

SLC Magazine



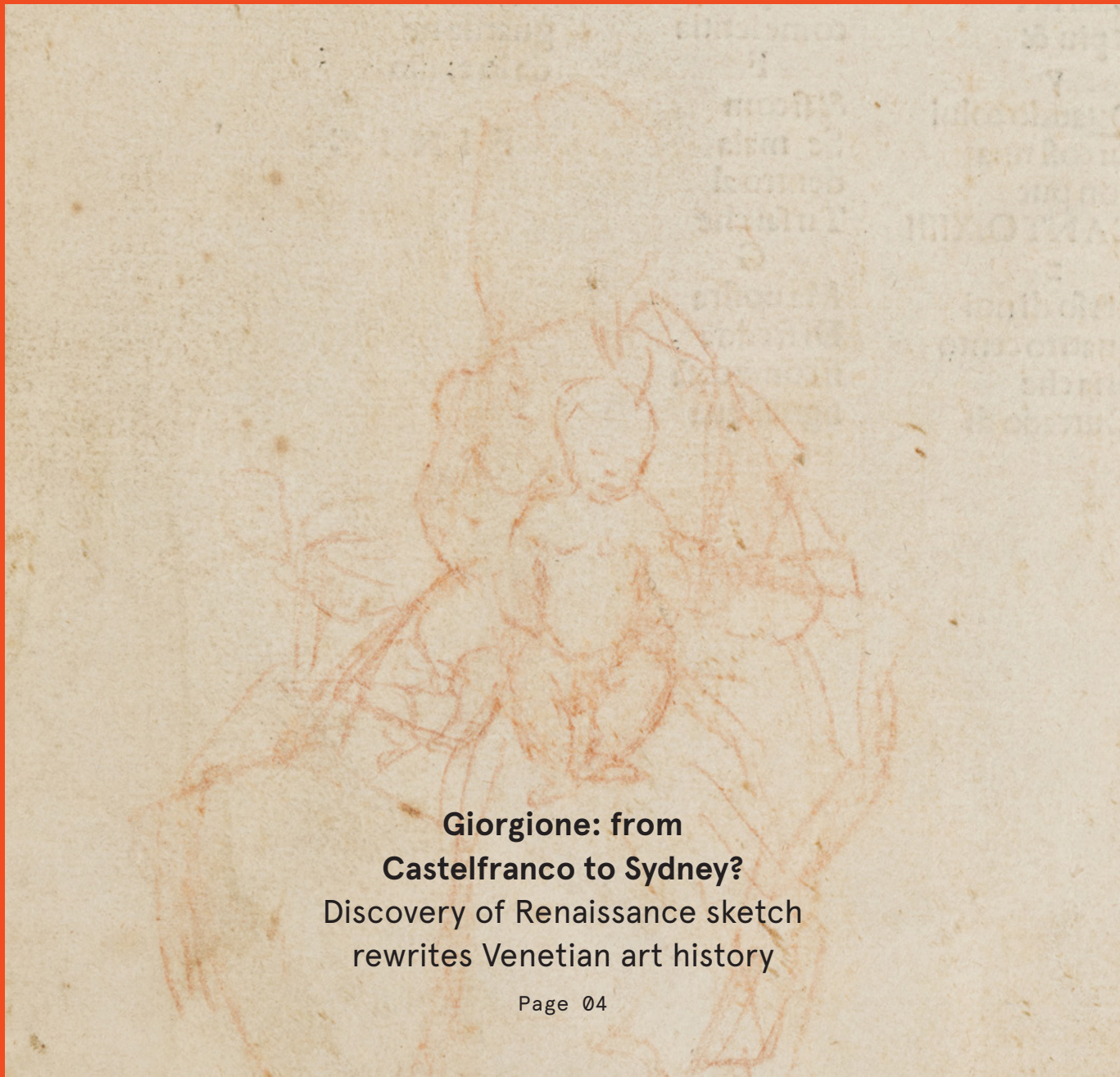
THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

Chinese tomb murals
along the Silk Road

Women's writing and the
role of photographs

The metamorphoses of
artist Louise Bourgeois

Learning languages via
cultural immersion



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rewrites Venetian art history

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It has been a real pleasure to take over from Professor Yixu Lu while she is on well-deserved research leave during 2019.

While it has been a hectic year, it has also been incredibly rewarding. A number of our colleagues have new monographs out: Professor Michele Ford, Dr Chiew-Hui Ho, Associate Professor Christine Ji, Dr Gili Kluger, Dr Cat Moir, Associate Professor Michelle Royer, Dr Clara Sitbon, Dr Josh Stenberg and Associate Professor Linda Tsung. Each of these is a work of highly significant scholarship. Along with the many edited collections, book chapters, journal articles and other publications (and, not least, creative works such as Professor Vrasidas Karalis's *The Glebe Point Road Blues*), they show the vibrancy and excitement of working in the School. The World Literatures and the Global South Conference, convened by Professor Yixu Lu, was a great display of many aspects of this intellectual energy, as are the articles by colleagues in this magazine.

Another really rewarding aspect of the Head of School's role is our connection with the wider community. This is displayed in events such as our annual Prize Night Ceremony, and most of all, through the very generous support we receive through funding and donations from individuals and groups. Our School

newsletter highlighted the Ann Kirby Bequest and its support for Jewish Studies, while this year we have started the Carole Muller scholarships to support research on Bali. I've also enjoyed attending events with the Greek community here at the University, where I learned about the depth of commitment from a wide section of society towards our teaching of Modern Greek language as well as Greek and Byzantine Culture.

Finally, having broad contact with our students has made this year particularly worthwhile. Talking to them about their experiences of our new in-country offerings, meeting with our student representatives to get their perspectives on learning, and attending events such as the SLC Student Intercultural Society Showcase Party has shown me how much our students make all our work significant.

Professor Adrian Vickers
Acting Head of School

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Cover image
Chalk sketch of Madonna and Child by Giorgione on the verso of folio CCXCVIII in the University of Sydney's 1497 copy of 'La commedia divina'. University of Sydney Library Digital Collections.

News in brief

Highlights from the School of Languages and Cultures

Gathering of experts at Sydney's first multilingual international conference on world literatures and the Global South



The School of Languages and Cultures proudly hosted the third international congress of the World Literature Association from 23–25 August 2019 with co-convenors from The Peking University Australian Studies Centre and the World Literature Association.

With keynote speakers, award-winning Australian author Alexis Wright and Columbia University professor and author Gauri Viswanathan, the international conference engaged with literary production on and from the Global South in their own languages as well as in translation.

The opening day featured a documentary launch and address by Gangalidda man Clarence Walden from the Gulf of Carpentaria in Queensland, who shared his gripping story of survival and cultural

resilience – from growing up in the Doomadgee Mission in the 1950s to exercising political determination for his community.

Over three days, 128 participants from more than 20 countries presented 94 papers across four thematic sections.

Along with a plenary event featuring 12 writers from 10 countries, the conference also hosted two public events featuring a reading performance by *Mascara Literary Review*'s Salon of diaspora writers and translators, as well as a discussion forum on China's place in world literature.

For more information and podcasts of key talks, visit:
sydney.edu.au/world-literatures-global-south

The inaugural University-wide student language speech contest

The University of Sydney held its first-ever student-run Foreign Languages Speech Contest on 29 August 2019 to allow students from various backgrounds to practise and display their language skills in the form of a two-minute speech.

Together with the School of Languages and Cultures (SLC), the event was organised by a team of students representatives from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

Catering to a range of languages and various levels from beginners to native speakers, participants were given the opportunity to speak before a judging panel comprising of SLC's teaching staff about their chosen topic ranging from 'The Power of Language' to custom-made topics such as 'Love'.

With thanks to the help of our volunteers, the contest went off without a hitch, with participants and judges coming together for pizza and drinks to close the evening.

Congratulations to the winners of our first multilingual speech contest!



SLC experts help secure Australia's place in Holocaust Remembrance Alliance

On 4 June 2019, Dr Avril Alba and Professor Emerita Suzanne Rutland from the Department of Hebrew, Biblical and Jewish Studies were among a small group of experts of the Australian Delegation who secured Australia as the 33rd member of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) following a unanimous vote of the plenary in Luxembourg.

Australia is the first Indo-Pacific Nation to join the IHRA. The IHRA is the international and intergovernmental body promoting Holocaust education, remembrance and research, as well as the countering of antisemitism, racism and anti-Roma and Sinti prejudice.



"Now that Australia is a full member, we are able to full participate in IHRA's efforts to formulate policies, plans and programs advancing Holocaust education, commemoration and research. This is particularly important given the large number of Holocaust survivors and their descendants in Australia," Dr Alba said.

"Membership also provides a mandate to further enhance Australia's efforts in Holocaust

education and commemoration with the support through IHRA of leading experts from around the world," Professor Rutland added.

The Australian government's commitment to IHRA enjoys bi-partisan support and is facilitated through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). The Head of the Australian delegation is Lynette Wood, Ambassador to Germany.

Leading Australia in research – ARC ERA and Latin American Studies

The Australian Research Council (ARC)'s *2018 Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA)*, published in March 2019, marks the University of Sydney's research as 'well above world standard'.

Researchers from the School of Languages and Cultures contributed to areas that attained the highest ERA rating of 5, such as Cultural Studies, Literary Studies, Historical Studies, Sociology, and History and Philosophy of Specific Fields. This is the third consecutive time that the top ERA rating has been given to Cultural Studies, Literary Studies, Historical Studies, and History and Philosophy of Specific Fields.

In September 2019, *The Australian's Research* magazine ranked the University of Sydney as the country's leading institution for Latin American Studies.

"Being recognised as a leading institution in our field is a significant achievement – particularly as we consider that the Department of Spanish and Latin American Studies launched in 2007, making it one of the youngest in the country," said Dr Fernanda Peñaloza and Dr Vek Lewis in a joint statement from the Department and Sydney University Research Community for Latin American Studies (SURCLA).

Ad. 17. ferendino Mou zoro da Castelfranco a pello
fintore eccellentissimo da pello Venezia de
annj .36. & requiesce pace

Giorgione: from Castelfranco to Sydney?

Discovery of a Renaissance drawing
transforms Venetian art history

Written by Nerida Newbiggin



For over 500 years, a drawing of a woman and child has rested silently on the last page of a 1497 edition of Dante's *Divine Comedy* in the University of Sydney's Fisher Library. Its red chalk lines and accompanying inscription caught the eye of librarian Kim Wilson who consulted Nerida Newbigin, Emeritus Professor at the Department of Italian Studies, about her discovery. Professor Newbigin confirmed that the inscription recorded the death from plague of "Zorzo da Castelo Franco ... fintore excelentissimo" – "Giorgio da Castelfranco ... most excellent painter."

Professor Newbigin recounts how the sketch came to be recognised as one of only three drawings ever to be attributed to the enigmatic Renaissance painter, Giorgio da Castelfranco, known to posterity as Giorgione.

One of the annual delights of teaching on research methods for literary students was a tutorial in the Friends' Room of Fisher Library where we could look at volumes from the University's Dante collection. The holdings are remarkable. In addition to facsimile reproductions of the most important and beautiful manuscripts from 1336 onwards, Fisher Library holds a collection of early printed editions, including large quarto editions extensively annotated and illustrated with woodcuts; Aldus Manutius's 1501 'pocket' edition printed in italics for a 'modern' reading public; and more.

In 2017, Julie Sommerfeldt, Rare Books and Collections Manager at Fisher Library, invited me to contribute to an ongoing series of lunchtime talks entitled Rare Bites. I chose to speak about the Dante collection as well as

the passionate collectors and philanthropists who had helped to create it. I selected a number of volumes to be taken along. Among them was an old friend, Incunable 97.1: the 1497 edition of Dante's *La Divina Commedia*, printed in Venice by Pietro de Quarenghi from Bergamo.

A gratifying number of library staff were present. Among them was Kim Wilson, Academic Liaison Librarian for the School of Literature, Art and Media. At a subsequent meet-and-greet occasion for Library donors, some items were brought out from the Rare Books and Special Collections. Kim chose our 1497 Dante to show and discuss with our guests – and she did some homework. Kim's curiosity had been piqued by an inscription and a drawing on the last folio of the volume which was otherwise blank.

Fig. 1. The verso of the last folio of a copy of Dante's *Commedia*, Venice 1497, with an inscription in iron-gall ink and a drawing of the Virgin and Child in red chalk. 30.5 by 19.8 cm. ([University of Sydney Library, Inc.97.1](#)).



Detail of Fig. 1.



Adoration of the Magi, predella panel of the Allendale Nativity, National Gallery, London.

Did the owner of the book record the death of the artist on that page because the artist had done a sketch there? Did the volume belong to Giorgione? Did it belong to a friend or would-be patron, for whom the artist sketched an idea for a commission? Nothing else in the volume allows us to confirm any of these hypotheses.

The article in *The Burlington Magazine*'s [March 2019 'Drawings' issue](#) was the result of our further discussions and research. It proposes that the drawing is indeed the work of Giorgione and can be related to the Allendale group of paintings, which includes Giorgione's *Adoration of the Magi* in the National Gallery, London, the Allendale *Adoration of the Shepherds* and the Benson Holy Family, both in the National Gallery of Art, Washington DC, and the unfinished *Adoration of the Shepherds* in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.

On 16 February 2019, before the *Burlington* article was published, an article by freelance journalist Luke Slattery appeared on the front page of *The Australian* – an exceptional and welcome 'good-news' piece for the University and the humanities. The response around the world has been no less excited than our own. As Italian critic and University of Verona academic, Enrico Maria Dal Pozzolo, wrote in *La Nuova* on 26 March 2019: "We can thank heaven for a truly momentous discovery that demonstrates an axiomatic truth that we often encounter as much in the history of art as in life: namely, that the more you look the less you find, whereas when you are not looking, sometimes life surprises you and leaves you with your mouth agape."

Emeritus Professor Nerida Newbigin taught Italian Language and Literature at the University of Sydney from 1970 until her retirement in December 2008. She is now a full-time researcher. Her research interests are philological and historical: the history of theatre and performance in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, late medieval lay piety, and the editing and interpretation of theatrical texts and archival material. She has just completed her latest book, *Making a Play for God*, on 15th-century Florentine religious drama.

Murals from tombs along the Silk Road

Written by Dr Xiaohuan Zhao
Photography by Qian Wang

The Silk Road was an ancient network of trade routes that linked China with the West – a thoroughfare for the exchange of ideas and goods between the East and West, and between the North and the South.

*Over the Great Desert,
a lone straight column of smoke rises up;
On the Long River,
the setting sun is round.*

The above antithetical couplet from a pentasyllabic regulated-verse poem by the famous Tang dynasty (618–907) poet and painter, Wang Wei (699–759), vividly depicts the natural environment and beautiful landscape of the Great Desert and the Long River along the Silk Road.

The Silk Road was officially opened during the reign period of Emperor Wu of Han (reigned 141–87 BC) who dispatched Zhang Qian (died 114 BC) as his imperial envoy to the Western Regions in an attempt to build an alliance with the Tokharians to fight against their common foe: the nomadic Xiongnu. The mission undertaken by Zhang Qian to the Western Regions

was blatantly a diplo-military one but, thereafter, the Silk Road eventually became an important road for economic and cultural exchange.

The 'Tribute of Yu' of the 5th-century BC Confucian classic *Book of Documents (Shangshu)* notes: "Reaching eastwards to the sea; extending westwards to the moving sands; to the utmost limits of the north and south – his fame and influence filled up (all within) the four seas". Indeed, "reaching eastwards and extending westwards" is a true portrayal of cross-cultural communication along the Silk Road that finds full expression in tomb paintings.

Tomb paintings began to appear in China during the Han dynasty (206 BC–AD 220) and continued throughout imperial China until the Qing dynasty (1644–1911). They were executed on walls, stones, bricks, wood and silk – with murals accounting for the bulk of them. They reach a very high artistic level. Elements of Han Chinese culture are mixed with those of non-Han Chinese cultures from the Western Regions, standing testimony to a dynamic cross-cultural communication between China and the West.



Part of banquet scene with a Han musician playing the Chinese bamboo panpipe (*paixiao*) and a non-Han Chinese musician playing the phoenix-headed *konghou* harp – a plucked string instrument introduced to China from the Western Regions during the Han dynasty. The mural is from a tomb excavated in 2008 in Shuiquanliang of Shuozhou, Shanxi province dating from the Northern Qi period (550–577) (hereafter Shuiquanliang Tomb Mural).

They are of enormous value to artists, archaeologists, historians, philosophers and religious studies scholars, as they contain rich information about this life and afterlife; gods, ghosts and spirits; birds, beasts and flowers; demons and divine beings; mythical characters and creatures; historical and legendary figures; state and military affairs, architecture and decorative art; and etcetera.

As a form of religious art, most of the tomb murals are devoted to describing the daily life enjoyed by the tomb occupant in this world and the afterlife where they continue to enjoy the heavenly world. This is particularly true of tomb murals from both early and early medieval China when people “served the dead as they would have served them alive; they served the departed as they would have served them had they been continued

among them”, as observed in the Confucian classic *Doctrine of the Mean (Zhongyong)*.

The tomb mural occupies an important position in Chinese art history. The earliest known Chinese landscape paintings and portraits of Huangdi the Yellow Emperor – who has been worshipped as the originator of Chinese civilisation and apical ancestor of the Han Chinese people since the Warring States Period (475–221 BC) – all come in the form of tomb murals. Murals that have been discovered in excavated tombs, when put together, would cover a total area of more than ten thousand square metres – no other forms of paintings from ancient China can compare with such a scale. More than one-third of the tomb murals are found in the burial sites along the Silk Road, which is extended northward to the grassland of present-day Mongolia.



The tomb occupant receives a guard of honour headed by two officials cloaked in red robes.



Musicians play the Chinese brass trumpet, *laba*, to provide entertainment for the tomb occupant.



Horse riding scene in Shuiquanliang Tomb Mural from a burial site in Shuozhou of modern Shanxi, a place of strategic importance on the way that linked the Mongolia Steppe to the Silk Road in ancient times.

There has never been a shortage of scholarly interest in ancient Chinese tomb murals, but most of the research has been focussed on a specific historical period, a specific burial site, or a specific piece of artwork with little attention given to an overall survey of the development, distribution, discovery and distinctive features of tomb murals along the Silk Road.

Seen in this light, an in-depth analysis of tomb murals along the Silk Road fills a gap within scholarship through the thematic study of the current status and geographical distribution of the archaeological remains; the form and structure of tombs in terms of the social status of tomb occupants; the iconic systems, artistic features and religious themes of tomb murals; and the interaction and mutual influence between Han Chinese and non-Han Chinese burial customs and tomb murals.

Dr Xiaohuan Zhao is Senior Lecturer in Chinese literature and theatre at the Department of Chinese Studies at the University of Sydney, and Distinguished Overseas Professor at the Institute of Theatre and Theatrical Relics of Shanxi Normal University in China. He is Co-Deputy Editor-in-Chief of *Tomb Murals along the Silk Road in China* (*Zhongguo Sichou zhilu shang de mushi bihua*, hereafter *Tomb Murals*), a seven-volume book series containing more than 1,500 illustrations. Published in 2018 by Southeast University Press in Nanjing, China, *Tomb Murals* was awarded the 'Third-class Book Prize 2018' by the Government of Jiangsu Province. Dr Zhao publishes extensively in the fields of traditional Chinese culture and literature with a specialist focus on religion, literature and theatre, and has recently published *Drama, Fiction and Folk Belief: Traditional Chinese Literature and Culture from an Overseas Perspective* (Fudan University Press, 2018). He is engaged in a forthcoming Routledge book project on the history of Chinese temple theatre.

Remembering, writing and showing: women's writing and photography

Written by Giorgia Alù

The acts of remembering and forgetting powerfully affect our actions. They shape our life histories and the ways we perceive the histories of other people and places. These acts are enacted through and supported by material object – including photographs.

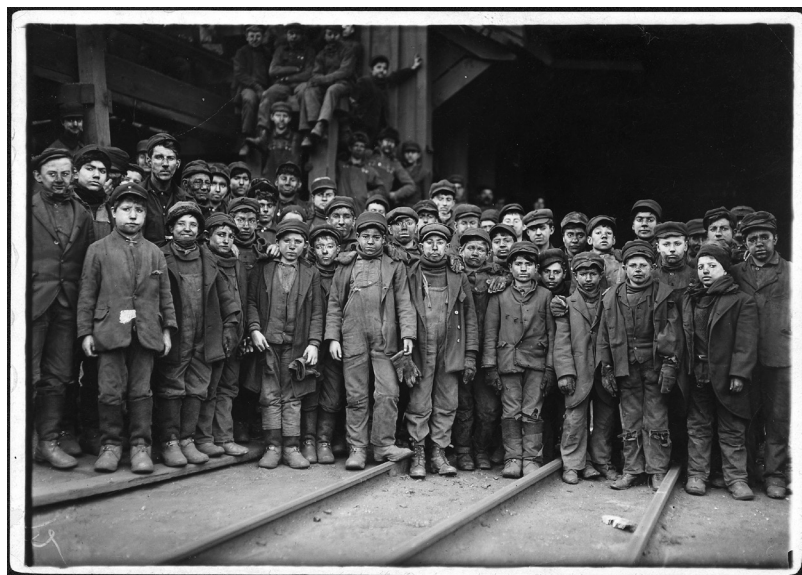
Serving as elements of material culture and symbols in acts of commemoration, photographs may contribute to the construction of a common and shared past and, consequently, groups and communities of remembering. We share photographs by touching and showing them to other people. Cultural memory expert and historian Annette Kuhn describes the process of scrutinising photographs as “memory work”, a process that is “a conscious and purposeful performance of memory [that] involves an active staging of memory” via spoken and written words, diverse types of images, and sounds.¹

In narrative texts that aim to reconstruct personal histories, family histories and biographies, the subject’s process of writing may often be activated by looking at an old photographic image. At other times, the writing may be inspired by oral stories or written documents, but a visual image is required in the identification, appropriation and validation of scenes and faces that emerge through other people’s narrations. Through this process, light is cast on an anonymous or forgotten photograph found in an archive or a family album which is then given a meaning, story and

title through the text that accompanies it. Photographs travel across time and space, supplying links between individuals and their past to provide – via photographic archives, museums, exhibitions and albums – the socio-historical context in which narrative is woven. At the same time, it is through photographs, and together with the stories that the images encourage us to narrate, that people lost in time and space can travel back to us.

This is particularly evident whenever old photographic images are retrieved and used in narratives of migration, diaspora and exile. The act of showing and narrating the lives of others through photographs and writing is also an ethical form of “altruism”, and a step that is crucial for us to know our own identity.²

Women, especially, have often played and replayed the role of the keeper in familial and community relationships, as well as the vessel and vehicle of the family’s memories. They bear witness to stories that have been fragmented, interrupted and even silenced by separation by becoming “the historians, the guardians of memory.”³



A group of the youngest breaker boys, January 1911. Photo by Lewis Wickes Hine. This photograph is included in Anna Maria Riccardi's *Cronache dalla collina* (*Chronicles from the Hill*): un romanzo tra storia e memoria (2005).

Photographs travel across time and space, supplying links between individuals and their past to provide – via photographic archives, museums, exhibitions and albums – the socio-historical context in which narrative is woven.

1. Kuhn, Annette (1995) 2002. *Family Secrets: Acts of Memory and Imagination*. London: Verso. p. 157; Kuhn, Annette. 2010. “Memory Texts and Memory Work: Performances of Memory In and With Visual Media.” *Memory Studies* 3(4): 298-313.
2. Cavarero, Adriana. 2000. *Relating Narratives: Storytelling and Selfhood*. Translated by Paul A. Kottman. London: Routledge.
3. Holland, Patricia. 1991. “History, Memory and the Family Album.” In *Family Snaps: The Meaning of Domestic Photography*, edited by Jo Spence and Patricia Holland, 1-14. London: Virago.

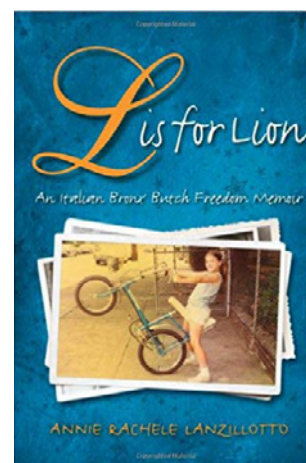
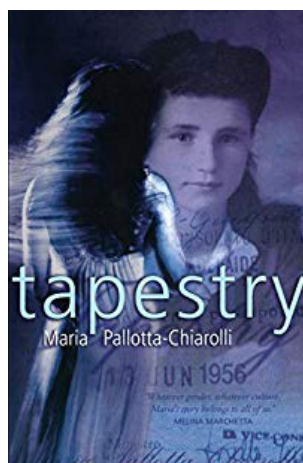
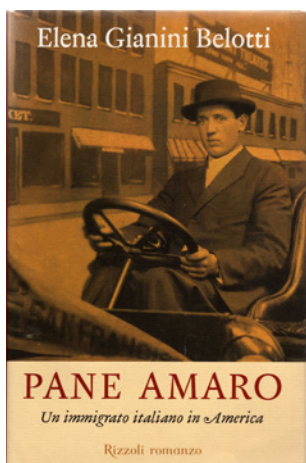
Some of the stories I have studied in the last few years are told by Italian, Italian-American and Italian-Australian women who retrieve vernacular and personal photographs from family or public archives and albums, using them to reconstruct and retell familial and personal stories – the tales of transnational mobility. Through words and photographs, some of these women fictionalise the migration stories of their parents and grandparents, or in their literary memoirs and artistic works, in attempt to rediscover their own complex multilingual and multicultural identity and roots.

Placed on the cover of the book, inserted within its pages or simply described in words, the mute and often anonymous photograph of a beloved lost relative – or of other people who lived similar experiences of displacement and trauma – represents not only what can no longer be seen, but also what was never seen and, therefore, only imagined. The text, then, comprised of recorded memories and both oral and written sources, bridges the gap: the “interruption” in history that the image represents to make the photograph communicable, narratable and readable. Through their

books about familial migration, women therefore connect the lost worlds of their families – or of a single individual within those worlds – with the present. The amalgamation of verbal and visual materials produces a reunification and form of ‘homecoming’: people and their lives in a distant place and time are brought back to the present and to their own family or community.

Through the journeys and mobile lives of others, the author also makes her own private journey through time and space. This is exemplified by the novels *Pane amaro* (2006) by Elena Gianini Belotti, the illustrated and little-known *Cronache dalla collina* (*Chronicles from the Hill*) (2006) by Anna Maria Riccardi, or the memoir *Tapestry* (1999) by Italian-Australian writer Maria Pallotta-Chiarolli. In these books, the photograph becomes a meeting point at which the life of the author and those of distant others intersect both visually and imaginarily, where she may repeatedly reorganise and reassess her identity as woman, daughter, and granddaughter, and as a member of a group – whether it be her family, her family’s original community, or her country of origin.

Through their books about familial migration,
women therefore connect the lost worlds of
their families – or of a single individual within
those worlds – with the present.



Books of women's writing where photographs connect author to family roots (L-R): Elena Gianini Belotti, 2006. *Pane amaro. Un immigrato italiano in America*. Milan: Rizzoli; Anna Maria Riccardi, 2006. *Cronache dalla collina: un romanzo tra storia e memoria*. Rome: Gangemi. Bottom (L-R): Maria Pallotta-Chiarolli, Maria. 1999. *Tapestry*. Sydney: Random House. Annie Rachele Lanzillotto. 2013. *L is for Lion: An Italian Bronx Butch Freedom Memoir*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

The amalgamation of verbal and visual materials produces a reunification and form of 'homecoming': people and their lives in a distant place and time are brought back to the present and to their own family or community.



The pens at Ellis Island's Registry Room (or Great Hall) who have passed the first mental inspection, circa 1902–1913. This photograph is included in Anna Maria Riccardi's *Cronache dalla collina* (2005). Photo: Edwin Levick. New York Public Library Digital Collections.



B. Amore, "D'Amore Triptych Family Stories". Wood, tin, photo, mixed media, family artifacts, *Lifeline: filo della vita*. Ellis Island, Immigration Museum 2000–2001. Used with permission.

Through their hybrid texts and artworks, the women I have studied remove the static photograph from its usually immobile position – whether it portrays people, themselves, places or objects – and transfer it to other means and formats. These women's works, in fact, remind us that the photograph is also a site of material cultural practice⁴ and the process of interweaving photographs with other objects and texts; through various creative practices including albums, installations and archives, they create a dynamic relation between people and things. Photographs, thereby, become akin to pieces of textual tapestries.

An example is *Life Line: filo della vita* (*Thread of Life*), the artwork of Italian-American artist B. Amore (Bernadette

D'Amore), that was displayed at the Ellis Island Museum from 2000 to 2001. With the aim of preserving family stories for posterity, the tapestry-style composition in many of these works reinforce the intersection between human subjects (as readers, viewers, and authors) and material subjects (objects, words and images). Another example is the long photo-textual memoir by Italian-Australian writer Giulia Giuffrè, *Primavera*, or *The Time of Your Life* (2011), where we also find many photographs of family's objects like children's clothing.

Writing and narration are involved with the textural significance of the photograph as a material object, and as a metaphorical fragment of a larger narrative fabric that imbricates stories of displacement, loss and trauma.

4. Edwards, Elizabeth. 2009a. "Photography and the Material Performance of the Past." *History and Theory* 48 (4): 130–150; Miller, Daniel, ed. 1998. *Material Culture: Why Some Things Matter*. London: University College London.

THE FABRIC OF MEMORY



Giulia Giuffrè, "The Fabric of Memory," in *Primavera*, or *The Time of Your Life*, 2011, pp. 282-283. © Giulia Giuffrè. Used with permission.

Further examples can be found in Annie Lanzillotto's dense memoir *L is for Lion* (2013) whereby the author, an Italian-American lesbian writer, singer and performer, interlaces the story of her family and domestic violence with her own story of illness and sexual coming-out. The book is illustrated with family photographs and photographs of the author at the hospital.

By entering, supplementing or containing the writing that accompanies it, the photograph becomes knitted into other texts and materials to produce complex transcultural practices and collage-like narratives whereby personal, family and community stories are continuously woven. Through this amalgamation of the personal and the collective, these authors and artists participate – together

with their reader-viewers – in diverse narrative relational spaces. They express emotional and material experiences that capture moments of cross-cultural and transnational exchange, and communal histories of displacement.

Dr Giorgia Alù is Senior Lecturer in Italian Studies at the University of Sydney. She is the author of *Journeys Exposed: Women's Writing, Photography and Mobility* (2019), *Beyond the Traveller's Gaze: Expatriate Ladies Writing in Sicily* (1848-1910) and of various articles on the relationship between literature and photography, visual culture, women's writing and travel writing. She has also co-edited *Enlightening Encounters: Photography in Italian Literature* (2015) and is now working on a forthcoming monographic book on photography and communities in Italy at the turn of the 19th century.

The metamorphoses of Louise Bourgeois

Written by Léa Vuong

In April of 2019, I travelled to China to deliver a lecture for the opening of a three-month exhibition on Louise Bourgeois (1911–2010) as part of the first retrospective of the French-American sculptor and painter in mainland China. The Song Art Museum in Beijing, where the exhibition was held, is located on grounds previously used for breeding and riding horses – not far from the city’s international airport.



Song Art Museum's opening of the exhibition *Louise Bourgeois: The Eternal Thread* in Beijing, China.



Behind the museum's scenes: an advertising panel for *FREEZE*, China's answer to Frieze Art Fair, the international contemporary art fair with annual editions in London, New York, and, more recently, Los Angeles.



In the Song Art Museum sculpture park: Bourgeois's *Eyes Benches I* (1996-1997) on the left and her *Maman* (1999) sculpture in the background, looming large over visitors.



Song Art Museum's main structure designed by Vermilion Zhou Design Group.

While the former stables remain, the museum is located in a purpose-built structure made of delicate church-like features and surrounded by hilly lawns, planted with knotted centenary-old Greeting Pine trees: the museum's titular Ying Ke Song trees plucked from the Chinese Huangshan mountains, located more than a thousand kilometres away.

For the purposes of the exhibition, the museum's grounds had been transformed once more – this time into a sculpture park – housing some of Louise Bourgeois's most iconic sculptural works which, on the day of the opening, were periodically plunged into obscurity as planes hovering low above them would cast their temporary shadows. By opening its doors to Louise Bourgeois's

oeuvre, the Song Art Museum, for all its striking beauty and unique setting, took on a transient entity in sync with its neighbouring airport, becoming a 'non-place' created by globalisation. A term coined by French anthropologist Marc Augé, it suggests the image of the museum as a dot in a never-ending line of cultural institutions, museums and galleries across the world hosting one after the other, and sometime simultaneously, exhibitions devoted to the artist's works.

The universal appeal of Louise Bourgeois's work and her recognition as a global figure of modern and contemporary art – and of an equally globalised art market – began late in her career. It paradoxically started at the moment Louise Bourgeois

defined her art through a personal dimension. She was born in 1911 in France, where she started her artistic career before moving in 1938 and settling in New York, where she lived and worked until her death. She remained an artist's artist for a long time until a 1982 retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) opened up her work to a larger public – the first time the museum devoted a retrospective to a living artist who is also a woman.

It was then that she declared her work was about her childhood and that she subsequently developed, through published writings and interviews, an autobiographical narrative which has only recently, and posthumously, become an object of critical enquiry.

Part of my research looks in detail into Bourgeois's writings and the literary influences and aspirations that shape her artistic practice. It pays close attention to the narrative and poetic inner workings of her autobiographical stance, as well as the ways in which it plays and subverts the borders between truth and fiction, life and work, word and image, and between French and English.

In Mapplethorpe's photograph, Louise Bourgeois is in her early 70s. The phallic-shaped object tucked under her arm is her then-14-year-old sculpture *Fillette* (1968). Its title can be translated as 'little girl' and it makes sense insofar as the sculpture is small enough to be both carried under the arm ('-ette' serves as a diminutive in French) and, as an object created by the artist, her artistic offspring ('fille', meaning



The sculpture's title densifies – rather than affixes – the work's meaning, verbally suggesting a form of insult and belittling that contrasts with the object's almost comical enlargement. Because the title means 'little girl', the sculpture also suggests tenderness and affection. Through its verbal feminisation and reference to the realm of childhood, it can also be read as a form of self-identification.

Robert Mapplethorpe's portrait of Louise Bourgeois, 1982 (printed 1991). *ARTIST ROOMS: Tate and National Galleries Collection*. © Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation. Reproduced from Tate, London for use of non-commercial criticism and review of the artist's work.

The enduring universality of Louise Bourgeois's oeuvre stems in part from its constantly shifting state of being, a metamorphous state that photographer Robert Mapplethorpe managed to immobilise onto a fixed image: a photographic portrait of the artist taken in 1982 on the occasion of her MoMA retrospective.

both 'girl' and 'daughter' in French). Yet, it is also clearly not a '*fillette*' because it is a phallus and, as such, an obvious metonymical representation of adult masculinity and a symbol of patriarchy. Louise Bourgeois's work has long been read through feminist frameworks, and the 1960s and 1970s are decades

Louise Bourgeois is simultaneously portrayed as the artist and the work she holds in her arm, as the black-and-white effaces the limits between her body and the sculpture.

when she was active in New York City's feminist and artistic circles.

To take the object out of the photograph and viewing it in an exhibition space also shows the invisible role played by verbal language. As it is meant to be shown hanging upside down, it can obviously be seen as a denunciation – and retaliation – on patriarchy. The sculpture's title densifies – rather than affixes – the work's meaning, verbally suggesting a form of insult and belittling that contrasts with the object's almost comical enlargement. Because the title means 'little girl', the sculpture also suggests tenderness and affection. Through its verbal feminisation and reference to the realm of childhood, it can also be read as a form of self-identification.

Louise Bourgeois is simultaneously portrayed as the artist and the work she holds in her arm, as the black-and-white effaces the limits between her body and the sculpture. Her knowing smile and stately posture also evoke iconic and universally-known images such as Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa* and Marcel Duchamp's own repurposing of the masterpiece in *LHOOQ*. If Bourgeois is not equipped with a mustache, she is covered with hairs – having come to sit for Mapplethorpe wearing a monkey fur coat and insisting it features in her portrait.

Through Mapplethorpe's camera, she posits herself simultaneously as a successful 1980s New York artist and as her own sculpture, a photographer's model who makes her own rules, a painting, a readymade, a crossdresser, a human covered with animal hairs and an old lady who is also a child. This presence of metamorphosis notably evokes the realm of fairy tales, which Louise Bourgeois often weaves through the various retellings of her childhood's story, inviting us to see her work – and herself – as one would approach a tale's endless layers of possible readings.

Dr Léa Vuong is a lecturer in the Department of French and Francophone Studies. She works on modern and contemporary literature and visual art, and specifically on interactions between word and image. She has published a monographic study of contemporary French writer Pascal Quignard, and she is currently working on a second book project, currently entitled *Louise Bourgeois: The Artist as Writer*.

Experiencing the world through language and culture immersion

Since 2018, more than 350 students have travelled overseas through the In-Country Experience program within the University's Open Learning Environment. By 2020, the offering will cover more than 10 destinations. Our student ambassadors who embarked to China and Germany in the program's pilot year reflect on their adventures in learning a new language through immersion in the local context.

Learning Mandarin in Peking Experience China: Beijing

Written by Deirdre Mair (B Engineering (Hons) and B Arts) and Adam Herman (B Arts and B Laws)

Over the November and December summer holidays in 2018, we had the opportunity to participate in an Open Learning Environment (OLE) in-country unit in China for three weeks. We discovered that an appreciation of the city and the local language gave us a far greater understanding of Chinese culture than we could ever have predicted.

There are many things that are remarkable about Beijing – from food to art to historic monuments. Yet, one of the most remarkable things that we noticed is something that is rarely commented in tourist brochures: its size.

Across the entire city, buildings soar into the sky, continuing on and

on as far as the eye can see. This is unsurprising when we consider that Beijing is home to over 20 million people – almost the entire population of Australia condensed into one urban centre. The sheer scale of the city continued to amaze us throughout the entire trip.

Beijing's urban context is by no means trivial. It set the scene for our discovery of what it means to live in

modern-day China. So many things that we previously had not understood made so much more sense: a dense and busy urban environment calls for significantly greater optimisation and convenience when compared to other smaller cities, which explains the use of QR codes for quick information access and the near-ubiquitous overnight shipping for online shoppers.

The enormous size of the city means that your chances of running into someone you've met are extraordinarily small, hence the tendency for people to add relative strangers on WeChat, a popular Chinese social media platform and mobile messaging app, after just one meeting. Even the city's focus on designer clothes made more sense – considering the landscape of Beijing. Since the buildings and streets are relatively homogenous, it became apparent to us that fashion is the main way for individuals to set themselves apart from others.





“Being able to use the language immediately in real-life scenarios added significant depth to our learning and enabled us to remember what we learned so much better.”

**Deirdre Mair and
Adam Herman**

On the other end of the spectrum, another striking aspect of Beijing as a city was the incredible number of parks. These weren't just small, quarter-acre sized parks like the ones you find in Australian suburbs, but were huge, sprawling gardens filled not only with plants, but also heritage temples, pagodas and palaces. The achievement in preserving these spaces amidst an increasingly bustling city is a testament to the value which the Chinese people place on culture and the provision of spaces for quietness, for reflection, for encounters with nature and for the gathering of the local community. We saw groups congregating in these spaces to play traditional games and just to chat with one another; it was clear that community values are truly important.

At the same time, we were learning Mandarin at Peking University, arguably the best higher education institution in China. Having the

opportunity to experience both a language and culture simultaneously was incredibly enriching. We attended class and learned new words that describe different types of food; we then went straight to the university canteen to order all the food items we had just learned about in class. Being able to use the language immediately in real-life scenarios added significant depth to our learning and enabled us to remember what we learned so much better.

An experience that was particularly rewarding occurred on the day when we learned numbers. After class, we went to Maliandao tea market in the tea district of China. Armed only with our beginner's knowledge of counting numbers and basic phrases such as “How much is it?” and “Can it be cheaper?”, we proceeded to bargain on the price of jasmine tea. We may or may not have gotten a good deal on the tea we brought, and we definitely made a lot of language mistakes. But those



mistakes were learning opportunities which helped to consolidate our knowledge.

One mistake that we will never forget was the day when Deirdre tried to order her dinner for the first time in a local restaurant. She should have said, “wo yiao jiaozi”, however she accidentally said, “wo *jiao* jiaozi” – so, instead of ordering herself some dumplings, she inadvertently said to the shopkeeper: “My name is dumpling.” This was met with a lot of laughter and also a very confused look on the shopkeeper’s face. This is a mistake that Deirdre will probably never make again.

In addition to allowing us to communicate with Chinese people (when we didn’t make mistakes), learning Mandarin really enriched our understanding of the culture. It meant that we were able to pronounce and also understand the meaning of different place names – that we could begin to appreciate how expressing

courtesy in Mandarin is different to English and, thus, truly begin to appreciate the beauty and tonality of Chinese language.

The opportunities and time we had on this OLE in-country experience to Beijing, China was unforgettable. It represented an unparalleled opportunity to truly immerse ourselves in a completely new culture – and we’d redo it all over again.

To see more from the OLE in-country unit Experience China (Beijing, Nov-Dec 2018), view the [photo album](#).



Language: the key to a culture Experience Germany: Berlin

**Written by Juliette Marchant
(B Arts and B Laws)**

We tell ourselves stories in order to live with the past. A dictator holds a nation under his thumb. A flag waves red, white and black against the steely, winter sky. The innocents sit behind locked doors and closed windows. The perpetrators, marked by that fatal hooked symbol, march through the streets with robotic gestures and emotionless faces.

It was the pages of these common stories – of war, destruction and division – that laid the foundations for our cultural journey. Equipped with little more than passion and drive, 30 University of Sydney students set out

to become more than just bystanders in the Berlin narrative.

In the baroque centre of the historic city stands the historic Humboldt University. The brainchild of brothers Wilhelm and Alexander Humboldt, the institution has been home to some of the greatest minds of all time, including Karl Marx, Albert Einstein and a total of 55 Nobel Prize Laureates from a variety of disciplines. It was our turn – a group of undergraduate students with lofty aspirations and little more than ‘ja’ and ‘nein’ in the way of German vocabulary – to continue the Humboldt legacy.

We took a seat in our first lesson of the language course spanning four hours a day, five days a week, across two weeks, and totalling 40 hours. Despite being overwhelmed by the unknown, we were ambitious

and ready. Our feeble attempts at responding to our lecturers’ fluent German instructions became increasingly confident as the days went on. From simple questions such as “What is your name?” and “Where do you live?”, we progressed to ordering food in German, battling with increasingly lengthy and complex words and pronunciations as the days went on.

Despite the natural hesitation of locals towards us English-speaking foreigners, Berlin began to embrace us as we embraced its culture and language. The looks we received from a handful of locals at our conversing in English turned into smiles of admiration as we ordered coffee, asked for directions and told the time in often-cohesive (although not always completely correct) German.

“...we were exposed to history in a way that quite simply cannot be replicated in even the most engaging of lectures.”

Juliette Marchant



Accounting for the largest amount of time in our Humboldt course, language was the area in which there was the most noticeable growth. Fellow student Maria Djuric, stated: “I couldn’t believe that by the end of the course, I was able to converse so freely and confidently with people around me in a language that wasn’t English. I honestly didn’t anticipate learning so much in such a short span of time, but what really aided the process was the immersive experience.”

Similarly, Samantha Whitiri-Faitua noted: “Learning the language was certainly the most rewarding part of the trip, as it forced you to interact with the culture on a more visceral level. I really hope to continue this skill when I get home and to hopefully return to Germany.”

Language was just one gateway to understanding a culture that we had all been acquainted with in the past; be that through history classes in high school, films, novels or further study. Although unlike a normal history course, wherein content is learned through lectures and tutorials, we experienced history in the flesh through field study and excursions to a variety of important locations within Berlin. From the German History Museum and Topography of Terror, to the Berlin Wall Memorial and East Side Gallery, we

were exposed to history in a way that quite simply cannot be replicated in even the most engaging of lectures.

Fellow student, Alec Franks, discussed the influence of such experiences upon his learning: “History is such a vital part of any





culture but, for a city that spent decades divided, there is no greater insight into its current state than in the remnants of the wall which allowed for the division.”

Although, in view of my premise – that we encounter the past through the hostile pages of history – there is a tendency to view Germany as a 20th century state. Nonetheless, through our excursion to the Federal Chancellery, the political home of one of the world’s most powerful female leaders, and the Reichstag, the political building now adorned with a glass dome roof to represent governmental transparency; I was reminded, in the most evocative sense, of the progressive, contemporary qualities that make Berlin a global city of the 21st century.

Thus, whilst we peer through the windows of textbooks and televisions, laptops and lectures, seeking some sort of grand epiphany in the hollow claims of victors who once lived in far-off lands, it is not until we speak in their tongue, walk in their footsteps and see their stories through our own eyes that we can really understand.

To see more from the OLE in-country unit Experience Germany (Berlin, Dec 2018), view the [photo album](#).

The Open Learning Environment (OLE) In-Country Experience

The School of Languages and Cultures offers intensive in-country units for undergraduate students to learn a new language overseas as part of their degree.

Learn more:

sydney.edu.au/arts/ole-in-country

For more photos and videos from other destinations, visit the School of Languages and Cultures on Facebook:

facebook.com/usydslc

2019 SLC Prizes Night Ceremony

On 1 May, the School of Languages and Cultures celebrated the achievements of outstanding students and acknowledged the School's benefactors for their valuable support at our annual ceremony for recipients of prizes and scholarships.

The evening opened with a welcome by Faculty Dean Professor Annamarie Jagose and a series of traditional folk dances from the Greek Islands. Our Head of School (Acting), Professor Adrian Vickers, recognised the students for their results and thanked their guests and the VIPs/donors for providing the emotional and financial support to allow students to undertake language and culture studies.

Master of Ceremonies Professor Vrasidas Karalis introduced the Department Chairs, VIP guests and their representatives who presented award certificates to 68 students.

We had the pleasure of hosting 21 VIPs and nine of their guests in attendance, including our generous donors and partners; Consulate General representatives for France, Greece, Italy, the Federal Republic of Germany, the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Indonesia, and the Republic of Korea; an Australian delegate of the European Union to Australia; and representatives from *The Greek Herald's* Foreign Language Press, the Italian Institute of Culture, Australian-Italian community newspaper *La Fiamma*, Japan Foundation Sydney and the Khyentse Foundation.

Photography by Christian Wilson





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1. Performance of three traditional folk dances from the Greek islands, 'Sousta, Maleviziotis and Ikariotikos' by alumna Sophia Komarkowski and current student Antonia Komarkowski, along with Ari Paraskakis and Patrick Thomas
2. Professor Vrasidas Karalis, Sir Nicholas Laurantus Professor of Modern Greek and Department Chair of Modern Greek and Byzantine Studies, opens the night as Master of Ceremonies
3. Professor Annamarie Jagose, Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, gives her welcome
4. Professor Adrian Vickers, Head of School of Languages and Cultures (Acting), addresses the evening's guests

5. Dr Lucia Sorbera, Department Chair of Arabic Language and Cultures
6. Department of Arabic Language and Cultures: Rhian Mordaunt-Buksh and Joumana Shead, PD Jack Prize



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Kate Stanton

- Goethe Prize in German Studies for German Honours
- Margaret Ann Bailey Memorial Prize for Honours in a Modern European Language

“I couldn’t imagine studying at the University of Sydney without furthering my knowledge of German. Learning German has been indispensable to my studies. I undertook an Honours year in Germanic Studies which has paved the path of a future I never thought was within my reach.

I researched a post-war historiographical debate about the Nazi past with Dr Cat Moir as my supervisor. This gave me the opportunity to consolidate and challenge the knowledge I had obtained throughout my undergraduate studies, and finally reached the level where I could read all the original historical documents in German – untainted or manipulated by English translations.

I am continuing my research at the University of Oxford, undertaking a Master in Modern European History. The School of Languages and Cultures helped me attain my proficiency in German which is what drove my application into the competitive range.”



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7. Department of Chinese Studies (L-R): Xiaoyi Huang, TM Hsiao Scholarship; Hu Liu, The Raymond Hsu Scholarship; Prudence Luttrell, Asian Students’ Council’s 1963 Festival of Asia Scholarship for Proficiency in Chinese Studies; To Wing Chinese Language and Culture Fund recipients Yichen Liu, Gabriela Powell Thomas, Anny Gao and Angie Wang

8. Professor Peter Morgan and EU Ambassadors Prize recipient Nicole Lee

9. European Studies Konrad Adenauer Prize recipient Emma Cross

10. Department of French and Francophone Studies: Joel Agius, Sonia Marks Memorial Prize for French; Mark Bosch, Graham Jones Prize for French

and Ronald Horan Prize for French; Timothy Livingstone, Garton Scholarship No II for French; Eleanor Murray, Garton Scholarship No I for French; Josephine Goldman, Emilie M Schweitzer Exchange Scholarship in French Studies; Francesca Rowlinson, Anne Bates Memorial Scholarship for French

11. Kate Stanton and Mr Klaus Steitz, Deputy Consul General, Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany

12. Dr Tristan Lay, Department of Germanic Studies

13. Simona Neupauerova, Enid Watson Memorial Scholarship in Germanic Studies; Isabel Hopkinson and Edna Boey, Garton Scholarship No IV for First Year German



14

Thomas Jenkins

– Garton Scholarship No V for Second Year German

“My experiences with the School of Languages and Culture have been excellent. The teaching staff are fantastic. They encourage an engaging and supportive environment for language learning. Learning a language has motivated me to revisit the grammar of my native tongue, allowing me to develop a better understanding of sentence structure and the proper use of grammar in my writing for university and beyond.”



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14. Thomas Jenkins

15. Dr Jim Rheingans,
Department of Asian Studies

16. Brigitte Fyfy, Khyentse
Foundation; Maxine Williams
and Elizabeth Menzel, Khyentse
Foundation Award for
Excellence in Buddhist Studies

17. A/Prof Ian Young,
Department Chair of Hebrew,
Biblical and Studies; Amir
Elsaidy and Kristen Lewis, Percy
Joseph Marks Prize for Modern
Hebrew; Lisa Edinger-Reeve,
Bernard and Rodia Ferster
Prize; Gillian Li, Bernard and
Lotka Ferster Scholarship

18. Mrs Zani Murnia, Consul for
Education and Socio-Cultural
Affairs, Indonesian Consul for
Information; Department Chair
of Indonesian Studies Dr Novi
Djenar; Nicholas Dobrijevich,
F H Van Naerssen Memorial

Prize for Indonesian Studies

19. Nicholas Dobrijevich; Maxine
Williams and Bronte Powell,
Asian Students' Council's
1963 Festival of Asia Prize
for Proficiency in Indonesian
Studies

20. Dr Sonia Wilson,
Department Chair of
International Comparative
Literature and Translation
Studies (ICLTS) and Loren
Holley, International
Comparative Literature Studies
Program Award

21. Dott Vincenzo de Carlo,
Italian Government Lecturer,
and Timothy Richmond, Rosina
Tedeschi Memorial Prize for
Italian Conversation

22. Professor Adrian Vickers
and Laura Watts, Countess E. M.
Freehill Prize No II for Second
Year Italian



23

Maxine Williams

- Asian Students' Council's 1963 Festival of Asia Prize for Proficiency in Indonesian Studies Third Level
- Khyentse Foundation Award for Excellence in Buddhist Studies

“Studying Indonesian at the School of Languages and Cultures has opened many doors for me. I was elected as one of two Student Representatives for the Department of Indonesian Studies in 2018. In this role, I designed and implemented a Language Buddy program which was a great success.

Learning Indonesian has further motivated me to do an Honours thesis on issues related to development in Indonesia. This involves a period of intensive-in country fieldwork which is only possible as a result of my cultural and language skills.

The greatest value of multilingualism is the ability to connect deeply with people from different cultures around the world. While we often initially learn other languages to understand the differences between people, we gradually come to see more of our similarities as we gain more experiences and skills. This is essential if we want to live in a society based on peace and respect.”



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23. Maxine Williams

24. Mr Arturo Arcano, Consul General, Consulate General of Italy in Sydney and Riley Treisman, Beatrice Moran Memorial Prize in Third Year Italian

25. Department Chair of Italian Studies Dr Giorgia Alu; Timothy Richmond; Josephine Atkinson, Countess E. M. Freehill Prize No 1 for First Year Italian

26. A/Prof Rebecca Suter, Department Chair of Japanese Studies; Jungwon Sohn, Mark Kwan Memorial Prize for Excellence in Beginner Japanese; Mirei Sakurai, James Murdoch Prize for Excellence in Japanese 3 and 4

27. Mr Kie-Min Kim, Director, Korean Education Centre, Consulate General of Republic of Korea in Sydney; Department

Chair A/Prof Ki-Sung Kwak; Sneha Karri and Bingjie Liu, Korean Consulate Prize (Top Media); Nonlapan Sangsrichan and Cameron Shir-King, Korean Consulate Prize; Dr Duk-Soo Park

28. Department of Modern Greek and Byzantine Studies: A/Prof Anthony Dracopoulos; Leah Varvaressos, Maria Kolivra and Katherine Lambros, The Modern Greek Studies Foundation Prize in Modern Greek Studies; Athanasios Kallos, G. S. Caird Scholarship in Third Year Modern Greek; Marina Dionysiou, G. S. Caird Scholarship in Second Year Modern Greek

29. Elaine Kintis, The Greek Herald and Athanasios Kallos

30. Dimitra Skalkos, The Greek Herald and Marina Dionysiou



The Carole Muller Bequest

Written by Adrian Vickers

In honour of Carole Muller's legacy, the bequest of \$1 million to the School of Languages and Cultures at the University of Sydney has led to the establishment of a PhD scholarship at the end of 2019 and a separate fund to support research on Bali, including [fieldwork](#).

This generous gift from Carole Muller will allow future students to continue her research interest in the visual culture of the Bali Aga, the "Mountain" or "Original Balinese", and contribute to the support of Balinese culture.

While undertaking her postgraduate degree in Anthropology at the University of Sydney, Carole undertook coursework in the Department of Indonesian Studies.

Carole first went to Bali in the early 1970s and worked on hotel design with the famous architect, Peter Muller. Her engagement with Balinese art and culture led to restorations of key sites, including the former home of expatriate artist Rudolf Bonnet, which became the Campuhan Studio; the Buckminster Fuller's house in Ubud; and the Tirta Gangga water palace in Karangasem.

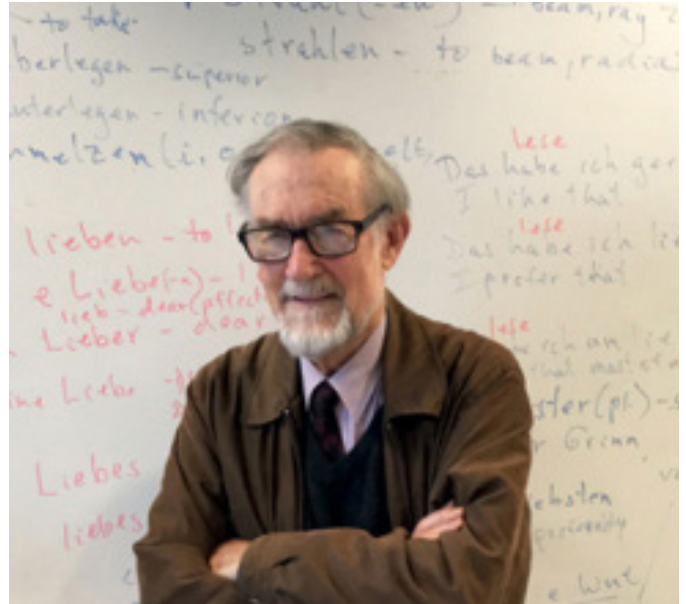
Her design work and eye for distinctive artistic forms led her to look at the culture of the Bali Aga. During the 1980s she visited villages looking at architectural form and traditional planning modes in order to understand their relationship to cosmology and social structure.

Despite macular degeneration, she was determined to publish some of the results of decades of field research in her later life, leading to three books on Bali Aga villages. That same determination led to her bequest to the University in her will. Carole passed away in December 2017, but her legacy will continue in the University. The scholarship and postgraduate funding are open to University of Sydney students researching Balinese culture.

Adapted from Siobhan Campbell's "Carole Muller and Bali: Her Academic Legacy", *The Asian Arts Society of Australia Review* 27(2): 18–19.

In memoriam: Brian Taylor

Written by Cat Moir



The Department of Germanic Studies pays tribute to Honorary Associate Professor Brian Taylor (13 May 1937–24 July 2019) who had been at the heart of the Sydney German studies community for over 60 years.

After graduating with a major (Hons) in German in 1958, Brian went on to further studies in teaching and applied linguistics in Sydney and Edinburgh, and completed a Master of Arts (Hons) at the University of Sydney in 1981.

Brian enjoyed a successful first career teaching German and other modern foreign languages in Australian high schools, where he helped to shape language teaching and learning in his advisory roles on curricular and examination committees.

In 1967, Brian joined the University of Sydney as a Senior Tutor in German. He was promoted to Lecturer in 1975, to Senior Lecturer in 1978, and to Associate Professor in 1992. Upon his retirement in 2001,

Brian became Honorary Associate Professor in German, continuing voluntarily to teach German for research purposes with his usual spirit of enthusiasm and dedication until early this year.

Brian was an active and path-breaking researcher whose work was internationally renowned. His expertise was as wide-ranging as it was deep, covering language acquisition and multilingualism, the history of German medieval song, practices of bibliography and bibliophily, and Celtic literature and culture.

His work appeared in numerous single and co-authored articles and collected volumes, and he supervised four doctoral students to completion. A *festschrift* in honour

of Brian's work was published in the Sydney Series in Celtic Studies in 2017, and was positively reviewed as a fitting tribute to Brian's outstanding contribution to research in Germanic and Celtic studies.

Brian was a passionate and committed teacher, beloved by his students; a brilliant scholar and researcher; a thoughtful colleague; and a warm, kind person whose presence on the University of Sydney campus will be deeply felt and sorely missed by the Department and School along with Brian's family, friends, students, colleagues, and to all who knew Brian.




To learn more about Brian Taylor's *Festschrift*, read Pamela O'Neill's column in our magazine's [June 2018 issue \(p. 43\)](#).

Read Kate McCallan's tribute to Brian Taylor's work in *SOPHI Magazine* (Issue 4, Winter 2017, p.18–19): ['Fifty Years of German for the Humanities'](#)

SLC Magazine

The School of Languages and Cultures at the University of Sydney offers a wide range of studies in languages and cultures. We have research expertise on ancient and modern societies in Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Middle East, as well as the multilingual reality of Australia in areas including linguistics, literature, history, political science, anthropology, religion and sociology.

sydney.edu.au/arts/slc

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