

The English Showcase



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10th February 2016

13:00 - 17:15

Clive Granger, A41

Including

An introduction with award-winning novelist

Clare Harvey

And

Closing discussion from Associate Professor

Dr Christina Lee

Committee Members:

Asha Rahman

Jenny Scott

Liam Knight

Milly Voice

The English Showcase: Programme

13:00: Arrival

13:15: Welcome from the committee

13:30: **Clare Harvey: *How I turned my University of Nottingham Masters Submissions into a two-book publishing deal***

Panel 1: Theatre and Creativity (Chaired by Liam Knight)

14:00: Inyo Lian - *In Memory of a Heartbeat of a Child*

14:10: Felicity Bromley-Hall - *Adapting the Nation: Exploring identity and nationality through social media performance*

14:20: Rebecca Batty - *Satirical Meta-Theatricality in The Knight of the Burning Pestle, Act 3 Scene 4*

14:30: Panel Q&As

14:45: Break

Panel 2: Literature (Chaired by Asha Rahman)

15:00: Amy Curran - *The Gendered Aesthetics of Power in V For Vendetta and The Hunger Games*

15:10: Jodie Marley - *Representations of sexual desire and male/female relationships in D. H. Lawrence's The Rainbow, and Katherine Mansfield's short stories 'Bliss', 'At The Bay', 'Prelude', and 'The Daughters of the Late Colonel'*

15:20: Tom Holmes - *Katniss the Cuddly Capitalist: Economic Theory and Suzanne Collin's The Hunger Games*

15:30: Rebecca Rowland - *How does the treatment of 'things' and food demonstrate growing concerns with the influence 'things' and food have on nineteenth-century life in Emma, Cranford and Alice's Adventures in Wonderland?*

15:40: Panel Q&As

Panel 3: Language (Chaired by Milly Voice)

16:00: Bernardo Silva - *'World Haunting' – An Exploration of Virginia Woolf's 'London Adventure' using Text World Theory*

16:10: Maria Myriantopoulou - *Experiencing loss: Text World Theory and 'One Art'*

16:20: John Michael Cammish - *'I've not even researched Pottery yet': How does the Community of Practice of Gamers establish their membership and hierarchy within a game?*

16:30: Briony Newbold - *Representing mental illness in the media: Fight Club and schizophrenia*

16:40: Panel Q&As

17:00 Closing Discussion from Dr Christina Lee

17:15: Catering and networking opportunities

Abstracts

Panel One: Theatre and Creativity (Chaired by Liam Knight)

Speaker: **Inyo Lian**

Title: *In Memory of a Heartbeat of a Child*

Inyo was inspired by the 2012 *The Tale of Brin & Bent and Minno Marylebone* graphic novel which was written by Ravi Thornton and illustrated by Andy Hixon. Inyo chose to write a 750 word poetic adaptation which uses themes from the novel such as loneliness, isolation, and surrealism. The poem is written from the point of view of the characters Brin and Bent and is set after the events of the graphic novel take place. She also wrote a 1,900 word literary commentary to justify the decisions she made and have the chance to mention further inspirations such as the work of Angela Carter and the photography of Hannah Starkey. The reflective essay also explains why the poem is relevant to contemporary British society; because loneliness is becoming endemic.

Ravi Thornton herself responded to this adaptation, picking out certain lines from the poem which she particularly enjoyed; 'Yes, we compensated for it, but we did not cure it', and also commenting that the voice of the poet is "beautifully clear, a sorrowful voice, and deeply moving." To receive such positive feedback from the author of the novel herself was a huge bonus and is the reason why this is the piece of work which Inyo is most proud of so far in her university career.

Speaker: **Felicity Bromley-Hall**

Title: *Adapting the Nation: Exploring identity and nationality through social media performance*

'Why must I rob you of your humanity, to feel good about mine?' - Akala

How do you respond to the word, 'nation'?

The project explores identity and the nation through social media. It blurs the boundaries of 'art' and 'real life' to mirror and discuss the notion of fluid national boundaries and (inter)national relations in a digitally-connected global society.

Form:

- The adaptation comprises of 43 short, individual video clips.
- Within each clip, one participant says a fictional line from one of the three plays mentioned.
- Alongside these clips, the participant responds to various biographical questions (such as name, age, mother's nationality, religion).
- The 43 clips are then combined into an overarching structural form on

Instagram to create an online community of individual speakers.

- Participant performers are drawn from a variety of cultural/ ethnic backgrounds, genders and age ranges, but all have some form of British citizenship.

The separate pieces represent constant splits as the nation's 'individuals' exist both within and distinct from the dominant whole.

In an online world, individuals exist both nowhere and everywhere, but also somewhere: in an app, on our phones, which we carry around in the back pocket of our jeans all day long. In the countries we're walking around in.

But because of that online world, each individual country becomes connected. This project exposes the links between those countries, and gives logical reasoning to the notion that all human lives must be respected – regardless of where they geographically reside.

Speaker: **Rebecca Batty**

Satirical Meta-Theatricality in The Knight of the Burning Pestle, Act 3 Scene 4

Focusing on how Early Modern stage conventions were used in performance, *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* is very useful in discussing Early Modern stage conventions, as it directly shows how such conventions were used by placing them as objects of satire within the performance. Through a close analysis of Act 3, Scene 4 in *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* Rebecca intends to argue that Beaumont uses boy's companies, fights, stage sitters, sexual humour, and intertextuality within his meta-theatrical comedy to highlight the inherent deception and duplicity involved in performance. Through this, he also draws attention to the idea of the audience actively contributing to the meaning of the play, and shows a level of performer-audience co-operation very different from contemporary theatre.

Panel Two: Literature (Chaired by Asha Rahman)

Speaker: **Amy Curran**

Title: *The Gendered Aesthetics of Power in V For Vendetta and The Hunger Games*

'The Gendered Aesthetics of Power in *V for Vendetta* and *The Hunger Games*' was written for the Year Two module 'Literature and Pop Culture'. Using sources as film reviews, academic papers, and newspaper interviews Amy aimed to explore the way these very visual texts coded power or rebellion as feminine or masculine. She decided to use the 2012, Gary Ross-directed film version of *The Hunger Games* and the graphic novel *V for Vendetta* by Alan Moore for this analysis.

Throughout the essay, Amy asserts:

- That *V for Vendetta* and *The Hunger Games* are fit to be compared to one another by virtue of their shared traits – both are set in a dystopian landscape, both feature oppressive governments, both have young girls as their protagonists
- That 'Norsefire', the government in *V for Vendetta*, is visually coded as masculine, while characters who express femininity are persecuted
- That the visual agents of power in *The Hunger Games* are hyper-feminine, while lower-class citizens are not afforded the luxury of accessing this femininity
- That Alan Moore's aesthetic representation of 'Norsefire' reflects contextual issues such as patriarchal and racial oppression, underrepresentation of women and minorities in parliament, and concerns around fascism
- That the appearance of the ruling forces in *The Hunger Games* reflects a millennial concern with capitalism's structure

Speaker: **Jodie Marley**

Title: *Representations of sexual desire and male/female relationships in D. H. Lawrence's The Rainbow, and Katherine Mansfield's short stories 'Bliss', 'At The Bay', 'Prelude', and 'The Daughters of the Late Colonel'*

In D. H. Lawrence's *The Rainbow* and Katherine Mansfield's short stories, sexual desire is always represented as 'fire' or 'light' within the self. Sexual desire in Lawrence is a transcendent merging of polarities: of the male and the female, of the 'fire' within oneself and the 'darkness' sensed in the unknown depths of the reciprocating partner. Only the meeting of polarities through sexual experience allows growth within relationships.

Lawrence's approach to sexual desire is marred by heteronormativity. *The Rainbow* is praised by many for its inclusion of a lesbian relationship, yet the relationship is called 'perverted' by *The Rainbow*'s narrator, and cannot achieve fulfilment because of the lack of male/female polarity and fire/darkness imagery.

Mansfield's work contrasts Lawrence's heteronormative representation of sexual desire. 'Bliss's protagonist experiences homosexual desire yet cannot consummate it due to her entrapment in a conventional heterosexual marriage, commenting on the repressive heteronormative mores of early twentieth century society.

Tensions and unease of authority within male/female relationships in Lawrence are battled out through intercourse with the current sexual partner; in Mansfield male sexual desire always comes with the threat of violence, as if the woman must be subjugated to and punished by her father figure of a husband.

Though the openness of Lawrence's and Mansfield's treatment of sexuality in their works is to be lauded, the issues raised by both writers regarding homosexuality and sexual violence are crucial in understanding the stances of both writers regarding the sexual politics of their period and cannot be ignored.

Speaker: **Tom Holmes**

Title: *Katniss the Cuddly Capitalist: Economic Theory and Suzanne Collin's The Hunger Games*

Tom argues that Suzanne Collins' *The Hunger Games* is not solely a critique of the use of violence in reality programming. When read alongside the Great Recession of 2008, Collins is actually mounting a critique of the ethics of the modern capitalist system but is not entirely damning the methods it uses. Katniss Everdeen can actually be viewed as a business that is seeking investors in a quasi-feudal economic structure. Katniss succeeds because she fits all the criteria of the perfect 'capitalist citizen'. She represents a branch of 'cuddly' capitalism in a feudal governmental structure.

Speaker: **Rebecca Rowland**

Title: *How does the treatment of 'things' and food demonstrate growing concerns with the influence 'things' and food have on nineteenth-century life in Emma, Cranford and Alice's Adventures in Wonderland?*

The nineteenth century was a period of great scientific discovery, industrial and technological advancement, and immense underlying anxieties. Many of these anxieties came from the fear of the changing world nineteenth-century society was experiencing: the abolition of slavery in Britain and later the British Empire as a whole; the Crimean War; the Indian Mutiny; the Boer War; the Married Women's Property Act and the growing suffrage movement; and the growing tensions between Britain and new(er) emerging world powers such as Germany and the USA all contributed to a pervasive fear of loss of control in both individual lives and wider society. Rebecca's essay focuses on three texts from the early to mid-nineteenth century and examines the way that the treatment of 'things' (as opposed to simply 'objects') and food can give us insight into the social and moral anxieties at the centre of the nineteenth-century mind-set: in Jane Austen's *Emma* (1815) food and 'things' are uneasily marginalised by the narrator and central character, Emma; in Elizabeth Gaskell's *Cranford* (1851) there is a growing unease surrounding the significance and place of food and 'things' in society; and in Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1863) Alice is overwhelmed and almost consumed by her uncontrollable desire for 'things' and food. Rebecca will make the argument that there is a clear progression in the development of anxiety surrounding food and 'things' as the nineteenth century progresses.

Panel Three: Language (Chaired by Milly Voice)

Speaker: **Bernardo Silva**

Title: *'World Haunting' – An Exploration of Virginia Woolf's 'London Adventure' using Text World Theory*

This paper applies a cognitive poetic framework to a text belonging to the essay genre, a genre on which, as yet, there has been little contemporary stylistic research. Virginia Woolf's literary modernity will be foregrounded by looking at her genre-breaking employment of world-switches and (possible) fictionality in her essay, therefore arguing in favour of its literariness.

Speaker: **Maria Myrianthopoulou**

Title: *Experiencing loss: Text World Theory and 'One Art'*

This paper investigates the Text World Theory model, a framework used to analyse the cognitive process of mapping information when encountering discourse, in relation to the poem 'One Art' by Elizabeth Bishop. Maria argues that although the poem is problematic in TWT terms, since it does not establish a main concrete text world, this model is ideal in investigating the poem's effect upon the reader, as its intricacy lies in the enticing interplay between discourse- and text-worlds. Maria conducts a thorough analysis of the poem on both grammatical and literary levels. She considers the contradictory treatments of the reader by Bishop, who both involves them through pronominal usage and imperatives, whilst also excluding them through employment of an 'ideal reader' and deviation from their expectations of reality. Maria also argues for the interactive nature of poetry by accounting for the active experience of the poem's main theme of loss by the reader, through analysis of negation. Furthermore, Maria accounts for the numerous biographical misinterpretations of the poem, by analysing the emotionally climactic structure of the denouement against the World-Repairing principle. Finally, she makes some propositions for future considerations of the TWT model by questioning Gavins' (2005: 82) replacement of 'sub-worlds' with 'world-switches', and discussing the existence of a conceptual hierarchy within the reader's cognitive mapping of the poem, as a result of Focalisation.

Speaker: **John Michael Cammish**

Title: *'I've not even researched Pottery yet': How does the Community of Practice of Gamers establish their membership and hierarchy within a game?*

The research looked into the Community of Practice of gamers during an online game of Civilisation V, looking into how the participants constructed their identity as gamers and established their legitimacy within the community as well as their hierarchical positioning. Due to word count limitations, John was unable to undertake analysis of all seven participants, though he did manage sustained analysis of four, as well as explanation of how the software of the game and voice chat affected conversation, as well as the hardware of the computers themselves.

John found that there were two forms of dominance present, that of being good at the game and that of dominating the social element; the main features found and discussed within the essay were dominance of speech, exploitation of game mechanics, innuendo, and choice of laughter, roleplaying and undermining of others for personal gain.

The observer's paradox was heavily present throughout the data; the participants were fully aware of being recorded and often referred to it, often creating some very interesting and unusual forms of speech. As part of the analysis John also named a new phenomenon, which he described as 'Accommodation of Medium', where participants chose to use text to speak to the participant who had no mic, and so could only respond through text.

The audio-based data really lends itself to a presentational format; being able to hear the data being discussed makes it not only more interesting to hear, but easier to understand.

Speaker: **Briony Newbold**

Title: *Representing mental illness in the media: Fight Club and schizophrenia*

The media can be considered a cultural touchstone, representing popular ideas as well as reinforcing them. This presentation aims to explore the ways in which the film Fight Club uses cultural ideas about mental health issues to construct a central plotline, using a multidisciplinary approach, combining discourse analysis and film techniques to explore both linguistic and visual markers. This presentation will focus on the tension between media stereotypes and medical practice, as well as the legacy of mental health depiction in which Fight Club resides.

Delegate List

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