism from the clergy, was elevating himself to a god-like figure. In 1940, Jägerstätter was called up for basic infantry training. After completing the course he was allowed to go home again. At that stage, farmers were still exempt from going to the front. But that would change when Hitler insanely attacked the Soviet Union in 1941. By the year's end, the Wehrmacht in the Soviet Union was stretched out along a 3000 km long front and suffering heavy losses. So Jägerstätter was called to an induction centre in Linz and given his uniform, but then he refused to swear the oath of loyalty. Asked why, he said he considered Austria's annexation in 1938 illegal, he was not a German and thus under no obligation to accept German commands. He said Hitler's war was criminal and murderous, and the killing of other human beings was morally repugnant. After that he went to jail.

And now a time of intense self-scrutiny and suffering came. The Wehrmacht did not want to make a martyr of a Roman Catholic and sent for the priest of St. Rade Gund to change Jägerstätter's mind. The priest, who knew of his faith and anti-Nazi beliefs, came as bidden, but did not try to dissuade him. Next, the bishop of Linz, Josef Fließner, was called upon, and Jägerstätter was taken to his residence. The bishop offered no spiritual assistance at all and did his best to make him join the Wehrmacht, saying he had a greater moral duty to his wife and three children than to a "conscience" which, incidentally, did not have his seal of approval. There was a sneak side to the bishop too. "What makes you think you are so special" he argued, "aren't you guilty of sinful pride to stick to your belief when millions other men simply perform their military duty?" Jägerstätter was unfazed. "Do you mean to tell me, your eminence, that there is no higher duty than that to Adolf Hitler?" Wordlessly, the bishop dismissed him.



So our prisoner of conscience was taken to Berlin, tried, and sentenced to death by beheading. The trial took only a few minutes. Jägerstätter's state-appointed attorney did not even plead the case; all he tried was to avert the death penalty. (After the war the attorney came under investigation for his miserable role, and defended himself saying any attempt to plead "not guilty" would have resulted in him being struck off, and most likely he would have been sent to the Russian front.) But still the authorities were not happy with this outcome. Franziska Jägerstätter was sent for. She made the long train trip to Berlin and to that chamber of horrors, the high security prison of Plötzensee. Before she left, it was made clear to her by the *Ortsgruppenleiter* of St. Radegund that she had a "patriotic duty" to end this "cowardice" of her husband, for her and the children's sake, but also for the sake of the community. Already it had acquired a bad reputation; word had spread that a simple farmer dared stand up to the mightiest man in the country, the wise and strong Führer!

I am trying to imagine that final meeting of Franz and Franziska, in the visitors' room of the Plötzensee prison. They had 30 minutes and she had travelled 20 hours for them. Did they cry? Very likely. Hands, did they hold hand? Yes, they were allowed to hold hands. Hugs and kisses maybe? No, out of the question: There were two prison guards; husband and wife were separated by a table. Did she try and persuade him to change his mind? Oh she did. *What do you think I should do, Franziska?* Well Franz, I want you to live. *But how can I when my conscience tells me I can't be part of a monstrous evil?* I don't know Franz I just want you to live and to help raise our children. Think of the children! *Oh but I do my dear wife, all the time. But there is a higher principle to serve than the duty to our children. There is God.*

At the end of Arthur Miller's historical play *The Crucible*, in which the simple farmer John Proctor is accused of witchcraft and sentenced to hang, his wife Rebecca is called in to make him sign a life-saving "confession". Wishing to escape death, Proctor says he will sign it in the presence of God -- but he will not allow his tormentors to display the document and thus to shame him. When the judge says this is not good enough, Proctor remains steadfast and goes to the gallows. His wife Elizabeth accepts the decision with a few simple words: *He has his goodness now – God forbid I should take it from him.* These are words that might have been thought by Franziska, too.

There were several Jehova's witnesses who were executed for resisting induction, but they had the benefit of being spiritually supported by their community. Some catholic priests and nuns were executed for anti-Nazi activities, one of them was an Austrian: Pater Reinisch. Jägerstätter was the *only* catholic war resister in Germany and Austria to be executed just for refusing to serve in Hitler's war. 9 August 2008 saw the 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death and hundreds of visitors turned up for a candlelight vigil, a service, and several addresses.

Let us return to St. Radegund and the year 1943. Franziska, cruelly robbed of husband and family father, was punished by the community as well. Many wives held her responsible: *she* had filled her husband with all that "religious rubbish". Even the children -- two of them in primary school -- were held accountable, were taunted by a female teacher and made to sit in the last row. The war came to an end, but not the family's isolation. In 1949 Franziska applied for a Nazi victim's pension. Her request was denied, and the reason given was that her husband, though executed by the Nazis, did not qualify as a resister -- resisters were those who took up a weapon to fight the regime. The irony that Jägerstätter had been executed precisely because he would *not* take up a weapon was lost on the bureaucracy. Franziska won the appeal against

the decision, but it took seven years – and only because the bishop of Linz (maybe he felt guilty about his role in the matter?) interceded on her behalf. The bishop (it was still the above mentioned Josef Fließner) gave an order to the journalists of the Catholic Press not to raise the name "Jägerstätter" in any of their articles. He was to be ignored.

For another 20 years Franziska would continue to be a social outcast in St. Radegund, even though her life was without a blemish. The local Veterans' Association ("Kameradschaftsbund") successfully constructed Jägerstätter a "coward" who had shirked his "responsibility" towards the "fatherland". Jägerstätter, a *coward*? The man that had faced the horrors of Plötzensee: a shirker? It was a smear that took a long time dying. In 1971 a TV movie was made about him by the unforgettable (Jewish) artist and director Axel Corti, screened on Austria's National day (26 October) and from then on perceptions began to change. The media began to review the case, they begged Franziska for interviews. Increasingly, Catholics with admiration for the martyr visited the house where he had lived, and his grave. They came from all parts of Europe, even from the USA and Australia. In fact, they were initially more likely to come from overseas than from Austria! St. Radegund was baffled and displeased. The villagers resented this intrusion. There were many local women whose husbands or sons or brothers had been killed in the war, soon to be completely forgotten; they were addled that someone who had *not* fought should be honored and so well remembered. However, a new generation not indoctrinated by the old ideology had meanwhile grown up, a generation that was ready to see Jägerstätter as a hero. A biography was written (Zahn 1967), a play, and numerous poems. Young women took up the cause of the maligned, marginalized Franziska as a feminist heroine for our time. Symposia were organized, now there is an annual two-day conference every year on the anniversary of the execution. The 2010 meeting had 150 participants. The panel of speakers was extraordinary. Retired career soldiers and officers now hold Jägerstätter up as an example of someone who refused to carry out an immoral order! A remarkable transformation for a man who was once branded a coward. German military officers *on active duty* (!) lectured on when today's soldiers can *and must* refuse a military order. Why did no-one instruct Lt. William Calley or Lindy England on these important matters?

And Franziska, now 98 but still surprisingly lucid, is the centre of attention, everybody's darling. In 1997 she was awarded the "Silver Medal of Merit" (Silbernes Verdienstzeichen) of the province of Upper Austria. A book was published containing a selection of letters by Franz addressed to her, including the last letters from Plötzensee. (Putz 1987). On September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2007 a Church Opera called "Jägerstätter" was first performed in the "Ursulinenkirche" Graz. The composer was Alfred Fortin. In the same year, Jägerstätter was beatified or *selig gesprochen*. It was hugely gratifying for her and her three daughters.

After the collapse of the East German regime the complete file on Franz Jägerstätter was discovered in a GDR state archive. It transpired that after the death verdict he had suggested to his jailers that he *would* serve – but only in a non-combatant role, for instance as a stretcher bearer. So he did try to compromise and survive – but to no avail. His proposal was rejected.

It may surprise the reader that according to several sources (Maislinger, Merton) Jägerstätter is the best-known German war-resister in the United States. (Okay okay, he is really an Austrian but never mind). However, when Jägerstätter was still a nobody in his own country, during "Vatican II" in 1963, Archbishop Thomas D. Roberts (he was the Bishop of Bombay) addressed the congregation in these words: "I plead with the Fathers to consider this man and

his sacrifice in a spirit of gratitude. May his example inspire our deliberations" (Maislinger). More recently, British father Bruce Kent has drawn a strong parallel between Sir Thomas More and Jägerstätter: both died because their loyalty to God was greater than to their country (both cit. in Maislinger). In 1968, Thomas Merton devoted a chapter to Franz Jägerstätter in his widely disseminated anti-Vietnam book *Faith and Violence: Christian Teaching and Christian Practice*. In the introduction he wrote:

In the case of Franz Jägerstätter we have a faith that stood up against an unjust but established power and refused to practice violence in the service of power. On the other side, we have Simone Weil who was a French pacifist before World War II and who later joined the French resistance against the Nazis.

Daniel Ellsberg repeatedly said he was inspired by Franz Jägerstätter to risk his job and reputation when he began to compile the material for his *Pentagon Papers*. Jägerstätter was his most important "moral inspiration".

On May 20<sup>th</sup> 1987, on the occasion of Jägerstätter's 80 birthday, a high Mass was celebrated in the cathedral of Linz. The Catholic Church which had for so long shunned Austria's greatest anti-Nazi hero, had finally decided to hold him up as a moral example. Once again there was gentle pressure from the United States. The Mass was co-celebrated by Bishop Aichern and the bishop of Detroit, Thomas Gumbleton. I was there and heard Gumbleton say that the American peace movement "Swords into ploughshares" (which maintains a strong presence also in Germany) had derived the greatest moral inspiration in their struggle to resist the American arms race with The Soviet Union from Franz Jägerstätter! Imagine my joy, and amazement.

I have visited Franz Jägerstätter's grave many times: each new visit still moves me to hot tears. How could he be so sure of his decision? Where did this uneducated farmer find the extraordinary courage to remain steadfast unto death?

**This article is based, inter alia, on a personal interview with Mrs Franziska Jägerstätter in 2001.**

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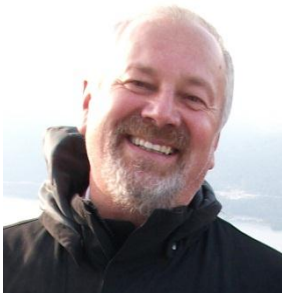
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**Professor of English and American Studies –**  
**University of Klagenfurt/Austria**



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## VIEW FROM THE DESK

### Reading Les Murray

Adi Wimmer

It is a fact that contemporary poetry relies heavily on academic teaching for its propagation; for every reader who enjoys reading poetry for its own sake, there are probably 20 students who take poetry as part of an introductory course on Australian Literature and nothing else. A few years ago I taught such a course at the Australian University of X in the principality of Y, in which four out of the 13 mandatory weeks were given over to discussions of Australian poets.

One of these was Les Murray. As the most prominent and visible of all contemporary Australian poets (rumours of an impending Nobel prize have been floating around for years), his inclusion in such introductory courses is usually not contested in university course development committees. And in my experience, first year students find Murray's poetry rewarding and accessible. They enjoy the richness of its imagery, the easy flow of his style, and with admirably empathy, they readily connect his poems to the pain and marginalization of rural people. But there can be too much of a good thing and so the trouble with reading Murray seems to be that any analysis of his work is regarded as a terribly serious business. Attempting to counter this trend I selected one of his more light-hearted poems for the final exam: "Shower."

A mistake, as it turned out. Quite a number of readers could not believe the poem really was about the joys of taking a shower -- and not about Gallipoli, or war in general, or the Republic Movement, or the Boeothian Greeks. All these wrong-headed approaches surfaced in the papers. However, none was more spectacularly wide of the mark as a paper that 'identified' sex as the real meaning of the poem. But let us first look at what Murray wrote:

#### Shower

##### From the metal poppy

**this good blast of trance  
arriving as shock, private cloudburst blazing down,  
worst in a boarding-house greased tub, or a barrack with competitions,  
best in a stall, this enveloping passion of Australians:  
tropics that sweat for you, torrent that braces with its heat,  
inflames you with its chill, action sauna, inverse bidet,  
sleek vertical coruscating ghost of your inner river,  
reminding all your fluids, streaming off your points, awakening  
the tacky soap to blossom and ripe autumn, releasing the squeezed gardens,  
smoky valet smoothing your impalpable pyjamas off,  
pillar you can step through, force-field absolving love's efforts,  
nicest yard of the jogging track, speeding aeroplane minutely  
steered with two controls, or trimmed with a knurled wheel.**



**Some people like to still this energy and to lie still in it,  
stirring circles with their pleasure in it – but my delight's that toga  
worn on either or both shoulders, fluted drapery, silk whispering to the tiles  
with its spiralling frothy hem continuous round the gurgle-hole;  
this ecstatic partner, dreamy to dance in slow embrace with  
after factory-floor rock, or even to meet as Lot's abstracted  
merciful wife on a rusty ship in dog latitudes,  
sweetest dressing of the day in the dusty bush, this persistent  
time-capsule of unwinding, this nimble straight well-wisher.  
Only in England is its name an unkind word;  
only in Europe is it enjoyed by telephone.**

The first thing that strikes us about this poem is how full of sound (but not of fury) it is. There is a constant hissing and splashing of water, contained in onomatopoeic verbs (blazing, braces, streaming, blossom, smoothing, absolving, speeding, stirring, whispering), adjectives (sleek, nicest, ecstatic, sweet, still, slow, squeezed, smoky, dusty, persistent), and nouns (blast, chill, sauna, silk, dressing, ship). It revels in the pleasure of revelling in water: being caressed by it: having it stream off your "points", whatever body parts you imagine those to be: forgetting the day's heat, and the dusty day's work. In the second stanza the speaker becomes "dreamy" in the embrace of the "hot blast" emanating from the spout, which is likened here to a poppy – and an association to opium induced dreaminess is thus made possible. Or else the person revelling in the "sauna" becomes another "Lot's wife", ironically frozen in the warm water that is imagined as a silky toga. References to the dusty bush or the factory indicate that the speaker is a Murraysque working-class persona who is glad to get the grime off his working-man's body: Using soap on it, a lather blossoms from the contact, releasing the fruity aroma of autumn and washing away the bacterial "gardens" that have grown in the furtive folds of the flesh. The downpour, either hot or cold, speeds up the languid flow of body fluids, creating an "inner river" echo to the sounds of the outer. One line personalizes the shower cone into a "valet" whose task it is to wash off the concreted body odours of a good night's sleep. Another line sees the cylindrical space created by the water as a miraculous "pillar you can walk through", and a "force field" washing off certain body fluids. The latter reference eroticizes the experience of submission to an "enveloping passion." There are two references however that establish the speaker's control over it: the shower is compared to an aeroplane with either two controls (the hot and cold taps) or, in a more modern shower, with a single "knurled wheel" that regulates both the temperature and the flow of the water. In the last line, the shower type common to many European countries is invoked in the line "only in Europe is it enjoyed by telephone", a reference to the detachable shower head with its handle that looks a bit like a telephone receiver, connected to the faucet by means of a flexible, metallic-looking pipe.

Very little of that made an impression on my student - this is what he wrote, and you will find my stream-of-consciousness comments in parentheses:

*The speaker is open to discussing the intimacies of the poem. The poem speaks of sexual intercourse. The poem is lustful and the speaker delves into the passions of sex (mmh -- where do "the passions of sex" come in?)*

*The tone of the poem is like the motions of sex. Partially awkward but there is a constant fluid motion. The last two lines are simple, easy and to the point. The end is conclusive like that of the moment after sex, after the sexual tension is released. (Hang on a sec. You say the motions of sex are awkward? And "fluid" too, I see. Where is this leading us.)*

*The images used in the poem are very sexual: Sweat, heat, chill, sauna. These are felt within the moments of passion. The use of the bidet – yes, something found in a bathroom and would work with the obvious shower theme, but when you look deeper it is a bath which is straddled in order to wash ones genitals: "Fluids, streaming off your points." This could again refer to a shower, but it could also refer to semen from a penis. (Yes it could, but isn't that a bit strained? And while I agree that sweat and heat have something to do with sex, I am not sure where "chill" and "sauna" come in. Besides, sex -- ok, real sex -- needs a partner, whom, in this case, we haven't got.)*

*The tacky soap to blossom and ripe autumn, releasing the squeezed gardens: This line talks of the woman involved in the sexual relations. A blossom can often refer to a female, especially her genital. A woman in her sexual prime is "ripe for the picking." (God, mate, you'll be hauled before the Germaine Greer tribunal if you carry on like that. I am glad you didn't add that all sexually active women are in the autumn of their lives.)*

*Taking pyjamas off provokes the thoughts of nakedness. This is also present from the title – people get naked for showers (and also sex.) (True, but only a real lecher automatically thinks of the latter when stepping into the former.) The jogging refers to the effort and movement that occurs in sex. (Mmh – have you ever tried IT while running?) So too does the aeroplane minutely steered with two controls. The controls may refer to the woman's breasts. The "knurled wheel" would refer to the man's penis. ("Knurled," is it? Speak for yourself, mate.) An aeroplane is commonly referred thought to be controlled by a joystick, and a "joy stick" commonly associated with a penis.*

*The speaker talks about being inside a woman in the second stanza. He talks about his flute being draped – his penis in her vagina. "The gurgle hole" can be the drains in the shower, but it could refer to the woman's vagina. (Oh dear. Wherever a poem mentions a "hole", the reference must be to a sexual orifice, mustn't it.) And which man would not "gurgle" with pleasure upon entering said hole?*

*The speaker talks with such fondness of sex. (Not the speaker, dearie, YOU do.) The "sweetest dressing of the day in the dusty bush": "Only in England is its name an unkind word, only in Europe is it enjoyed by telephone." (Ah, I see: telephone sex!) These lines show the world's varied views on discussing sex.*

*The poem only consists of two stanzas just as it only takes two people, a man and a woman, to have sex. 14 lines in the first but only 11 in the second, and this probably indicates that one has more sex in the first half of one's life than in the second half. (Touche - can't argue with that one, I am afraid.) The first stanza is on passion and the heat of intercourse, where as (sic) the second stanza is more on the pleasure involved and the climax.*

Well, well. Bold, that, and full of ideas on women. A highly individual approach - Written, no doubt, by a 'penetrating' mind whose motto is: *once you've managed to get an idea in your head you must never ever allow additional information to detract you from your course.*

However, there are two conclusions we can draw from this student's interpretation. Modern poetry is often so hermetic and difficult to understand that students feel any reading is as good as any other. The poem does not contain a meaning unless you put one into it - Which, by the way, is not so very far removed from the central tenet of "Rezeptionsästhetik", or Reader Response Theory. The other conclusion is: some students feel that what really matters is originality of interpretation. They will also have found that *anything* they say in class will get the teacher's response: "ah, that is really intriguing." In Reader Response Theory this is translated as: if such a thought comes into your head when reading the poem, then this meaning must be contained in it, however well concealed it may be. I am sure many of us have said such a thing to students in an attempt not to discourage them from "inventive" interpretations. A teaching strategy that, as I think I have demonstrated, has its hazards.

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**Professor of English and American Studies –**  
**University of Klagenfurt/Austria**



Adi Wimmer referierte im April 2011 im österreichischen Rundfunk in einer fünfteiligen Kulturreihe über das Thema: "Die Besiedlung Australiens". Auszüge aus dieser Radiosendung finden sich auf der Website der GAST (Publikationen/ Spezial):  
[http://www.australienstudien.org/frameset\\_pub.html](http://www.australienstudien.org/frameset_pub.html)

## REVIEW: EXHIBITION

### **Aborigines-Kunstaussstellung im Museum Ludwig in Köln:**

#### **"Remembering Forward: Malerei der australischen Aborigines seit 1960"**

**Sibylle Kästner und Corinna Erckenbrecht**

Von November 2010 bis März 2011 bestand in Köln Gelegenheit, sich mit der zeitgenössischen Malerei australischer Aborigines vertraut(er) zu machen (vgl. *e-Newsletter* der GAST, Nr. 4, Dez. 2010). Neben der Ausstellung "Remembering Forward" im Museum Ludwig, in der Arbeiten von neun indigenen KünstlerInnen aus der Desert Region und den Kimberley sowie Rindenmalereien aus Arnhem Land zu sehen waren, wurden Abendvorträge, Filme, ein Workshop und ein Symposium angeboten. Im vorliegenden Bericht wollen wir die Ausstellung, die Begleitpublikationen, das zweitägige Symposium am Museum Ludwig sowie den vor geschalteten Workshop Revue passieren lassen und kritisch reflektieren.

Die Ausstellung "Remembering Forward" im Kölner Museum Ludwig muss vor dem Hintergrund der Diskussionen und Entwicklungen auf dem internationalen Kunstmarkt betrachtet werden. 1994 hatten sich die Veranstalter der Kölner Art Cologne noch geweigert, Aboriginal Art, die sie als 'folk art' (ab)klassifizierten, als zeitgenössische Kunst auszustellen. Das Ausstellungsteam von "Remembering Forward", bestehend aus den VolontärInnen Emily Joyce Evans und Falk Wolf unter der Leitung von Prof. Kasper König, dem Direktor des Museum Ludwig, präsentierte die Malereien der Aborigines nun im klassischen modernen Ausstellungsstil als Kunst an weißen Wänden. Damit folgten sie dem Vorbild australischer Kunstmuseen, in denen indigene australische Kunst mittlerweile auf Augenhöhe mit internationaler Kunst gezeigt wird. Ziel der Ausstellung "Remembering Forward" war es, unser (westliches) Verständnis von moderner und zeitgenössischer Kunst zu erweitern. Es wurden knapp 60 Gemälde sowie eine kleine, aber feine Auswahl an Rindenmalereien gezeigt, letztere aus den Sammlungen Stuart Scougall/Tony Tuckson, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, und der Sammlung Karel Kupka, Museum der Kulturen in Basel. Diese Rindenmalereien stammen mehrheitlich aus den 1950er und 1960er Jahren, wobei das älteste Stück aus dem Jahr 1931 datiert – allein schon durch sein hohes Alter ein bemerkenswertes Exponat. Die 60 großformatigen Gemälde stammen aus den letzten 50 Jahren, in denen der große Aufschwung der Aborigines-Malerei stattfand.

Zu den ausgestellten Künstlern und Künstlerinnen gehörten Paddy Bedford, Emily Kame Kngwarreye, Queenie McKenzie, Dorothy Napangardi, Rover Thomas, Ronnie Tjampitjinpa, Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri, Tim Leura Tjapaltjarri und Turkey Tolson Tjupurrula. Ihre Gemälde wurden nur mit einem Minimum an Zusatz-Informationen präsentiert. Dazu gehörte neben einem recht kurzen einführenden Wandtext ein kleines, 15 Seiten umfassendes Heftchen, das den BesucherInnen beim Kauf der Eintrittskarte ausgehändigt wurde. Letzteres enthält knappe Informationen zum Konzept der *Dreamtime*, zum Hintergrund der modernen Aborigines-Kunst und zu den in der Mehrzahl bereits verstorbenen KünstlerInnen und ihren ausgestellten Werken. Ob das Heftchen ausreichte, um dem künstlerisch interessierten Publikum die mit komplexer kultureller und historischer Bedeutung aufgeladenen Bildwerke verständlich zu

machen, erscheint mehr als fraglich. Deutlich mehr ethnologisches und kunstspezifisches Hintergrundwissen ist im Ausstellungskatalog enthalten. Einige AutorInnen in diesem Katalog, aus einem eher kunsthistorischen Kontext heraus argumentierend, üben allerdings explizit Kritik am ihres Erachtens klassifizierenden Umgang mit Aborigines-Kunst seitens der EthnologInnen: So seien Rindenmalereien nicht nur ethnographische Artefakte, die in ethnologische Museen gehörten, sondern auch Kunst und sollten daher in Kunstmuseen ausgestellt werden. Die Entscheidung des Ausstellungsteams, eine solche Schau ohne eine Kooperation z.B. mit dem Kölner Völkerkundemuseum "Rautenstrauch-Joest-Museum – Kulturen der Welt" durchzuführen, dürfte vor dem Hintergrund des eben erwähnten Diskurses getroffen worden sein. Diese Art der Abgrenzung ist allerdings nur bedingt nachvollziehbar. Das Rautenstrauch-Joest-Museum besitzt zwar keine Sammlung an Aborigines-Malerei wie beispielsweise das Stuttgarter Linden-Museum oder das Grassi-Museum in Leipzig, verfügt stattdessen aber über eine umfassende Sammlung von Ethnographika aus Australien, die man für eine Begleitausstellung zu "Remembering Forward" durchaus hätte nutzen können.

Als Zusatzprogramm wurden vom 17.- 19. Februar 2011 ein Workshop und ein Symposium angeboten. Beide Veranstaltungen, auf denen internationale RednerInnen auftraten, waren erfreulicherweise öffentlich zugänglich bei freiem Eintritt. Wer an diesen Veranstaltungen teilnehmen wollte, musste allerdings über profunde Englisch-Kenntnisse verfügen, denn Übersetzungen waren nicht vorgesehen.

Vorgeschaltet zum Symposium am Museum Ludwig fand am 17. Februar der Workshop "Australian Aboriginal Art – Materialisations and Transformations of Knowledge" des Internationalen Kollegs "Morphomata: Genese, Dynamik und Medialität kultureller Figurationen" an der Universität Köln statt. Dieses, vom BMBF über 12 Jahre geförderte interdisziplinäre Kolleg, beschäftigt sich mit der spannenden Frage, wie sich kulturspezifisches Denken in Objekten umsetzt. Wie drücken sich menschliche Vorstellungen in Texten, Bildern oder Objekten aus? Wie verändern sich diese Artefakte und wie wirken sie auf unsere Vorstellungen zurück? Die Konkretisierungen kulturellen Wissens nennen die Wissenschaftler "Morphome" – eine Kategorie, wie sie in der Kultur und Kunst der Aborigines in Fülle vorkomme, wie die beiden ausgewiesenen Redner *Howard Morphy* (Australian National University, Canberra) und *Fred Myers* (New York University) betonten. Zunächst berichtete *Howard Morphy* in seinem Beitrag "Time, Place and Space in Australian Aboriginal Art" über die Kunst und ihre Bedeutung bei den Yolngu im nördlichen Arnhem Land. Die Gemälde seien "condensations of what happened" sowohl in historischer als auch in mythologischer Hinsicht. Zusätzlich könnten die mythologischen oder historischen Inhalte einerseits gegenständlich (Ablauf einer Geschichte mit ihren Protagonisten) als auch andererseits in abstrakten Feldern (wo und auf wessen Clanland es geschah) künstlerisch dargestellt werden. Dieselbe Geschichte werde nur in unterschiedlicher Weise präsentiert. In seinem Nachmittagsvortrag ("The Production of Discourses by and on Australian Aboriginal Painting") berichtete *Fred Myers* von dem beeindruckenden Kunstschaffen der Pintupi in Zentralaustralien, den Ergebnissen seiner Forschungen dort und einer Ausstellung von Pintupi-Künstlern in New York. Vormittags ging es somit mehr um die Frage "What is going *in* the paintings?", am Nachmittag um "What is going *on around* the paintings". Die anschließende Möglichkeit, Fragen zu stellen und mit diesen beiden internationalen Koryphäen ausführlich und intensiv zu diskutieren, rundete die gelungene Auftaktveranstaltung ab.

Am Abend hielt *Howard Morphy* dann seine Eröffnungsrede ("Moving the body painting in the art gallery: a critical perspective from the recent history of Yolngu art") für das zweitägige Symposium "Exhibiting Aboriginal Art", welches direkt im Anschluss an den Workshop am Museum Ludwig stattfand. Ausgangspunkt für das interdisziplinäre Symposium war die kulturelle Irritation, die immer dann auftritt, wenn zeitgenössische Malerei australischer Aborigines in europäischen Kunstmuseen ausgestellt wird. Am ersten Tag sprach nach den Eröffnungsreden von *Kasper König* (Direktor des Museum Ludwig) und *Claus Volkenandt* (Kunstgeschichtliches Institut Universität Basel) zunächst wieder *Fred Myers* über das Thema "Showing too much, showing too little; the art and agency of Aboriginal acrylic painting in circulation". Hierbei ging es um künstlerische und religiöse Inhalte der Bilder und ihre Zurschaustellung vor einem öffentlichen Publikum, was Fragen in Bezug auf die Geheimhaltung, die Zugangsbeschränkungen und die Konsultationen mit Aborigines aufwarf. Danach referierte *Alexandra Karentzos* (Juniorprofessorin für Kunstgeschichte mit Schwerpunkt Postcolonial und Gender Studies, Universität Trier) über "Exclusions from the art institutions; postcolonial remarks", wobei sie anhand ausgewählter Beispiele die Architektur, Museumskonzepte allgemein und bestimmte Ausstellungsgestaltungen kritisch reflektierte. Diese erste Symposiums-Session stand unter dem Motto "General frameworks: between art and culture, between depiction and expression". Nach dem dritten Vortrag von *Wilfried van Damme* (Institut für Kulturwissenschaften, Universität Leiden) wurde diese Sitzung durch einen Kommentar von Larissa Förster vom Internationalen Kolleg Morphomata abgeschlossen.

Nachmittags hielt *Sally Butler* (Kunstgeschichtlerin an der University of Queensland) einen sowohl visuell als auch inhaltlich beeindruckenden Vortrag über die Kunsttradition an der Westlichen Cape York Halbinsel, hier speziell in Aurukun, und berichtete über ihre Erfahrungen bei der Kuratierung einer Kunstaussstellung in Brisbane. *Friederike Krishnabhakdi-Vasilakis* (University of Wollongong) sprach anschließend über "Sharing the space with Kandinsky: bringing Aboriginal art out of the cabinet, onto white walls". Die Rednerin thematisierte unter diesem spannenden Titel Aborigines-Kunst in der deutschen Kunst- und Ausstellungstradition. Der Beitrag muss aufgrund der geringen und eklektischen Auswahl von Beispielen, darunter die Ausstellung "Entartete Kunst" im Dritten Reich, indes als misslungen oder zumindest als wissenschaftlich bedenklich eingestuft werden. Den ersten Tag schloss dann der Beitrag "Evolution and Politics in Aboriginal Art" des freien Kurators *Jean-Hubert Martin* aus Paris ab.

In die Freude über die an sich großartige Gelegenheit, ausgewiesene internationale Experten und Expertinnen aus dem universitären Bereich einerseits sowie erfahrene Praktiker aus dem Ausstellungssektor andererseits bei dieser Tagung sprechen zu hören, mischte sich die Kritik an der mangelnden Qualität manch anderer Beitragender und die Frage nach der Auswahl und Anordnung der RednerInnen im Laufe dieses Tages.

Am zweiten Symposiumstag standen sechs Vorträge auf dem Programm. Zwei Beiträge widmeten sich ausschließlich der Künstlerin Emily Kame Kngwarreye aus Utopia. Während die indigene Kuratorin *Margo Neale* (National Museum of Australia, Canberra) über eine Einzelausstellung der Künstlerin in Tokio im Jahr 2008 berichtete, die mehr BesucherInnen als eine Andy-Warhol-Ausstellung angezogen hatte, konzentrierten sich die Ausführungen von *Chrischona Schmidt* (Australian National University, Canberra), die Feldstudien in Utopia durchführt, auf die enorme künstlerische Bandbreite der international gefeierten Malerin. *Terry Smith* (University of Pittsburgh) beschäftigte sich in seinen kunsthistorischen und kunsttheoretischen Betrachtungen mit der Frage, worin der Unterschied zwischen moderner

und zeitgenössischer Kunst bestehe und wo in diesen Diskursen Aborigines-Kunst verortet werden könne. Die nächsten beiden Vorträge vermittelten Einblicke in vergangene oder noch andauernde Ausstellungsprojekte. Der Kurator *Georges Petitjean* (Museum of Contemporary Aboriginal Art, Utrecht) stellte die Ausstellung "Nomads in Art" aus dem Jahr 2009 vor, in der Werke indigener australischer KünstlerInnen aus der Desert-Region zusammen mit dem Werk eines belgischen Künstlers ausgestellt und in Beziehung gesetzt wurden. Der neue Anbau der National Gallery of Australia, in dem in 13 verschiedenen Räumen Werke indigener australischer KünstlerInnen gezeigt werden, stand im Mittelpunkt der Betrachtungen der indigenen Kuratorin *Franchesca Cubillo* (National Gallery of Australia, Canberra). Die National Gallery of Australia besitzt mit über 7500 Exponaten die weltweit größte Sammlung an Werken von Aborigines-Künstlern. Cubillo ist der Meinung, dass Aborigines-Malereien ohne Hintergrundinformation gezeigt werden könnten, als Kunst mit ästhetischem Fokus. Hintergrundinformation stünde entweder online zur Verfügung oder sei in Büchern und Katalogen enthalten. Das abschließende Resümee war *Ian McLean* (University of Western Australia, Perth) vorbehalten. Er ging u.a. auf die noch immer existierende Spannung ein, die den Diskurs der Ethnographischen Museen mit der Kunstwelt bestimmt.

Die oben schon erwähnte Abgrenzung zur (deutschsprachigen) Ethnologie zeigte sich auch während des Symposiums. Obwohl dieses ausdrücklich als interdisziplinär ausgeschrieben war, nahmen keine deutschen VertreterInnen der Ethnologie und der Völkerkundemuseen als Vortragende teil. Lediglich im Publikum waren einige wenige KuratorInnen deutscher Völkerkundemuseen vertreten.

In Bezug auf die Ausstellung im Museum Ludwig ist anzumerken, dass es ohne Frage einen wesentlichen Qualitätssprung bedeutet, dass Werke von Aborigines-Künstlern in hochrangigen Kunstmuseen in Europa ausgestellt werden. Dennoch blieben in den Augen der Autorinnen einige Defizite bestehen. Die klassische Hängung an weißen Wänden, die den Werken keinerlei zusätzliche Aura verleihen konnte, wirkte unpassend. Die minimalen Informationen zu den Bildwerken ließen die BetrachterInnen meist ratlos zurück. Angesichts der Fülle des erzählten Stoffes, der in solchen Bildern transportiert wird, wirkt dies besonders unglücklich. Allerdings kann der gut gemachte Katalog die wichtigsten Lücken schließen.

**Article ©Sibylle Kästner 2011**  
**Stadtführerin in Köln**



[s.kaestner@gmx.de](mailto:s.kaestner@gmx.de)

**und ©Corinna Erckenbrecht 2011**  
**Ethnologin in Köln**



[www.erckenbrecht.com](http://www.erckenbrecht.com)

PROJECT

## Begegnungsreise mit Aborigines im August 2011

Corinna Erckenbrecht (Köln) und Gerhard Rüdiger (Adelaide)

VERANSTALTUNGEN



Festakademie zum Gründungstag

13

### *Von Dresden in die Welt* *Zu den Anfängen der Mission*

Am 17. August 1836 wurde der Dresdner Missionsverein ins Leben gerufen, der die Initialzündung für die spätere Leipziger Mission war. So wollen wir 18.36 Uhr mit unserer Jubiläumsfeier beginnen. Sie wird uns die Motive der Missionsgründung erläutern und in einem Rückblick die Entsendung der ersten Missionare nach Australien wieder lebendig vor Augen führen. Die Spuren der Arbeit von Christian Gottlob Teichelmann, Clamor Schürmann, Eduard Meyer und Samuel Klose sind in unserer Gegenwart spürbarer denn je. Neben Gästen aus Australien und Vertretern aus Kirche und Gesellschaft sind auch Nachkommen der damaligen Missionare sowie alle Interessierten in das Haus der Kirche (Großer Saal) herzlich eingeladen.

**TERMIN**  
17.08.2011  
Beginn 18:36 Uhr  
**ORT**  
Haus der Kirche,  
Dresden, Haupt-  
straße 23

**Referenten:** Dr. Robert Amery, Adelaide, Australien (angefragt)  
Oberlandeskirchenrat Dr. Christoph Münchow, Dresden

Anmeldung: **bis 03.08.2011**  
Evangelisch-Lutherisches Missionswerk Leipzig  
Telefon: 0341 99 40 643 | Telefax: 0341 99 40 690  
E-Mail: Irmhild.Kaiser@LMW-Mission.de



Im August 2011 wird eine 12-tägige Begegnungsreise von Aborigines aus dem Raum Adelaide in Deutschland stattfinden. Der historische Hintergrund ist die 175. Jubiläumsfeier des Leipziger Missionswerks – 1836 zunächst in Dresden gegründet –, das 1838 seine allerersten Missionare in die damals neu gegründete britische Kolonie Südaustralien entsandte. Die vier Missionare Christian Gottlob Teichelmann, Clamor Schürmann, Eduard Meyer und Samuel Klose nahmen ihre Arbeit an verschiedenen Standorten in und um Adelaide auf und kamen so in Kontakt mit den (Sprach)Gruppen der Kurna, Barngarla und Ramindjeri (Teilgruppe der Ngarrindjeri). Obwohl ihr missionarisches Anliegen wenig Erfolg hatte, konnten die Missionare wertvolle Einblicke in die Kultur und vor allem die Sprache der Aborigines gewinnen. In der Folge legten sie detaillierte linguistische und ethnographische Aufzeichnungen über die örtlichen Aborigines und ihre Sprachen vor. Bereits 1846 gaben sie ihre eigentliche Missionsarbeit jedoch als gescheitert auf und arbeiteten fortan als Pfarrer der lutherischen Kirche oder als Landwirte (oder beides). Die Aborigines jener Gegend wurden aufgrund des massiven Zustroms weißer Siedler bald vertrieben, marginalisiert und umgesiedelt, so dass ihre Kultur und Sprache fast ausgestorben schien.

Seit Anfang der 1990er Jahre hat es jedoch eine erstaunliche Umkehrentwicklung gegeben, indem seitens der Nachfahren jener Aborigines erfolgreiche kulturelle und linguistische Wiederbelebungsversuche unternommen werden. Grundlage dafür sind die alten Aufzeichnungen der Missionare, die nun die Basis z.B. für das "Kurna Reclamation Program" bilden, ein vielgestaltiges Wiederbelebungsprogramm des Kurna (sprich: Gana). Das Programm wird geleitet von einer Gruppe von Vertretern der Kurna-Gemeinschaft und wissenschaftlich betreut und unterstützt durch Dr. Robert Amery, Professor für Linguistik an der Universität Adelaide. Dr. Amery hatte im Wintersemester 2010/2011 die DAAD-Gastprofessur für Australien am Anglistischen Seminar der Universität Köln inne. Zusammen mit einem Netzwerk engagierter Einzelpersonen in Deutschland und Südaustralien bereiten wir nun die Begegnungsreise einer etwa 5-köpfigen Besuchergruppe aus dem Raum Adelaide vor.

Das vorläufige Reiseprogramm wird verschiedene Stationen umfassen. Zunächst geht es für einige Tage in die Nähe von Osnabrück, wo noch Nachfahren eines der Missionare leben. Anschließend wird Halle/Saale mit den Franckeschen Stiftungen besucht, in deren Archiv die Originalaufzeichnungen der Missionare (Dresdner Missionsarchiv) liegen. Danach folgen Besuche in Leipzig und Altenburg, wo ornithologische Sammlungen der Missionare erhalten sind. Auch einige ethnographische Objekte gibt es noch, die im Völkerkundemuseum in Dresden aufbewahrt werden. An den einzelnen Stationen sollen auch Kontakte zu befreundeten Kirchengemeinden und Missionsgesellschaften geknüpft werden. Angedacht ist auch ein Aufenthalt in Berlin, wo kirchliche und persönliche Bezüge durch die dortige Erstausbildung der Dresdner Missionare bestehen.

Den Abschluss bilden die Feierlichkeiten am 17. August in Dresden – Beginn um 18.36 Uhr! –, wenn die Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche in Sachsen und das Leipziger Missionswerk mit vielen Gästen das 175. Jubiläum der Gründung der Dresdner Mission feiern. Am folgenden Wochenende wird die Gruppe wieder abreisen. Die Teilnehmer und Teilnehmerinnen der Besuchergruppe, herausragende Persönlichkeiten aus dem indigenen Kulturleben Adelaides, werden hoffentlich einen großen kulturellen, linguistischen aber auch persönlichen Gewinn aus dieser Reise ziehen, der sich aus den vielen fachlichen wie zwischenmenschlichen Begegnungen ergeben kann.

**More information:**

[info@erckenbrecht.com](mailto:info@erckenbrecht.com)

[corinnaerck@gmx.de](mailto:corinnaerck@gmx.de)

## ABOUT OUR MEMBERS

### Wir begrüßen die neu gewählte stellvertretende Vorsitzende der GAST: Prof. Dr. Renate Brosch



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#### Lebenslauf:

Nach der Habilitation an der Technischen Universität Berlin hat Renate Brosch an der Humboldt Universität Berlin, der Universität des Saarlandes und an der Universität Potsdam unterrichtet. Im April 2007 hat sie den Lehrstuhl für Neuere Englische Literatur an der Universität Stuttgart übernommen. Ihre Interessensgebiete liegen im Bereich der Bild-Text-Beziehungen und der Visual Culture, der Narratologie und Metapherntheorie und der Kulturgeschichte Australiens. Sie hat Forschung zu Henry James (*Krisen des Sehens: Henry James und die Veränderung der Wahrnehmung im 19. Jahrhundert*. Tübingen: Stauffenburg, 2000), Beziehungen von bildender Kunst und Literatur, weiblichen Autorinnen der Moderne und zur australischen Literatur publiziert. In diesem Jahr hat sie einen Band über visuelle Strategien in Texten mit herausgegeben (R. Brosch/ R. Tripp (Hgg.): *Visualisierungen: Textualität - Deixis - Lektüre*. Trier: WVT) sowie einen Band zur Kurzgeschichte publiziert (*Short Story: Textsorte und Leseerfahrung*. Trier: WVT, 2007). Renate Brosch war Beiratsmitglied des Deutschen Anglistenverbandes 2002-2006 und Sprecherin der mit Landesmitteln geförderten Graduate School "Visualisierungen/Visuelle Kulturen" 2004-2006.

Aus der Vielzahl ihrer Projekte zur Problematik kultureller Visualisierung seien hier auszugsweise erwähnt:

"For Your Eyes Only? Visual Cultures/Gender/Globalisation": Workshop mit Nicholas Mirzoeff, Januar 2004

"Punkt, Punkt, Komma, Strich: Visualität in Texten", Konferenz Universität Potsdam, Januar 2006.

Klimaausstellung mit Workshop "North, East, South, West" in Zusammenarbeit mit dem British Council, SS 2007, Universität Stuttgart

Ein Überblick über die umfangreiche Publikationstätigkeit von Renate Brosch findet sich unter: <http://www.uni-stuttgart.de/nel/mitarbeiter/Brosch.html>

Prof. Renate Brosch ist verheiratet und hat drei erwachsene Kinder.

Frau Brosch organisiert die nächste Zweijahrestagung der GAST in Stuttgart 2012.

**Ein tragischer Todesfall eines Mitglieds unserer Gesellschaft:**

**✚ Andreas Baumann**

Anfang Februar 2011 kam unser langjähriges Mitglied Andreas Baumann – er trat 1999 in die GAST ein – durch einen unglücklichen Sturz von einer Treppe des Kölner Hauptbahnhofes ums Leben. Obwohl die Sanitätskräfte rasch alarmiert wurden, kam rettende Hilfe zu spät.

Andreas Baumann war australischer und deutscher Staatsbürger. Er kam in Australien zur Welt, weil sein Vater für die Firma Bosch für einige Jahre dorthin emigrierte. Im Alter von nicht ganz drei Jahren remigrierte die Familie. Er blieb aber dem Fünften Kontinent treu, besuchte ihn regelmäßig und machte auch seine Hochzeitsreise dorthin.

Andreas Baumann wird betrauert von seiner Gattin Heike. In einigen Monaten wären die Eheleute wieder nach Australien geflogen, um dort ihr 10-jähriges Jubiläum zu begehen. Ein grausames Fatum hat dies verhindert. Wir sprechen Frau Baumann hiermit unser tiefes Beileid aus.

Adi Wimmer

## CONFERENCES

### Gesellschaft für Australienstudien

#### **Visualizing Australia, 13<sup>th</sup> biennial GAST Conference, Stuttgart 2012 27.9.-29.9.2012**

#### **CALL FOR PAPERS**

#### **Visualizing Australia: Images, Icons and Imaginations: Representing the Continent at Home and Abroad**

The conference topic concentrates on visual representations of Australia.

Visual images with their immediate and direct appeal are particularly powerful vehicles of national identity, transporting ideas of an 'imagined community' (Benedict Anderson). Some images are recognized as quintessentially "Australian" in spite of evidence that their legitimacy lies in collective myths. These myths, or nationalist narratives, are reiterated through the continual use of key pictorial icons. Investigating the multiple layers of meaning which images accrue in the course of becoming lodged in the cultural imagination can reveal key moments in the narrative of nation, country or region.

Bush landscapes, Aboriginal bark painting, Uluru, shearers, life-savers and surfers, kangaroos and koalas; these are some of the images associated with Australia all over the world, becoming icons of Australianness through medial forms such as art, cinema or advertising. These images are by no means static, reacting to or reflecting upon (violent) disruptions in the narrative of the nation: Desert images of Uluru are challenged by those of Woomera; life-savers by the Cronulla rioter. Such changes rest uneasily with hitherto comfortable notions of Australia as an easy-going, egalitarian culture. The historicity of specific images underlines the importance of diachronic approaches, key to ascertaining different phases of visual (self-)definition.

An increased awareness of uneven power balance in visibility and visibility informs recent representations of Australia. In examining how images of national self-fashioning shape-shift and transform, historical assessments that seek to determine different phases in the construction of Australianness on the basis of significant central images will be particularly welcome. The tensions between what people outside Australia consider its distinguishing features and what locals recognize as such constitute particularly fertile grounds for the exploration of the engendering of national identities through visual imaginings. Analyzing examples of visual imaging in various media and practices can reveal similarities and differences between Australian images and their use and reception abroad. Such transnational perspectives are particularly welcome to ensure a hermeneutic process that avoids a reduction to exclusively internal and national perspectives.

The purpose of concentrating on visual representations and practices is to raise the level of



awareness of the social, political and economic conditions which inform the production as well as the reception of images and to create an awareness of the pitfalls of sorting them into easily available stereotypical slots.

Contributors are invited from a broad range of disciplines and institutional affiliations. Suggested thematic clusters include:

- Visual arts: painting, photography, performance
- Visual media: cinema, TV, internet
- Visual forums and formats: museums, exhibitions, anniversaries, events, narratives
- Visual practices in tourism, advertising, mapping
- Icons, stereotypes and figurations of Australian people: constructions of race, gender and age
- Landscape, space and place: conflicting images of natural resources and ecological concerns
- Discourses of visibility: power structures of seeing, visibility, access to visual media/ representation, narrative (constructions of) identity
- Visual Culture and the classroom

**Please send your proposals by February 29th 2012 to:**  
**[nina.juergens@ilw.uni-stuttgart.de](mailto:nina.juergens@ilw.uni-stuttgart.de)**

We ask international guests who would like to attend to respond with a (preliminary) title by 15.06.2011 in order to facilitate possible funding opportunities.

**Conference Convenors:**

**Prof. Dr. Renate Brosch**  
**Universität Stuttgart**  
**Institut für Literaturwissenschaft**  
**Neuere Englische Literatur**  
**Keplerstr. 17**  
**D-70174 Stuttgart**  
**Ph +49 711 685-83000**  
**Fax +49 711 685-83094**

**[Renate.Brosch@ilw.uni-stuttgart.de](mailto:Renate.Brosch@ilw.uni-stuttgart.de)**  
<<https://webmail.newschool.edu/Downloads/Renate.Brosch@ilw.uni-stuttgart.de>>

**Jr. Prof. Kylie Crane**  
**Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz**  
**Fachbereich Translations-, Sprach- und Kulturwissenschaft (FTSK)**  
**An der Hochschule 2, 76726 Germersheim**  
**Postfach 11 50, 76711 Germersheim**  
**Ph +49 7274 508 35-636**  
**[crane@uni-mainz.de](mailto:crane@uni-mainz.de)**



## Labour History and Its People

<http://www.anu.edu.au/>

Join the National Centre of Biography and the Canberra Branch of the Australian Society for the Study of Labour History at its conference on labour history and its people.

2011 marks the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Australian Society for the Study of Labour History in 1961 at the ANU. Papers will consider the sources, interpretation and study of labour history, and the collection and conservation of material culture relating to the working people in Australia.



### Speakers include:

- History Professors Stuart Macintyre and Patricia Grimshaw (Melbourne);
- Kim Sattler, Unions ACT secretary and Chair of Board, National Museum of Labour;
- Archivists Sigrid McCausland and Maggie Shapley;
- Activist Jack Mundy;
- Overseas guests Professors Don MacRaild and Neville Kirk.

There will also be a presentation on the National Museum of Labour, Canberra, and a tour of the Noel Butlin Archives, ANU.

The full conference program will be available in July.

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**Date:** 15-17 September 2011

**Venue:** Manning Clark Centre, Australian National University

**Cost:\*** \$300 full, \$200 students and concession  
day rate - \$100

\* includes lunch, and morning and afternoon teas

**early bird rates** (before 1 July)

\$250 full, \$150 students concession

There will also be a **Conference Dinner** at the Gods, ANU, Friday 16th September. **Cost:** \$50

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**You can also pay online or by cheque**



Cheques should be made payable to the 'Australian National University' and sent to:

Labour History and Its People Conference  
National Centre of Biography  
Research School of Social Sciences  
Coombs Building no 9  
Australian National University  
Canberra 0200

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**Registration Enquiries:** (02) 6125 4146 or [ncb@anu.edu.au](mailto:ncb@anu.edu.au)

**Conference Convenor:** Professor Melanie Nolan, Director National Centre of Biography and General Editor, Australian Dictionary of Biography, ANU  
email: [melanie.nolan@anu.edu.au](mailto:melanie.nolan@anu.edu.au)

**The conference is supported by:**

National Centre of Biography;  
ANU Research School of Social Sciences;  
ANU Research School of Humanities and the Arts;  
ANU College of Arts & Social Sciences;  
Australian Society for the Study of Labour History (ASSLH);  
Canberra Labour Club Group;  
School of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of New South Wales at The Australian Defence Force Academy





## **The 11th Australasian Urban History/Planning History Conference**

### **Perth, Western Australia on 5-8 February 2012**

The theme of the conference is Urban Transformations: booms, busts and other catastrophes. Most of the world's population now lives in cities, and this conference will focus on the manifold factors that operate over time to transform urban areas. Perth, the host city, has been built on economic booms reflecting its history as a resource and energy capital. Hence the sub-theme 'booms and busts' will enable us to reflect on the impact of rapid economic change on the planning and history of the city. The second sub-theme, 'catastrophes' is in response to recent urban events, from floods in Brisbane, to earthquakes affecting cities and towns in New Zealand and Japan, and will allow us to reflect on the complex, interwoven histories of cities and their environments.

#### **Sponsors**

The 11th Australasian Urban History/Planning History Conference is supported by:

[The University of Western Australia](#)  
[State Library of Western Australia.](#)





## CALL FOR ART

Sehr geehrte Damen und Herren,

wir sind eine Kommunalgalerie im Bezirk Berlin-Wedding mit dem Konzept "Kunst in der Kultur".

Die Räumlichkeiten der Galerie bieten die Möglichkeit, diverse Rauminstallationen und größere Gemälde auszustellen. Das Gebäude ist mit sehr großen Fenstern ausgestattet, was für die eben genannten Möglichkeiten von großem Vorteil ist, da die Räumlichkeiten mit viel Licht durchflutet werden. Für Video-Installationen sind die Räume nicht gedacht, da es zu hell ist.

Wir beabsichtigen im nächsten Jahr, 2012 und 2013, ein Projekt australischen Künstlern und vor allem jenen Künstlern, die sich mit den Ureinwohnern Australiens, den Aborigines, beschäftigen, zu widmen. Um ein Konzept für diesen Zeitraum aufstellen und effektiv ein Projekt planen zu können, müssten wir mindestens mit drei bis vier oder sogar mehr australischen Künstlern in Kontakt treten.

Wir wären sehr dankbar, wenn Sie uns bei unserem Vorhaben unterstützen könnten und uns jede Information wie Adressen, Internetseiten etc. von in Berlin lebenden australischen Künstlern, die Ihnen bekannt sind, zukommen lassen würden.

Wir danken Allen im Voraus für jede Hilfe. Sollten Sie Rückfragen haben, kontaktieren Sie uns: [sabaliotis@galeriewedding.de](mailto:sabaliotis@galeriewedding.de)

Pantelis Sabaliotis - Kurator Galerie Wedding

## CONCERT

**Museum Baden Solingen** - Wuppertalerstr. 160  
Sonntag, 11. September 2011, 17 Uhr

**Konzert des Wuppertaler Kammerorchesters mit dem Kinderchor  
St. Michael**

Werke von **George Dreyfus** (Uraufführung: "Vier Letzte Else Lieder") <http://museum-baden.de/>

Texte von Else Lasker-Schüler

*Wuppertaler Kammerorchester*

Leitung [Johanna Watzke](#)

## PUBLICATIONS

### Literature

#### Melinda Jewell.

**The Representation of Dance in Australian Novels: The Darkness Beyond the Stage-Lit Dream.** Bern/Berlin: Peter Lang, 2011. 402 pp. pb. ISBN 978-3-0343-0417-7  
€ 62.80 (Austria € 64.60)

This book is an analysis of the textual representation of dance in the Australian novel since the late 1890s. It examines how the act of dance is variously portrayed, how the word *dance* is used metaphorically to convey actual or imagined movement, and how dance is written in a novelistic form. The author employs a wide range of theoretical approaches including postcolonial studies, theories concerned with class, gender, metaphor and dance and, in particular, Jung's concept of the shadow and theories concerned with vision. Though these variegated approaches, the study critiques the common view that dance is an expression of *joie de vivre*, liberation, transcendence, order and beauty. This text also probes issues concerned with the enactment of dance in Australia and abroad, and contributes to an understanding of how dance is 'translated' into literature. The book makes an important contribution because the study of dance in Australian literature has been minimal, and this despite the reality that *dance* is prolific in Australian novels.

### Cultural Studies

#### Rob Garbutt.

**The Locals: Identity, Place and Belonging in Australia and Beyond.** Bern/Berlin: Peter Lang, 2011. 250 pp. Tables and graphs. pb. ISBN 978-3-0343-0154-1  
€ 41.60 (Austria € 42.80)

This book presents the first comprehensive survey of being a local, in particular in Australia. As in much of the colonised, English-speaking world, in Australia the paradox is that the locals are not indigenous peoples but migrants with a specific ethnic heritage who became localised in time to label other migrants as the newcomers and outsiders. How have Anglo-Celtic Australians installed themselves as locals? Where do Indigenous Australians stand in this local politics of identity? What are the ethical considerations for how we connect our identities to places while also relating to others in a time of intensifying migration? This book explores these questions via a multidisciplinary cultural studies approach and a mixed methodology that blends a critical language study of being local with auto-ethnographical accounts by the author, himself a *local*.

### **Francesco Ricatti.**

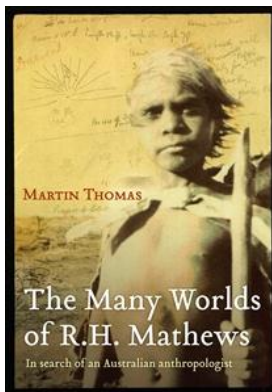
**Embodying Migrants: Italians in Postwar Australia. Bern/Berlin: Peter Lang, 2011. 331 pp. pb. ISBN 978-3-0343-0466-5 € 57.20 (Austria € 58.90)**

This book constructs a suggestive, dramatic and colourful portrait of migrants' everyday life in 1950s and early 1960s Australia, by focusing on important aspects such as health, sexuality, self-beautification, love, and morality. The volume considers two columns edited by Lena Gustin (Mamma Lena) for the Italian-language newspaper in Australia *La Fiamma* between 1956 and 1964. Furthermore, the historical analysis is based on hundreds of original letters that Italian migrants wrote in the same years to the two columns or directly to Gustin. Most of these letters were never published in the newspaper, or were strongly edited before publication. Gustin's selection and editing eliminated most of the explicit references to the body, sexuality, and violence. This "editing of the body" opens up important questions about the construction of Italian ethnic identity by the migrant elites and by scholars.

### **Anthropology**

#### **Martin Thomas.**

**The Many Worlds of R.H. Mathews. Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2011. 472 pp. Hard Cover. ISBN 9781741757811 AUD \$59.99**



A timely and important re-evaluation of a pioneer in anthropology and Aboriginal studies: meticulously researched, beautifully written and convincingly argued.

*The Many Worlds of R.H. Mathews* is about the life and work of the renowned 19th century surveyor turned ethnologist, R.H. Mathews, whose studies of Aboriginal Australia were path-breaking and quite controversial. His childhood in Goulburn meant that he grew up with Aboriginal children as playmates, so when he began his obsession with documenting Aboriginal life, he came to his subject with fond familiarity, not the freak show interest that spurred many of the English anthropologists of the time, especially Baldwin Spencer, who went out of his way to discredit Mathews' work, especially after his death. Largely due to this conspiracy, Mathews has been a reasonably unknown figure in early anthropology, but his legacy and work have

been reassessed and he is emerging as one of our most important documenters of Aboriginal language, legends and mythology. So important, in fact, that it is his legacy of papers, interpretations and documents, held largely in the National Library of Australia, that is being used by contemporary Aboriginal people to rejuvenate their culture. Martin's approach to his subject is not conventional biography, but something more ambitious and unusual, and one perfectly tuned to the revelations it contains.

### **About Martin Thomas:**

Martin Thomas is an Australian Research Council Future Fellow in the School of History at the Australian National University. He is the author of the acclaimed and award-winning *The Artificial Horizon: Imagining the Blue Mountains* (2003), which won the Gleebooks Prize at the 2004 NSW Premier's Literary Awards and was also short listed for the Award for Non Fiction, 2004 Festival Awards for Literature, and the Award for Innovation in Writing at the 2004 Festival Awards for Literature.

## **History**

**Kenneth James Arkwright. (hg. v. Katharina Friedla und Uwe Neumärker)  
Jenseits des Überlebens: Von Breslau nach Australien. Berlin: Stiftung Denkmal für die ermordeten Juden Europas, 2011. 183 pp. Illustrations. ISBN 978-3-942240-03-1**

Kenneth J. Arkwright wurde 1929 als Klaus Aufrichtig in Breslau geboren. Seine jüdische Familie war dort seit dem 16. Jahrhundert ansässig. Ab 1943 musste er Zwangsarbeit leisten, wurde 1944 in ein Arbeitslager verschleppt, floh und tauchte unter. 1945 kehrte er in seine Heimatstadt zurück, war jedoch wenige Wochen später gezwungen, sich nach Erfurt abzusetzen. Bald darauf begann er ein Studium in Ostberlin und emigrierte 1949 über Paris nach Perth in Australien.

### **Salomea Genin.**

**Ich folgte den falschen Göttern: Eine australische Jüdin in der DDR.  
Berlin: Verlag für Berlin Brandenburg, 2009. 400 pp. pb. Illustrations.  
ISBN-10: 3866502117 ISBN-13: 978-3866502116  
€ 19,90**



1932 als Kind polnisch-russischer Juden in Berlin-Wedding geboren, floh Salomea Genin im Mai 1939 mit ihrer Familie vor den Nationalsozialisten nach Australien. Mit 17 Jahren trat sie der Kommunistischen Partei Australiens bei. 1951 kam sie als Mitglied der australischen Delegation zu den Weltfestspielen der Jugend und Studenten nach Ost-Berlin und war von der DDR begeistert. Sie verließ Australien, um in der DDR ein besseres, antifaschistisches Deutschland aufzubauen, erhielt aber keine Aufenthaltserlaubnis in der DDR. So blieb Salomea Genin zunächst in West-Berlin und zeitweise in England, bevor sie 1963 offiziell nach Ost-Berlin übersiedeln durfte. In West-Berlin hatte sie begonnen, als Informantin für das Ministerium für Staatssicherheit der DDR zu arbeiten. Diese Tätigkeit setzte sie dann in der DDR fort. 1982 erkannte Salomea Genin: Statt zu helfen, die Welt zu verbessern, arbeitete sie für einen Polizeistaat. Sie brach mit der Stasi und wollte sich das Leben nehmen. Erst im Mai 1989 fand sie die Kraft, auch aus der SED auszutreten. Ihre Austrittserklärung wurde in westdeutschen Zeitungen abgedruckt, darunter in der Frankfurter Rundschau.



## **BROADCAST(ED)**

### **ON THE AIR: Professor Adi Wimmer – Universität Klagenfurt**



***Betrifft Geschichte: Terra australis – Südliches Land. Zur Eroberung und Kolonisierung Australiens – eine fünfteilige Radiosendung zusammengestellt von Sabrina Adlbrecht und kommentiert von Prof. Adi Wimmer (4.-8. April 2011 – Ö1).***

**Auf der Homepage der *Gesellschaft für Australienstudien* finden sich Hörproben der fünf Radio-Sendungen des österreichischen Rundfunks Ö1:  
[http://www.australienstudien.org/frameset pub.html](http://www.australienstudien.org/frameset_pub.html)**

## MULTIMEDIA

### NEW DVD - History

#### A Place for Historical Imagination: Edward Albert Koch's Memorial in Cairns Revisited

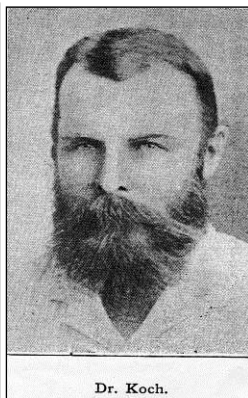
Henriette von Holleuffer



A cooperation project with *Cairns Historical Society*

The monument of the German-Australian medical doctor Edward Albert Koch in Cairns, Australia invites the historian to "reanimate" the life of a pioneer by reviewing reports, pictures and artefacts of his time, and to present the results of this research in a multimedia presentation. Memory challenges our imagination in more ways than one, as we experience life of bygone days through our minds, our eyes, and our ears.

The pioneers went to such distant places as Northern Queensland, where they found challenges for their activities and a substitute for their lost home. One of them was the medical practitioner Edward Albert Koch. In July 1882 he was appointed "to be health and medical officer at Cairns". He finally had the responsibility to run Cairns Hospital from 1884 on. Edward A. Koch achieved a reputation as a competent and innovative hospital doctor.



Duration: 30 Minutes

If you wish to buy the DVD **for educational purposes** please email to:

[adfonteshistory@aol.com](mailto:adfonteshistory@aol.com)

Fee (postage included): € 20

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## EXHIBITIONS

### ABORIGINAL ART & FOOD

**Das Kunstzentrum Bosener Mühle (Bosen am Bostalsee) eröffnet am 1. Juli 2011 um 18 Uhr die Ausstellung "Aboriginal Art". Der Organisator der Ausstellung ist der Besitzer des australischen Restaurants *Wongar* in Saarbrücken, Peter Hofman.**

Einen kleinen Einblick in die Kunst der australischen Aborigines vermittelt diese Ausstellung. Für sechs Wochen sind hier Werke von verschiedenen Künstlern aus ganz Australien zu sehen. Die Kunst der australischen Aborigines gilt als Spiegel einer der ältesten Kulturen der Welt. Die hier ausgestellten Werke symbolisieren sowohl die traditionelle Malerei wie auch moderne Stilrichtungen, die zumeist durch ihre ausdrucksvolle Farbgestaltung brillieren. Einige der präsentierten Werke wurden schon in internationalen Galerien gezeigt. Besonders hervorzuheben sind Werke des Künstlers Stan Yarramunua Dryden, u.a. das Bild "This Land is our Land". Stan arbeitet bei diesem Bild mit Handabdrücken, die zum Ausdruck bringen, dass das Land der Aborigines, das Land seines Stammes ist und dass dieses Land und alles, was sich darauf befindet, ein harmonisches und respektvolles Miteinander lebt.

**More information:**

**Tel.:** + 49 174 3152259

**Email:** [Peter.Hofmann@net2go.info](mailto:Peter.Hofmann@net2go.info)

### ART AT THE EMBASSY

**John Martin**

**The Colour of Light – Paintings of Australia**

**May – September 2011**

**Australian Embassy, Foyer, Wallstraße 76-79, 10179 Berlin-Mitte**

**More Info:**

[www.germany.embassy.gov.au](http://www.germany.embassy.gov.au)

## ONLINE EXHIBITION

### MARI NAWI: ABORIGINAL ODYSSEYS 1790 - 1850

The State Library of New South Wales presents a free online exhibition:

The first sailing ships that entered the world of the Aboriginal people of Botany Bay and Port Jackson in 1788 caused fear and wonder. They thought the ships were giant birds, monsters or floating islands and that the figures climbing the masts were devils or possums. The arrival of these ships changed their lives forever.



Aboriginal people embarked on voyages across the globe and played a significant role in Australia's early maritime history. With remarkable resilience, they became guides, go-betweens, boatmen, sailors, sealers, steersmen, whalers, pilots and trackers, valued for their skills and knowledge. They were present at the establishment of new settlements, survived shipwreck and being marooned for years and participated in the first lucrative export industries. On occasion, they were unwilling voyagers transported as convicts.

These Aboriginal mariners crossed conventional social boundaries. Aboard ship all members of the crew worked, ate, slept, talked, smoked and drank together and learned something of each other's languages and customs. In later years, some achieved the status of leaders of their people and a few were officially created 'chiefs' and given fishing boats, land grants and metal breastplates.

Link: [http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/events/exhibitions/2010/mari\\_nawi/docs/marinawi\\_guide.pdf](http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/events/exhibitions/2010/mari_nawi/docs/marinawi_guide.pdf)



## FACULTIES OF EDUCATION: PROFILE & COOPERATION

### Karlsruhe University



Professor Dr. Elizabeth (Liesel) Hermes  
Rektorin  
Pädagogische Hochschule Karlsruhe  
(Karlsruhe University of Education)  
Bismarckstrasse 10  
D-76133 Karlsruhe  
Telefon 0049 (0) 721/925-4011  
[Liesel.hermes@ph-karlsruhe.de](mailto:Liesel.hermes@ph-karlsruhe.de)

<http://www.ph-karlsruhe.de/cms/index.php?id=3938>

Private  
Im Speitel 128  
D-762129 Karlsruhe  
Tel: 0721/468424  
Fax: 0721/9463588  
[hermesl@web.de](mailto:hermesl@web.de)

The University of Education in its present form was established in 1962 and it now has about 3,200 students. It offers degree courses for initial teacher certification for primary and lower secondary schools, as well as the European Teacher Course (with a strong CLIL “content and language integrated learning” component) for these school types. In addition, there are several Bachelor’s and Master’s degree programmes and a graduate programme leading on to the doctoral level.



Professor Brenda Cherednichenko  
Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Engagement, Equity and Indigenous  
Executive Dean, Faculty of Education and Arts  
Edith Cowan University  
2 Bradford St  
Mount Lawley 6050 Australia  
Ph: + 61422009962  
[b.cherednichenko@ecu.edu.au](mailto:b.cherednichenko@ecu.edu.au)

[http://www.ea.ecu.edu.au/fo/executive\\_dean/](http://www.ea.ecu.edu.au/fo/executive_dean/)

Faculty of Education and Arts consists of four Schools that provide undergraduate and postgraduate education in performing and visual arts, music and music technologies, advertising, public relations, communications, television, broadcasting, photography, journalism, creative writing, English, politics, history, language studies, geography, literature, arts management, theatre production, fashion, multimedia, design and Indigenous services as well as the full range of courses within Teacher Education covering all areas from Early Childhood Studies to Secondary teaching.

The professional orientation of many undergraduate programs includes an extensive program of work experience, internships and clinical education. In addition, the Faculty regularly exhibits student work and holds public performances. 3 Faculties at ECU – FEA – 4 schools  
7000 students  
Possible areas of collaboration  
Graduate Quality  
Internationalisation  
Engagement and Partnerships with community and professions  
Equity – participation and success  
Staff qualifications and the research capability

## NEWS FROM THE EMBASSY

Interessenten, die den farbig illustrierten **Kulturflyer der Australischen Botschaft** regelmäßig und aktuell als PDF-Datei per Email erhalten möchten, werden gebeten, diesen als kostenloses Abonnement zu bestellen.

### **Abonnement**

**Ja, ich würde gerne bis auf weiteres den Kulturflyer der Australischen Botschaft beziehen.**

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Anschrift

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## **BRÜCKE NACH AUSTRALIEN: GEMEINSAME GASTPROFESSUR**

Die australische Autorin Anna Elizabeth Haebich, Professorin an der Curtin University in Perth, und die Literaturwissenschafts-Professorin Lyn McCredden besetzen im Sommersemester gemeinsam die Ludwig-Hirschfeld-Mack-Gastprofessur für Australienstudien. Sie übernehmen als sechste die Gastprofessur am Institut für Englische Philologie der Freien Universität, mit der der wissenschaftliche Austausch zwischen Deutschland und Australien gefördert werden soll. Die Gastprofessur wird finanziert vom Deutschen Akademischen Austausch Dienst (DAAD), dem Fachbereich Philosophie und Geisteswissenschaften, dem Institut für Englische Philologie der Freien Universität und der australischen Botschaft in Berlin.

Lyn McCredden lehrt Literaturwissenschaft an der Deakin University in Melbourne, Australien. Zu ihren Forschungsschwerpunkten zählen australische Literatur bis in die Zeit des Postkolonialismus, Indigene Literatur, Gender und die Poesie.

Professorin Anna Haebich ist Senior Research Fellow an der Curtin University im australischen Perth. Sie wurde für ihre Publikationen, Ausstellungen, Video- und Online-Beiträge mehrfach ausgezeichnet. Ihre Bücher "For Their Own Good" und "Broken Circles" sind führende Publikationen auf dem Gebiet der Australischen Geschichte. Als Gastprofessorin wird Anna Haebich Lehrveranstaltungen über die Rolle der Aborigines in der Geschichte Australiens halten.

Die Ludwig-Hirschfeld-Mack-Gastprofessur wird in jedem Semester mit renommierten auswärtigen Wissenschaftlern besetzt. Namensgeber der Professur ist der 1963 in Australien verstorbene Deutsche Ludwig Hirschfeld-Mack. Er war Mitglied der Bauhaus-Bewegung und emigrierte 1936 nach Großbritannien. 1940 wurde er von dort als ein sogenannter "feindlicher Ausländer" nach Australien deportiert und interniert. Nach dem Ende seiner Internierungszeit wurde Hirschfeld-Mack "Head of Art" an der renommierten Geelong Grammar School. Mit seiner Lehre übte er großen Einfluss auf Kunst und Design im Australien der Nachkriegszeit aus.

## DANCE DOWNUNDER

### BANGARRA DANCE THEATRE

#### News

From July 2011, **Bangarra** will present its new program, ***Belong*** with Stephen Page's *ID* and company choreographer and dancer Elma Kris' new work *About*. ***Belong*** will tour Australian capital cities from July to September.



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More information:

<http://www.bangarra.com.au>

## SOMETHING FOR DESSERT:

### AUSTRALIAN GINGER – The History of *Buderim* Ginger

#### SO FING ALLES AN - DIE GESCHICHTE VON BUDERIM

In den 60er Jahren wurden Ingwerwurzeln in einem kleinen Anbaubereich in Australien, 100 km nördlich von Brisbane, der Hauptstadt von Queensland, in dem Dorf Buderim gefunden. Begünstigt durch das dort vorherrschende tropische Klima mit hoher Luftfeuchtigkeit und viel Niederschlag, boten sich hervorragende Anbaubedingungen für die Kultivierung dieser exotischen Pflanze. Während des zweiten Weltkrieges kam der Handel und die Versorgung mit Ingwer aus China zum Erliegen. Da sich diese außergewöhnliche Wurzel mit ihren positiven gesundheitlichen Eigenschaften in den Küchen und in Speisen und Getränken der Australier etabliert hatte, war die Nachfrage weiterhin groß. Für die Ingwer-Farmer in der Gegend um Buderim bot sich hieraus die Möglichkeit, ihre Anbauflächen zu vergrößern und so dem Ingwerhandel die gewünschten Mengen zu liefern.



© Photo & Text Buderim Ginger Sales GmbH

Fünf Farmer aus Buderim erkannten das Potential, das in dem Ingwer steckte und gründeten mit einem Startkapital von 25 £, zwei Holztrögen und 14 Tonnen frischen Ingwerwurzeln die Buderim Ginger Grower's Cooperative Association Limited. Heute ist Buderim der größte Ingwer Produzent und hat einen Weltmarktanteil von 60% des mit Zucker verarbeiteten Ingwers. Bereits 1979 wurde eine Fläche von fast neun Hektar vom Department of Commercial & Industrial Development gepachtet. Um den rohen, grünen Ingwer zu veredeln und weiterzuverarbeiten, entschloss man sich zum Bau einer neuen Produktionsstätte. 1989 wurde die Buderim Ginger Limited in eine Aktiengesellschaft umgewandelt, an der überwiegend Farmer und Mitarbeiter beteiligt sind. Die Anteile werden zudem an der Börse von Sydney gehandelt.

#### More information:

<http://www.ingwer.de>

