The Arts and Humanities at Austin Community College

The Big Read

Carnival ah! 2009

Dancing for JUSTICE

In the Spirit of Moliere

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The Charm
by Lyman Grant

This is the third annual issue of Ovation, the magazine of the Arts and Humanities Division at Austin Community College, and I think it really shows the world how charmed we are at ACC to have such committed and energetic faculty and students.

Let me begin by thanking John Herndon, who as a College Associate in the division edits the magazine; he puts in countless hours pulling at the many strands of creativity in the division to create the magazine. We all know the analogy of “It’s like herding cats.” Well, John’s job trying to corral the creative energies of the Arts and Humanities faculty is like that. He insists on being one more important concern for a group of people who are already highly committed to family, students, and creative projects in the college and out. Thanks, John.

As always I want to praise the commitment our professors demonstrate in serving students and their learning. The college, of course, has a faculty evaluation process that we all take very seriously. In the past, departments have also found ways to practice faculty reviews that are focused, not on mere job evaluation, but on mutual learning, on mutual, collegial devotion to professional improvements. I have sat down with adjunct faculty who received “Excellent” on their evaluations and talked about what makes them excellent teachers in the eyes of their students. Check out the “For Faculty” section of the division web site: www.austincc.edu/ah/forfaculty.

And this year, we will continue this focus. Over the years my conversations with Stephen Christopher, ACC’s Director of the Office for Special Populations, have done much to educate me about the needs of students with disabilities and how the college, overall, and faculty, in particular, can serve these students in the college classroom. On the one hand, there are the demands of our particular disciplines and skills. On the other, there are the rights and responsibilities of these and all students to consider. And on the third hand (we are multi-dexterous in Arts and Humanities), there is simply being an attentive, inventive, creative, dedicated teacher to all students.

From the beginning of my tenure as dean, I have taken the phrase “Access and Excellence” to be my motto, my daily reminder of what I hope this division is all about. I have asked Stephen to bring to our faculty, beginning in August at our Division Convocation, his skills and insights on “The Care and Feeding of Students.” What he has to say about good, focused, attentive teaching applies to all students, as well as special populations.

I especially want to thank and praise everyone who dreamed up Carnival ab! Arthur Adair, Jodi Jinks, Gail Folkins, and Kathryn Benson, in particular, put in many hundreds of hours. By all standards, Carnival ab! 2009 was a tremendous success. And guess what? We are doing it again. We are going to do a bit of shifting around and adaptation, and Carnival ab! 2010 will be more exciting than before. You can keep up to date at www.austincc.edu/carnival.

And because Carnival ab! went so well, we have decided to add a fall special event. This fall we will participate in the Big Read, funded partially by the National Endowment for the Arts. From September 15 to November 2, we will support the college and community reading of Sun, Stone, and Shadows: Twenty Great Mexican Short Stories. We have many community partners and many events. Rosa Davila, Associate Professor of Spanish, is serving as the program manager for this tremendous project. See page 10, and check out www.austincc.edu/bigread.

Lyman Grant is Dean of the Arts and Humanities Division.
Many Pathways of the Spirit
by Melinda Rothouse

During the Spring 2009 Semester the Philosophy and Religion Program sponsored a series of panel discussions on religion and spirituality featuring leaders from local religious communities as well as student panelists. Three of the panel discussions focused on a particular religious tradition: Judaism, Islam, or Buddhism. The other two events, co-sponsored by Carnival ab!, invited religious leaders and practitioners from a variety of spiritual communities to ponder questions of identity and dissent. I had the honor of organizing and chairing four of the five events, and found it to be an incredibly enriching experience. A number of students told me after the discussions that they were grateful for the opportunity to speak directly with practitioners from a variety of religious faiths, and for the chance to discuss issues of spirituality, politics, dissent, and diversity in an open forum.

We began the series with a discussion of Judaism featuring Rabbi David Komorofsky of the Texas Hillel, as well as two student panelists, Patti Mokry and Michael McClendon. Rabbi Komorofsky had recently returned from a trip to Israel with a group of students, and had a fresh and insightful perspective about the situation in the Middle East.

Next up was a discussion of Identity in Spirituality and Religion, featuring Austin Area Interreligious Ministries CEO Tom Spencer, Khoton Shahbazi-Harmon of the Austin Baha’i Center, and Rita Ricardo of the Austin Shambhala Meditation Center. The event explored questions of why we believe what we believe, how our spiritual beliefs and practices affect the way we see ourselves and others, and how religious identities intersect and diverge within the local Austin community.

Equally fascinating was the discussion of Dissent in Spirituality and Religion, chaired by religion faculty member Grant Potts. Panelists included members of altmuslim.com, an Internet-based alternative news service focusing on issues relevant to the Muslim community; the Trinity United Methodist Church, a congregation known for embracing a diverse membership; and Reclaiming, which describes itself as an “eclectic ecofeminist Witchcraft community”; as well as a member of the Religious Society of Friends (known more commonly as the Quakers).

The fourth and most popular event in the series focused on the Islamic tradition, featuring Salwa Khan and Hella Cloyd of the Islamic Center of Greater Austin and Professor Fidelma O’Leary of St. Edward’s University. Together these three women, all good friends who paused during the break to perform evening prayers together, spoke with great conviction about their tradition, which is surrounded by controversy and misunderstanding, and helped to dispel common stereotypes about Muslims. Audience members asked many thoughtful questions during the Q&A period.

The semester closed with a discussion of Buddhism featuring David Zuniga, an ordained Zen monk in the Korean Taego lineage and Outreach Coordinator at Hospice Austin; Carlene South of the Plum Blossom Sangha, an ordained lay member of Thich Nhat Hanh’s Order of Interbeing; and Jake Lorfin, a psychiatric nurse and practitioner in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition, who also teaches meditation in two Texas prisons. The event also included two student panelists, Sarah Davis and Patricia Krassner, who posed a number of thought-provoking questions to the panelists.

The Philosophy, Religion, and Humanities Department will again host a series of panel discussions during the Fall 2009 semester, each exploring a religious tradition or theme and its presence in the Austin community. The events will take place on Thursday, September 10th, 7:00 p.m. at the EVC Auditorium (Room 8500); Thursday, October 15th, 7:00 p.m., RVC Auditorium; Thursday, November 19th, 7:00 p.m., RGC Gallery Theater. Panelists will include two students. You may apply to serve as a panelist by contacting Melinda Rothouse at mrothous@austincc.edu.

Melinda Rothouse is an Adjunct Assistant Professor of Religion.

Photograph by Gary Webernick
**International Night 2009**  
by Devorah Feldman and Charles Wukasch

Imagine a night in which the nations converge on Rio Grande Campus arrayed in national attire and conversing in numerous languages. They bring ethnic dishes to share and they eagerly sample others. The evening brings song and dance, promoting multicultural understanding through the bond of friendship. Such a night, first conceived by ESOL Department Chair Mary Corredor, was brought to life by the ESOL faculty.

On April 17, 2009, the ESOL Department hosted International Night. Undeterred by the sudden eruption of inclement weather, ESOL students and their families braved the elements to join in the festivities. The faculty had gathered early, working feverishly to set up chairs and decorate, while the students prepared national dishes to share. Participants were treated to a symphony of tastes, textures, and aromas, and no one went away hungry.

Entertainment that evening was nothing short of spectacular. The Scottish Country Dance Alliance offered a splendid performance of Scottish folk dance and then demonstrated their teaching abilities (and extraordinary patience) by inviting audience members to join in.

The next act was a breathtaking performance of the local Ballet Folklórico. The dancers enraptured the audience with flashes of bright color from their beautiful costumes. Expertly choreographed to the lively sounds of traditional Mexican music, the dances celebrated the Hispanic heritage of Texas making folks want to shout *Viva México!*

Capping off the evening was English professor Richard Price’s salsa band. It soon became clear that Price’s talents reach far beyond literary analysis. His band effortlessly transported ACC students and professors to a beachside discoteca in Puerto Rico.

ESOL student Nora Obeid from Lebanon recalls the night with fondness. She loved the fact that the Scottish dancers were so willing to teach others and invite them to learn the dances. The highlight of the night for Nora was Richard Price’s band. She reports, “It wouldn’t have mattered to them if no one in the world had been listening to them. They were playing their music with such immense pleasure and passion that you could feel the joy emanating from their sound.”

A big “Thank you!” to the faculty, students, and performers who made International Night a rousing success! Keep an eye out for our next International Night and your opportunity to join us in this multicultural medley of entertainment, food, and friendship.

*Devorah Feldman and Charles Wukasch are professors of ESOL.*

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**A Taste of Asia**  
by Myung-joo (Theresa) Oh

Asian Spring Festival 2009 was held on April 23rd at the Riverside Campus. The weather was beautiful and this year was the best attended Asian Spring Festival yet. As in the past two years, this event was a collaboration between the Foreign Language Department and the East Asian Culture Society. The special theme of the festival was “A Taste of Asia!” Six local Asian restaurants from the Austin area were invited to showcase their culinary traditions. ACC students, faculty, and staff had the opportunity to sample various Asian cuisines including Japanese, Korean, Chinese, Thai and Vietnamese.

The festival also featured non-stop performances. Aikido of Austin kicked off the event, followed by Korean, Japanese and Thai songs and dances by ACC’s Japanese language students. Everyone seemed amazed by their incredible talents. The rest of the performances included the colorful dances by Laya Dance Collective and Hanayagi Japanese Dance Company and the exciting demonstrations of Chinese yoyo and Kung Fu.

The booths sponsored by the various international clubs and offices of ACC and organizations from the Asian communities enlightened and entertained the crowd with their culinary traditions, ACC students, faculty, and staff had the opportunity to sample various Asian cuisines including Japanese, Korean, Chinese, Thai and Vietnamese.

Myung-joo Oh is a Professor of Japanese.
Deciding Which Roads to Travel

by Raul Cantu

At Carnival ab! in April of 2009, the Department of English for Speakers of Other Languages launched a new journal, Crossroads, to celebrate student success.

As a young boy, I grew up in a rural area of the Rio Grande Valley, where large tracts of farmland are marked by the meeting of roads. Thinking about the new journal we were planning, I reflected on what the students are trying to accomplish at ACC, and that reminded me of those crossroads from my childhood. To me the crossroads is a place where one must make a decision on which way to go. Similarly, the students at ACC are all at a crossroads because the road they choose now will influence the direction of their lives. Our students are making important choices on the roads they want to follow. Crossroads demonstrates some of the success that is made possible by their decision to attend classes here at ACC.

What I find interesting about the whole project is that the journal took on a life of its own. At first, the goal of Crossroads was to showcase the students' abilities to use their new language. However, the result was more personal—a collection of stories that are from the students' diverse life experiences. What started out as a seemingly sterile project evolved into a way that emerging writers of English could share their personal and unique stories. The result is writing that feels good because it comes from the writers' hearts.

The student writers are from very diverse backgrounds. For example, one student writer is from Germany and is attending ACC as an exchange student. Another excellent submission was from a student in the Deaf or Hard of Hearing classes. Some students were in advanced level classes and others were in introductory levels. However, all the writers shared the same passion to have their voices heard.

Many of the journal's contributors did not believe that their writing could be published. They felt that somehow their writing did not deserve this special attention, and they were amazed when they saw their finished product in print.

The journal took a lot of effort from many people who believed in the project. It all started with Lyman Grant and Mary Corredor who offered me the chance work on the project. At first I was a little intimidated by the idea of producing a journal. I had never worked on a project such as this and I was worried about being able to collect enough quality work. This was solved by the ESOL's faculty. They began collecting their students' writings and sending them to me. I quickly discovered that the students were eager to share their work, and then I realized that the major part of the project was going to be choosing the few works I could publish from among the many submissions.

After the writings were selected the concern became editing the pieces; we had to be sure that the students' essays reflected what they were really trying to communicate. The process was made easier with the help of a former ESOL student Sarah Yang, who worked on the project as the student editor. Sarah recently finished Composition II, and she was a big help in editing the submissions. The project was also successful because of the support that I received from the journal's art director, Laura Hofmann, who not only designed the cover and layout of the journal, but also helped edit some of the writings and put them in an order that would allow the work to flow smoothly from one essay to the next.

The plan for the journal is to publish a second edition in the fall. My hope is that the students will continue to grow as writers and that ACC will continue to demonstrate to the community the success our students are achieving.

Raul Cantu is an Assistant Professor of ESOL.

Photograph by Brandy McQuirter
In 1992, a poem of mine received an honorable mention in the first Allen Ginsburg Poetry Award competition. It was a small thing, but that fall I traveled to Patterson, New Jersey, home of Passaic County Community College, which offers the prize, to participate in a celebratory reading. There I met Maria Mazziotti-Gillan, who administered the Ginsburg prize along with the William Carlos Williams prize, named for a local boy who done good. The William Carlos Williams prize attracted my attention because it was unlike other prizes I knew about, offering a cash award not for an unpublished manuscript but for a book published during a given year.

I noticed these denizens of New Jersey had a healthy sense of irony about the beauties of their Garden State, a beauty which includes refineries and urban blight as well as accessible mountains, sandy beaches and the Pine Barrens. Kind of reminded me of Texas.

When I returned to Austin, I started talking to colleagues about the exciting program in Passaic County. Being rather naïve, I thought, why shouldn’t ACC do something similar? This could really put us on the map!

I broached the idea to David Lydic, then my department chair in English. In those days, we had different chairs for different campuses, and creative writing classes were taught in the English department. We kicked the idea around a little. David recalled recently, “I liked the idea of the prize because I was also coordinating the ACC Literary Festival at that time, trying to acknowledge creative writers as practicing professionals of their craft. I thought a national prize would support that idea.”

I wrote a proposal, and David took it from there. Much to my surprise, the idea received approval, and I was asked to direct the prize.

David and I had some long discussions about possible names for the prize, eventually choosing “balconies” for several reasons. The word is Spanish for “balconies,” and was a term applied to certain landforms which resembled them during the Spanish Entrada; Bernardo de Miranda gave the name to the Balcones Fault in 1756. The fault runs through Austin and Central Texas; of great antiquity, it is the geographical feature that gives rise to such prominent landmarks as Mount Bonnell and Barton Springs. We liked the name because it seems to reflect both the land and the people of our region.

As David said, “We tossed out several forgettable names, but Balcones stuck. I still like it a great deal.”

Thus the Balcones Poetry Prize was born. Our prize would recognize an outstanding book of poetry published during a given calendar year with a prize of $1,000.

The first Balcones prize was awarded to Kathleen Halme for her book Every Substance Clothed. The judges for that first prize were Dave Oliphant and Peggy Kelley, two outstanding Austin poets who I was both teaching at ACC at that time, and myself; our “judge-of-record” was the late Edward Dorn, one of America’s most outstanding poets of the late 20th century. That first year was a great launch, since we were able to bring both Halme and Dorn to Austin for readings.

As time flowed on, David Lydic directed the prize for a while, and later it was directed by Dorothy Ellis Barnett. The prize was not awarded for 1998 or 2003. In 2004, I was named Associate Director of the new Balcones Center for Creative Writing, with part of my duties to direct the prize.

Since then, the prize has continued to grow. We have received as many as 172 nominations for the prize in a single year. I noticed people were identifying themselves as “finalists” in the prize, a designation we had never officially made; so we decided to accept the inevitable and make it official!

I should say a word about our judges—they form an outstanding group of poets, writers and professors. Numerous ACC professors have served as judges, including Joe Hoppe, Elizabeth Scanlon, Elisabeth McKetta, Carrie Fountain, Doug Dawson and Richard Price, as well as former faculty members Dave Oliphant, Peggy Kelley, Ken Fontenot and Dale Smith; judges from outside ACC have included Hoa Nguyen (Skanky Possum), Scott Pierce (Effing Press) and David Moorman (Texas Monthly).

The 12 Balcones prize winners make up an impressive list of contemporary poets. Over the years, ACC students have benefited from these poets’ campus visits to give readings and visit classrooms.

In the last three years, we have begun to create video-based web learning modules based on our Balcones poets’ readings and interviews. The idea was first developed by Arts and Humanities Dean Lyman Grant, I believe, and I was asked to pioneer the effort. From some rather poor-quality video-tape, I culled a reading of a poem by Lorna Dee Cervantes and created tabs with questions about the poem and the reading, answers and discussion, and links. Everyone said it was cool. Learning from our mistakes, we captured some much better footage with Aimee Nezhukumatathil during her visit in 2008.
This time Creative Writing professors Liz Scanlon and Carrie Fountain developed the learning materials to go with the video, and they created a very enjoyable, fully interactive module that far surpassed my rather clumsy first effort. You can check these learning modules out at www.austincc.edu/crw/PoetryInPerformance/speakers.html.

We are looking forward to a visit by our 2008 prize winner Michael McGriff, scheduled for November 5, 2009. Born and raised in Coos Bay, Oregon, McGriff reflects the landscape of the Pacific Northwest in his collection *Dismantling the Hills*. He was a Wallace Stegner fellow at Stanford University, where he is now teaching, and a Michener fellow at the University of Texas, and currently holds an NEA fellowship. Our judges for 2008 cited his “pointed precision, haunted and insistent accuracy,” and his “deep understanding of the beauty within the ugliness of industry, and the way strength of spirit can arise from forlorn circumstance.” To read more about McGriff, go to www.austincc.edu/crw/balcones_prize.html.

*John Herndon is an Adjunct Professor of English and Creative Writing, Associate Director of the Balcones Center for Creative Writing, and editor of Ovation.*

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**Balcones Poetry Prize winners**

- Michael McGriff, *Dismantling the Hills*, 2008
- Aimee Nezhukumatathil, *At the Drive-In Volcano*, 2007
- Lorna Dee Cervantes, *Drive*, 2006
- Aaron Anstett, *No Accident*, 2005
- Lorenzo Thomas, *Dancing on Main Street*, 2004
- Carol Potter, *Short History of Pets*, 2001
- Dana Levin, *In the Surgical Theatre*, 2000
- Kathleen Halme, *Every Substance Clothed*, 1995

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Amy Nezhukumatathil signs her Balcones Poetry Prize-winning *At the Drive-In Volcano* after her reading at the South Austin Campus. Photo by Brandy McQuirter
Arts & Humanities Hosts a Big Read
By Christopher Smith

ACC’s Division of Arts and Humanities has received a $20,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to sponsor the Big Read in Austin. The Big Read is a nationwide effort to bring communities together to read and discuss literature.

The Arts and Humanities Division is using the grant to inspire Austinites to read, and to ensure that great works of literature do not get relegated to the recesses of the library, but remain at the forefront of American culture. Lyman Grant, Dean of the Arts and Humanities Division, hopes to get a broad spectrum of the Austin community reading this fall, and to accomplish this he has chosen Sun, Stone, and Shadows: 20 Great Mexican Short Stories, as the book to be used for the first Big Read to come to Austin.

Relapsed and reluctant readers are the main target of the Big Read program, and traditional book clubs just aren’t bringing those readers in, says Grant. “We need to create interest and excitement among readers.”

Grant chose this book of short stories by Mexican writers, from the long list of possible choices provided by the NEA, because he felt readers in Austin would be interested in these stories. “We have a large and important influence of Mexican Culture that is embedded throughout the city,” said Grant. He thinks that once people begin to read the book they will find that the stories of Mexico are not so different from stories of Austin.

“Mexican culture permeates the city,” said Grant, “The purpose of this program is to bring the literary aspect of the culture to the forefront.” Many other cities in Texas and across the country will also be using Sun, Stone, and Shadows for their Big Read programs. Places like the Bronx, Denver, and even Whitewater, Wisconsin, will be using the book, a sign of how widespread and ingrained Mexican culture is in the U.S.

Numerous organizations have signed on to help make the Big Read a city wide affair. The Mexican-American Cultural Center, Austin Public Library, Lorraine “Grandma” Camacho Activity Center, ACC Library, Austin Bat Cave, ACC’s El Centro, ACC’s Creative Writing Department, The Center for Public Policy and Political Studies at ACC, The Ann Richards School for Young Women Leaders, and Resistencia Bookstore will work with the Arts and Humanities Division to host readings, music, and other events related to the Big Read.

The person responsible for coordinating with all these different organizations and overseeing the various Big Read events is Rosa Davila, Assistant Professor of Spanish. “I think this is a very important program to promote reading,” said Davila, “I’m interested in making people aware of the possibilities there are in reading and exploring types of literature that will broaden people’s perspective of other cultures.” Davila has grouped the 20 stories in the book into seven themes she thinks will help link events and celebrations pertaining to Mexican culture to the stories. “We have stories coming from the revolutionary period where people are talking about the struggles of the great event which was the Revolution in México,” said Davila of the first set of stories to be discussed. The next two themes will deal with Mexican men and women and the issues of love, relationships and gender roles in society.

The themes to be discussed in October will begin with “The Absurd and the Bizarre,” and move on to “Ancient Gods” and “Poetic Imagination,” and end with the “Mysterious Night.”

Three stories in the book that deal with the revolution will correspond with Mexican Independence Day Celebrations being held at ACC’s Riverside Campus on September 16th. The Mexican American Cultural Center will host an event titled “Revolution, Personal & Political” on September 24th. Actors Rupert Reyes, from Teatro Vivo of Austin, and Amparo Garcia-Crow, Adjunct Associate Professor of Creative Writing at ACC, will perform stage readings of the stories.

On October 1st, Cuban-American author Cristina Garcia will give a collaborative reading with author and translator Liliana Valenzuela at ACC’s Rio Grande Campus Mainstage Theater. Garcia was born in Havana but grew up in New York City; she writes and speaks about the life and struggles of immigrants. Valenzuela has translated many works by Latina writers, including Garcia’s 2008 novel The Handbook of Luck. The Arts and Humanities Division will partner with ACC’s Center for Public Policy and Political Studies, the University of Texas, Huston-Tillotson University and St. Edwards University for “Reading the Future: Preparing Texas Educators Today for the Students of Tomorrow” to be held at ACC’s Eastview Campus on October 10th. The conference will highlight the importance of the teacher in encouraging the reading of literature.

For more information visit www.austincc.edu/bigread.

Christopher Smith is a Creative Writing and Journalism student at ACC.
Carnival ah! 2009: What Do I Think?
by Arthur Adair

A three-day festival celebrating the Arts & Humanities at Austin Community College...ah...yes...Carnival ah! What can I say about Carnival ah! 2009? Wow! What happened?

The vibe resonates.
Let me try a metaphor. As a teacher, I begin every semester with boundless energy, ready to convert eager minds to lead a life in the theatre; as the semester draws to a close, I realize you can lead a horse to water, but you cannot make him drink. (I am usually happy enough if the horses can at least appreciate the water’s existence and possibly remember a few terms like “downstage left” or “soliloquy.”) Yet, each semester, I begin with the same boundless energy, because a few horses do drink, and drink deep. And I have the opportunity to watch them ride off into a glorious sunrise with new-found energy and direction.

Carnival ah! 2009 set out to reaffirm a feeling of community here at ACC and provide opportunities for its students, faculty, staff, and alumni to celebrate the arts and culture.

Personally speaking? What do I think?
Let’s just say, “I think we’re gonna need a bigger boat.”

Arthur Adair is Adjunct Assistant Professor of Drama, and served as Project Manager for Carnival ah! 2009.

Photographs by Brandy McQuirter, Devorah Feldman and Steve McClary
Chaos and Creativity at Carnival ah!

For three days in April, the Rio Grande Campus was transformed into an open-air carnival. Students, faculty, staff and friends from the community spontaneously burst into song and dance, staged plays and screened films, read poems and stories, browsed among paintings, sculptures and ceramics, and just generally celebrated the arts and culture at the coolest college in the coolest town in Texas. This was Carnival ab!

You spell that with an “a” and an “h” and that stands for Arts and Humanities, the division and the dean—Lyman Grant—that put on the show.

Carnival ab! was a bit like throwing a handful of wildflower seeds into the air—let a hundred flowers bloom, let a hundred schools of thought contend.

Actually, there were just over 60 groups from campus and the community involved. Organizers estimated over 300 people got involved as participants, and some 1,000 visitors attended the events.

The biggest draw was clearly The Flea Circus—an homage to Billy Lee Brammer’s novel The Gay Place, which is set in Austin and concerns the political landscape of the late 1950’s. Brammer’s daughters Sidney and Shelby, who teach Creative Writing and Drama at ACC, screened a short sample of their work adapting the novel for film. Professor Joe O’Connell (English and Creative Writing) hosted a panel discussion of Brammer and the politics of the era, which featured former state senator A.R. “Babe” Schwartz, writers Gary Cartwright, Jan Reid, Kaye Northcott, Nadine Eckhardt (Brammer’s ex-wife) and UT Professor Don Graham. The Mainstage Theater was filled to overflowing.

Into the West, a co-production of the Drama and Creative Writing departments, as well as Moliere 2009, a celebration of French culture, also played to packed houses.

The last day was dedicated to celebrating our ties to the community, featuring such organizations as the Armstrong Community Music School, The Mexican-American Cultural Center, the Asian-American Cultural Center, Badgerdog Literary Publishing, Visions International literary journal, and Steamroller Prints.

Next year, Carnival ab! is scheduled for April 16-24.
**Fall 2009**

**Constitution Day Art Exhibit**
Sept 8-30
Reception and Awards Ceremony Sept 17, 6-8 p.m.
Sponsored by the Arts and Humanities Division and the Center for Public Policy and Political Studies
Highland Business Center Foyer

**The Big Read**
Sept 15-Nov 2
Visit: www.austincc.edu/bigread for more information.

“Modernity” Philosophy Lecture Series
Oct 1, 7-9 p.m.
Eastview Campus Room 8500
Sponsored by ACC’s Austin Philosophy Forum
Visit www.austincc.edu/philosophy for more information.

Cristina Garcia and Liliana Valenzuela Reading
Oct 1, 7 p.m.
Rio Grande Campus Mainstage Theater
Sponsored by the Creative Writing Department and Arts and Humanities Division as part of The Big Read.

**Dance Video Sampler Series**
Oct 8, 7-9 p.m.
Rio Grande Campus Dance Studio Room 130

**“Political Process” Philosophy Lecture Series**
Oct 15, 7-9 p.m.
Eastview Campus Room 8500
Sponsored by ACC’s Austin Philosophy Forum
Visit www.austincc.edu/philosophy for more information.

**The 2009 Annual ACC Faculty Show**
Oct 16-Jan 15
University of Texas Performing Arts Center
Bass Concert Hall, Lobby
7 to 9 p.m. Eastview Campus, (Room 8500)

“Under the Gaslight”
Oct 30-31, Nov 1, Nov 6-8, 8 p.m. Fri – Sat and 2 p.m. Sun
Rio Grande Campus Mainstage Theater
A Totally Original and Picturesque Drama of Life and Love in These Times
by Augustin Daly
Directed by Shelby Brammer

**Michael McGriff Reading**
Nov 5, 7 p.m.
Rio Grande Campus Gallery Theater
Michael McGriff is the ACC Balcones Prize-Winning author of Dismantling the Hills.

**“Metropolis” Film Screening**
Nov 12, 7-9 p.m.
Sponsored by ACC’s Austin Philosophy Forum
Visit www.austincc.edu/philosophy for more information about this event.

**Holiday Art Sale**
ACC Student and Faculty
Nov 18-19, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Highland Business Center Lobby

“**The Rio Review” Publication Celebration**
Dec 2, 7 p.m.
Rio Grande Campus Gallery Theater
ACC’s literary journal features poems, prose, screenplays and artwork by students.

**Fall Choreographer’s Showcase**
Dec 4-5, 8 p.m.
Rio Grande Campus Mainstage Theater

**Fall Dance Informance**
Dec 10, 7 p.m.
Rio Grande Campus Dance Studio Room 130

**Spring 2010**

**Dance Video Sampler Series**
Feb 18, 6 p.m.
Rio Grande Campus Dance Studio Room 130

**“Protest and Activism” Philosophy Lecture Series**
Feb 18, 7-9 p.m.
Eastview Campus Room 8500
Sponsored by ACC’s Austin Philosophy Forum
Visit www.austincc.edu/philosophy for more information.

**“Smoking Lesson”**
Feb 26-28, Mar 5-7, 8 p.m. Fri – Sat and 2 p.m. Sun
Rio Grande Campus Gallery Theater
Written by Julia Jordan
Directed by Marcus McQuirter

**“Aesthetics” Philosophy Lecture Series**
Mar 11, 7-9 p.m.
Eastview Campus Room 8500
Sponsored by ACC’s Austin Philosophy Forum
Visit www.austincc.edu/philosophy for more information.

**Percival Everett Reading**
Apr 1, 7 p.m.
Rio Grande Campus Gallery Theater
Percival Everett is the award winning author of more than a dozen books, including Suder, Glyph, and I am Not Sidney Poitier.

**ACC Student Art Exhibit**
Apr 3-28
Reception and Awards Ceremony Apr 6, 6-8 p.m.
Dougherty Arts Center

**“The Philosophy of Karl Marx” Philosophy Lecture Series**
Apr 15, 7-9 p.m.
Eastview Campus Room 8500
Sponsored by ACC’s Austin Philosophy Forum
Visit www.austincc.edu/philosophy for more information.

**Carnival ah!**
Apr 16-24
Rio Grande Campus
Visit www.austincc.edu/carnival for information.
“B-Sides from the A-List”
Apr 16-18, 8 p.m. Fri – Sat and 2 p.m. Sun
Apr 23, 8 p.m., Apr 24, 2 p.m.
Rio Grande Campus Mainstage Theater
Short Plays by Beckett, Ionesco, Albee and Pinter
Directed by Drama Faculty

Staff and Faculty Reading
Apr 22, 1-4 p.m.
The Rio Grande Campus
Sponsored by the Creative Writing Department

“The Rio Review” Publication Celebration
Apr 22, 7 p.m.
The Rio Grande Campus
ACC’s literary journal features poems, prose, screenplays and artwork by students.
Sponsored by the Creative Writing Department

“In 2 the West”
Apr 23-24, 2 p.m. Fri, 8 p.m. Sat
Rio Grande Campus Gallery Theater
Co-produced by the Creative Writing Department and the Drama Department
Directed by Amparo Garcia and Sidney Brammer

Spring Choreographer’s Showcase
May 7-8, 8 p.m.
Rio Grande Campus Mainstage Theater

Spring Dance Informance
May 13, 7 p.m.
Rio Grande Campus Dance Studio Room 130

Summer 2010

Summer Dance Informance
Jul 1, 7 p.m.
Rio Grande Campus Dance Studio Room 130

Ongoing

Student Literary Gatherings
Sept 14, Oct 12, Nov 16, Dec 7
Feb 8, Mar 8, Apr 9, May 10, 7 p.m.
Austin Java, 1206 Parkway
Visit www.austincc.edu/crw for information about these events.

Religion Panel Discussions
Sept 10, 7 p.m.
Eastview Campus Room 8500
Oct 15, 7 p.m.
Riverside Campus Room 8100
Nov 19, 7 p.m.
Rio Grande Campus Gallery Theater
Visit www.austincc.edu/philosophy for information.

Galleries and Displays of Student and Faculty Work
Galleries and displays can be seen at the following campus locations—Cypress Creek Commons; Highland Business Center first floor and fifth floor administrative offices; Pinnacle eighth floor hall and student commons; and Rio Grande main building, basement, and annex hallways, Gallery in the Cave, student lounge, and library.
The Rio Review—Ten Years of Creativity
by Gail Folkins

For the past decade, The Rio Review, student literary journal of Austin Community College, has showcased student creativity through short stories, poems, screenplays, creative nonfiction, photography, and artwork. To celebrate a 10-year milestone for this journal, the Creative Writing Department produced an anniversary edition, unveiled during the 2009 Carnival ab! event at the Rio Grande campus.

Founded by Dorothy Ellis Barnett, former department chair of Creative Writing, The Rio Review gives ACC students in all disciplines an opportunity to contribute their written and visual works. Students produce the journal through an academic co-op course held each fall and spring, which guides them through the selection, editing, and production processes. Printed by Morgan Printing of Austin, the journal has evolved through several designs over the years. In another important milestone, the publication transitioned from faculty-selected works to a student-run publication in 2005, with Paula Mendoza-Hanna serving as the first student editor. Along the way, faculty advisors John Hern-don, Lyman Grant, Maxine Beach and I provided publication know-how and encouragement.

The 10-year anniversary edition of The Rio Review, which was produced in addition to the spring 2009 edition, was guided by student editor-in-chief Chelsea Biondolillo. She began the selection process guided by recommendations of past faculty advisors. Part of the challenge came not only from selecting from 10 years of creative work, but also finding and contacting the authors, who had achieved a variety of educational, career, and writing goals over the years. With the content in place, Morgan Printing designed a 10-year anniversary cover based on past fall covers of The Rio Review, with spring cover designs serving as section breaks inside the journal. Biondolillo’s next task was helping plan a special reading to celebrate the journal and welcome back past ACC contributors.

On the opening day of ACC’s Carnival ab! Spring 2009 celebration, an excited group of students gathered on the front lawn of the Rio Grande campus to reconnect with one another, share readings, and enjoy cake and ice cream. Readers at the event included Paula Mendoza-Hanna, Lance Lawhon, Marita Peppard, Roberta Preston Pazdral, Phaidra Harper Vega, Nettie Hartsock, Susan Stockton, and others. After the reading, Arts & Humanities Division Dean Lyman Grant presented Dorothy Ellis Barnett with a plaque recognizing her achievements with the The Rio Review.

Guided by student editors and advisors to come, The Rio Review will continue showcasing the creativity and talent of ACC students, while enriching students’ educational experiences through a hands-on publication.

If you’d like a copy of The Rio Review 10-year anniversary edition, contact Mary Rincon of the Creative Writing Department at mrincon@austincc.edu.

Gail Folkins served as Interim-Department Chair of Creative Writing for 2008-09.
The Rio Review—Continuing Relevance
by Paula Mendoza-Hanna

I came to Austin from Seattle, Washington where I had attended Everett Community College, and even then I already knew that where I wanted to be was at a four year university. My time at Austin Community College proved to be the best preparation.

I feel fortunate for the extraordinary opportunity I had to be the Rio Review’s first student editor. Under the guidance of faculty advisors John Herndon, Joe Hoppe and Maxine Beach, and working together with a dedicated staff of my fellow students, I learned firsthand the many different elements that come together to produce a top notch literary publication.

When I transferred to UT, I founded a new literary journal for the undergraduate English program, as well as a creative writing group that organized readings, workshops and other literary events. I’ve since graduated and this fall I’ll be headed to Ann Arbor to pursue an MFA in poetry at the University of Michigan.

My experience at ACC woke me to the talent, creativity and passion that thrives within its community, and everything I’ve learned there remains relevant, and continues to inspire me, in my life and in my career as a writer.

Correction

The translation of Sappho, Fragment 94, by James H. Burleson that appeared in the 2008 edition of Ovation contained an error in the fifth line, where “burden” should read “abandon.” In the translator’s note, the comment “no masculine love poetry among the Greeks even approached the spiritual depth of Sappho's lyrics” should have been attributed to classical scholar Werner Jaeger. The corrected copy appeared in the on-line posting of the magazine.

Creative Writing—Getting the Word Out

A collection of four plays by Amparo Garcia-Crow, under the title The South Texas Plays, was published by NoPassport Press. The collection includes “Cocks Have Claws and Wings to Fly, “Under a Western Sky,” “The Faraway Nearby” and “Esmeralda Blue,” and has a preface written by Octavio Solis.

Joe Hoppe published a poem, “Michael Collins and the Far Side of the Moon,” in Descant, a literary journal from Texas Christian University.

Sidney Brammer’s short story “When Leslie Got the Call” was published in the Southwest Review.

Lyman Grant's poem “Weekend Forecast” appeared in Big Land, Big Sky, Big Hair: Best of the Texas Poetry Calendar, and another poem “Psalm 11” has been selected for a forthcoming issue of Windhover.

Joe O’Connell’s novel Evacuation Plan, won the North Texas Book Award for fiction.

Liz Scanlon’s new book for children, All the World, published by Simon and Schuster, was released in September. Liz will be a featured writer at the 2009 Texas Book Festival.

Carrie Fountain received the 2009 National Poetry Series award for Burn Lake, which will be published by Penguin Books in 2010. She was also awarded the 2009 Conference of College Teachers of English Creative Writing Award for Poetry.

Gail Folkins’ essay “Bigfoot in the Backyard” was published in the anthology Fearsome Fascinations, her essay “Light in the Trees” appeared in the 2009 issue of Amoskeag, and her short-short “Shoes,” in Melusine.

An original screenplay by John Herndon, “Bikes and Trikes,” is being produced by Recurve Films. Directed by Drew Thomas, a former ACC student, the movie is set in Austin in 1960.

Student Achievements

Poet Naomi Shihab Nye has selected four poems by Mary Selph for publication in an anthology of poets under the age of 25.

Chelsea Biondillo was named runner-up in Austin Monthly’s short story contest for “The Boxer,” which she wrote in Elizabeth Scanlon’s on-line poetry and prose class.
Slow-Slow Eat
By Irwin Tang

I don’t listen to my parents. Not all the time. Mostly only when they offer me money.

One thing that I do remember from nearly four decades of eating with my mother and father is a simple idiom:

*Man-man chi*. Eat slowly.

It’s not a question. No riddle here. It is not an observation. It is an order. An imperative. More like a request, perhaps an imploration.

Sometimes it may be seen as an admonition. Most of the time it is a courtesy. Something polite to say to another person.

Literally, *man-man chi* translates as “slow-slow eat.” It is perhaps one of the two most common phrases regarding eating in a culture that reveres food. The other is a question and a salutation, a way of saying hello:* Chi fan ma? “Have you eaten?”

As a child, I sometimes asked my mother and father why they tell us to eat slowly. It did not make sense to me. Why should any person ask any other person to eat slowly? Or for that matter to eat quickly? Or to eat with chopsticks or a fork? Or to eat with one’s lips on the bowl or not? Why does it matter?

Of course, it matters. *It matters*, my parents would respond if only by their body language.

*Man-man chi* is not a pronouncement of Confucius or Mencius or Mao or Lao Tzu. No one famous like that. It is something that came about from thousands of years of Chinese people eating billions of meals and wishing a good meal for others.

After all, one says “man-man chi” when one wants others to eat slowly and enjoy their meal. Perhaps I need to leave the table before others have finished eating. I say, “Man-man chi.”

Perhaps I am waiting for a table at a crowded restaurant. A woman sees me waiting for her spot. I tell her “Man-man chi.” Don’t mind me; I’ll wait happily.

Our family knew seemingly every Chinese family that ran a Chinese restaurant in town. I grew up in College Station, Texas, and the number of such eateries grew from one to over fifteen during my childhood. Oftentimes, the owner of the restaurant would come to our table. We would talk to the owner about this and that.

My paternal grandmother once noted to the owner of the Hunan that the snow pea leaves were old and tough; the owner accepted this observation with the utmost of respect. When a grandmother tells you your vegetables are tough, you bow your head and apologize. Such are the old ways.

Well, whenever the owners finished sharing a laugh or two (usually), they would leave our table and tell us all to “man-man chi,” no matter what my grandmother might have said about the veggies.

My parents told me about life, about living, about the right way to live, and I internalized a great deal of it. I absorbed their sense of right and wrong. Of shame and of honor. Of how to respond to injustice.

But of the actual verbiage regarding the ways of the universe, this one phrase stands out like Yao Ming at a Hobbit convention.

Why?

We were not a kissing family. I’ve never seen my mother and father kiss each other. Certainly not on the lips. I’ve rarely seen my parents hug each other. I’ve seen my father slap my mother on the ass a few times. I’ve seen them lying around on their bed. And I’ve seen them working in the vegetable garden together. How romantic.

My parents kissed us goodnight for a couple of years. I do remember that. And I remember when we quit hugging. That is, when me and my sister grew too old to be hugged – not for a greeting or for a hurt. Not for nothing.

And how about those three words? You know the ones. I don’t recall ever saying them or hearing them within our family. If we did say them, it was out of some desire to live like “Americans.” Or because someone was in the hospital, near death. More likely it was at the actual funeral. After all, these were awkward, foreign words to us and to my parents’ traditional culture. The Chinese equivalent, “Wo Ai Ni,” is relatively modern, and my parents never took their cues from Barney the dancing dinosaur or *The Brady Bunch* or *Happy Days*.

No matter.

We had our meals.

My mother cooked food. Several dishes every night.

Our three words were: “Have you eaten?”

Yeah, whatever, you say.

Let me say this: “I love you” takes one second to say, but a
meal, a real meal, a delicious Chinese meal, the kind my mama made for us, that takes hours. It takes strength and organization, thought and persistence and patience. It can burn the hands, cut the fingers. Long nails and manicures are sacrificed for pork ribs and green-river vegetable. I don’t miss my mother telling me she loves me. I miss her eggplant steeped in sugar and garlic. Like one Chinese saying goes,  

*talk cooks no rice.*

So to hell with words. Give me food, served hot enough to burn my tongue. Give me my parents putting food in my bowl with no concern for their own. Give me beef with broccoli, a Chinese American dish my mother adopted, or even her hamburgers and pork chops. Give me soybean milk forced into our glasses because it’s good and it’s Chinese, by God.

Give me my father literally pressing his lips to his rice bowl and shoveling food into his mouth and making inhaling and sucking noises. He eats fast, knowing in the back of his mind another old proverb, “Enjoy yourself. It’s later than you think.”

But after surviving his ancestors’ apparent age limit of 55 and then surviving through a brain aneurism that kept him in ICU for nearly three months, it is actually much later than my father ever expected it to be. And he is still eating.

Give me my father finishing his third bowl and my mother spitting out her last shrimp shell and telling me, “Man-man chi.” Eat and enjoy. Savor. This is life and life is good. Eat slowly.

My parents believe in efficient production. In mass quantity and high quality. They are good old fashioned capitalistic Americans. They believed that my sister and I should get straight A’s. Or get grounded. Or worse.

They believed in making money and investing their money to make more money and opening a Chinese restaurant that we needed not. But my father needed a new project, excitement, wanted or not, in our lives. They were more American than typical Americans in many ways.

But when we ate, everything came to a standstill.

I often felt so much pressure to get good grades, and I often needed so badly to get away from the loud, demanding voices (even if they did not demand as much as other parents), that I locked myself in the bathroom with a small pile of comic books and pretended that I had a lot to get out of my system. The throne was my refuge.

Sometimes my mother or father had to knock on the bathroom door to let me know that it was dinner time. And even then I was often reluctant to open the door.

But at the dinner table, production was shut down. It was time to eat. For the most part. There were questions about how I was doing at school and did I finish my science project yet and why didn’t I go to any of the school dances. There were fights when my father would literally overturn his rice bowl or bang his fist on the table.

There was a lot of mess at the dinner table.

But for the most part, homework and work-work and accounting tables and books and papers and bills and everything else was cleared from the table and prohibited from that place until after dinner. If there was anything that needed to be done, however urgent, *it could wait.*

It does not sound like much of a concession – the break from production and achievement – but in our family, it was a quiet oasis from the sandstorm.


Eat slowly.

That means “I love you.”

*Irwin Tang is an Adjunct Associate Professor of Creative Writing.*
Firing Clay in Costa Rica
by Julie Isaacson

Students of ceramic arts are taking advantage of an amazing opportunity to travel in Costa Rica and study with renowned artist and ACC art professor Ishmael Soto. The students visit the bustling capital city, the high cloud forest region and a small pottery village, where they study contemporary, Pre-Columbian and indigenous arts.

In the summer of 2008, the first three days of the trip were spent visiting museums in the capital city of San Jose. Students learned about the cultural heritage of Costa Rica, and more specifically, the influences of Pre-Columbian Art. Students visited the Museo de Oro Precolombino (Gold Museum) and the Museo de Jade (Jade Museum), both of which had many examples of pre-Columbian artifacts. They were also able to see the modern interpretations and influences of Pre-Columbian art when the group visited the Museo de Arte Costarricense which housed contemporary Costa Rican paintings and sculptures in a beautifully renovated building that was once an airport. On the final day in San Jose, students toured a pottery that processed local clay for the University of San Jose and surrounding communities.

In Monteverde, located high in the cloud forest region, students lived with host families and attended classes at a local studio under the instruction of Professor Soto. Their first project was constructing a medium sized reduction gas kiln, which they built in one day! Students spent the rest of their time in the studio creating work that was influenced by Pre-Columbian art, but with a contemporary twist. All of their work was then fired in the homemade kiln.

Amid the perks of visiting a foreign country is that you are able to visit and experience important sites specific to that country and region. Thus, in Monteverde, the students visited a Fair Trade coffee farm, saw an active volcano in Arenal, visited the hot springs and hiked through the volcanic park, took a guided tour through the cloud forest, and ziplined 500 feet in the air through the jungle.

For the third week of this ceramic course, students lived in San Vicente, a small pottery village on the Nicoya peninsula. The people of this village are descendents of the Choretega Indians, one of the main indigenous peoples of Costa Rica. ACC students again lived with host families and each day they broke up into very small workshops. The village has three different colors of local clay, black, red and white, which they use for decoration. These colored slips are used on the outside of the unfired pots and the traditional designs are carved into the surface of the pots. Once dried, the pots are fired in an igloo shaped wood burning kiln. As you pass through the village, it is common for almost every household to have a kiln shed in the yard.

For the fourth and final destination, students enjoyed a 3-day vacation at Playa Carrillo, located on the Pacific coast, with ample time for relaxation and reflection on their lessons and experiences from the trip.

In Summer, 2009, from July 5 – July 29, another group of students went to Costa Rica for a similar experience. To expand on the cultural exchange and educational experience, ACC has donated 4 used pottery wheels to upgrade the program in Monteverde. ACC students will have the opportunity to learn wheel-throwing techniques and local residents will also benefit from the new equipment. Many of the residents are women with children who have little means for earning money. This studio enables them to learn new skills and increase their earning power.

For more information on ACC study abroad programs, contact the ACC Study Abroad Office, www.austincc.edu/intstudy, 512- 223-7688, or the Ceramic Art Department, 512-223-3250, jisaacso@austincc.edu.

Julie Isaacson is an Exhibit Specialist in the Art Department.

Photograph by Julie Isaacson
Faculty and Students Attend the American College Dance Festival

Seven ACC dance students attended the American College Dance Festival hosted by Texas A&M University in College Station. Students selected classes from a variety of areas such as dance for camera, choreography, partnering, technique, hip-hop and pilates, and attended performances by guest artists and other participating universities and community colleges. ACC students also performed in two dances: Adjunct Professor Darla Johnson’s *The Scent of Maiden’s Blush*, and choreography student Christina Houle’s *Sushi Paws*.

KDH Dance Company, a contemporary dance company directed by Interim-Department Chair Kathy Dunn Hamrick, was one of two Texas-based dance companies invited to teach and perform at the festival. The dance company performed four excerpts from its repertory for 1,500 dance students and faculty from the Southwest region. The company celebrated ten years of presenting contemporary dance and providing arts outreach services for the Austin community with three concerts showcasing some of its favorite works from the past. Clare Croft of the *Austin American-Statesman* called the company’s performances “consistently lovely and loving.”

Trash Dance

Allison Orr, Adjunct Professor, has been deeply immersed in trash this year in preparation for her company's production of *The Trash Project*—a dance performed by the employees and machinery of the City of Austin Solid Waste Services Department. Orr’s company Forklift Danceworks presented this free event Saturday, September 12th on the tarmac of Austin Studios (1901 East 51st), and the evening featured choreography performed by over 15 large sanitation vehicles and 25 Solid Waste employees. Forklift received an award for Outstanding Choreography from The Austin Critics Table for it’s 2008/09 presentation of *SKATE! A Night at the Rink*, a community-lead performance that featured over 30 of Austin’s best roller skaters. To learn more about Forklift, visit www.forkliftdanceworks.org.

Student Successes

ACC student choreographers Mysti Jace Pride and Christina Houle presented new works in FronteraFest, January 2009. Mysti’s newest work, *Progress Against Limitations*, was selected for Austin’s Big Range Festival, June 2009. Annelize Machado premiered her solo dance & media project, *Take Off*, at Pangea World Theater in Minneapolis, June 2009. Melissa Watt was accepted into the MFA Program in Dance at Texas Woman’s University.
Dancing for JUSTICE
by Darla Johnson

In February of 2009, the second incarnation of the JUSTICE Project was born. My co-director Nicole Wesley, Assistant Professor of Dance at the University of Trinidad and Tobago, and I were invited to participate in the Dissolving Borders symposium held at the Dundee Contemporary School of Dance in Scotland, and focused on research, collaboration and pedagogy in dance. The invitation came from the Northumbria University Dance Choreography Program based in Newcastle Upon Tyne, England.

The JUSTICE Project is a vehicle for personal expression, collaboration and community building. Each dancer participates by researching and bringing to the project a personal or cultural issue that has meaning or relevance to him or her, an image of some sort, be it a photograph or an art piece or something from a magazine, and a piece of text. These elements can be related, or not. There were sixteen dancers participating in this version.

First off, however, the students, and Wesley and I used the Internet communication software Skype as a way to initiate contact and to get the project started before we arrived. Two three-way Skype conferences were held between Texas, Trinidad, and England. On the first call the students were asked to express what they hoped to gain from participating in the project. Their answers varied from better personal understanding of themselves through the work, to just being excited about traveling to Dundee to perform. The dancers were then given their assignment for the next conversation: to bring their personal issue to the call and be able to express to the group what they wanted to deal with.

The second conversation was much more somber and reflective. The issues ranged from the death of a parent to cancer to drug use to global warming. The students were then asked to research and bring their visual images and pieces of text to the first meeting the next week. They were also given the assignment to create solo movement studies based on their issues, and to have that ready to show to the group on the first day.

The word pedagogy immediately implies a structure, where there is a set and series of movements and rules to be adhered to. But, in the collaborative pedagogy of the JUSTICE Project there is no such thing. First and foremost, for the project to work a community has to be created. Setting up structures where it is imperative to support each other does this. Asking the dancers in Newcastle to choreograph something from their own personal issues and then perform this solo in front of the whole group required a commitment to be emotionally vulnerable.

There is an enormous amount of responsibility given to all of the individuals. They are responsible for teaching their written material to their peers. They are learning to deconstruct their movement vocabulary and to explain something very personal to them so that others may learn and understand and perform their creations. This work changes the already established social structures inherent in the group and builds a stronger community of performers and creators.

There was a wealth of material. From 9:00 am to 1:00 pm every day students and choreographers worked in the studio. Somewhere in the dance each student’s choreography was included. Every issue, was addressed, overtly or subtly. Texts were used, rewritten, interrupted and adapted. Visual imagery became physical imagery in the context of the performance. After the group dealt with two perpetually late students, a song and monologue were created and included in the piece to process the loss of those students to the process and the work.

This is not work for the timid. The directors have to multi-task to their highest potential. The material is constantly sifted and filtered through the directors’ own lenses and those of the groups. At every moment they have to be aware of each individual’s concerns and material that he or she has brought to the process. And at every moment there is an urgency to have each voice present in the final mix.

The final performance was 20 minutes in length. It included a short film of the dancers performing their own choreography and images from outside the studio that the dancers shot as a group project. The response in Dundee was overwhelmingly positive. The ride back to Newcastle was quiet and reflective.

Darla Johnson is an Adjunct Professor of Dance.
Deaf Students at the Core of Language
by Erica Domatti

We would never dream of sending blind children to a special school that would train them to see. We wouldn’t send them to a school where they would be asked to look harder and their success would be defined by their ability to use a sensory mode that is unavailable to them.

Sadly, this is exactly what we have done to deaf students. Beginning in 1913, the Oral movement dominated deaf education throughout the world. The emphasis of this educational philosophy is on listening and speaking rather than history, math, English, art and other core curriculum. Students spend many hours a day learning to listen and articulate speech. They are forbidden to use American Sign Language (ASL) because it is viewed as a crutch that would prevent them from really developing their speech skills. Many of my students tell stories of having their hands slapped with a ruler for signing or instances where they gave the right answer in class but it wasn’t accepted because they couldn’t verbally articulate what they wanted to say.

Fortunately, in the last 20 years the deaf community has fought back and pushed for ASL to be the language of instruction within the state schools for the deaf in the US. This is the Bicultural-Bilingual (Bi-Bi) movement and it advocates the use of ASL to teach the core curriculum as well as celebrate the history and culture of the deaf community. Today deaf students are graduating with knowledge of the core curriculum, the ability to use ASL as their primary language and a developed sense of their deaf identity. They are, however, oftentimes still struggling with their English skills.

Because English is an auditory-based language it is challenging for a deaf student who never really hears it. In addition, ASL and English are radically different languages. While English is auditory and linear with two parameters (consonants and vowels), ASL is a visual, spatial, three-dimensional language with simultaneous grammar and five parameters (hand shape, palm orientation, movement, location and non-manual markers). During a class presentation one group of students in a Deaf ESOL class here at ACC described English as a train and ASL as a cake. They felt that English was rigid and sequential while ASL was fluid and there were so many parts that, like a cake, you couldn’t always taste all of the ingredients. These differences in the languages and the deaf students’ lack of access to verbal English is the hurdle that the instructors in ACC’s Deaf ESOL program are trying to jump. In an effort to do so, we have developed a new curriculum and a way for the deaf students to compose their essays in ASL.

Even though ASL is the language of instruction in Bi-Bi programs, the grammar of ASL is rarely part of the curriculum. Because of this, deaf students don’t have a meta-linguistic understanding of language in their first language (L1). This gap in their education makes it difficult for them to develop meta-linguistic skills in their second language (L2), English. Our L1 ASL grammar courses provide ACC’s Deaf ESOL students with the knowledge of formal ASL grammar they need to fully develop their English skills.

In addition, the beginning Deaf ESOL writing courses require the students to first compose their essays in ASL before they put pen to paper. They do this using a webcam. If you go to the RVS Learning Lab chances are you will see our students signing away at the computers. As with written compositions, ASL compositions must go through the draft, revision and editing process. Students then save their work onto a thumb drive and bring it to class where it is viewed by all of the students and feedback is given. Once the final draft of their ASL video composition is completed and graded, they create a written English version. By doing the ASL video composition first, the students develop an understanding of the structure and topic so that when they tackle the English they can focus on the English grammar structures.

While innovative, this is by no means a panacea. It is our hope that K-12 programs will begin to include ASL grammar in their core curriculum in the same way that hearing students are taught the grammar of their language from an early age. In the meantime, we will keep signing away into our webcams.

Erica Domatti is an Associate Professor of ESOL.
Lessons Learned
by Devorah Feldman

From the sheer number and variety of courses offered through ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages), you might imagine a professor's file cabinet stuffed with a motley collection of rather abstruse topics. A professor can bounce from explaining the rule of sequence of tenses in reported speech to demonstrating aspiration of word-initial voiceless stops. Professors of international students are asked not only about syntax, etymology, and connotation, but also about U.S. geography, Texas government, and regional variations in etiquette.

Years of teaching ESOL turns even the most reserved of professors into actors, artists, mimes, and improvisational comedians. Even so, despite the abundance of actions mimed, pictures drawn, and questions entertained, ESOL professors still find themselves teaching things they've never taught before. Such an opportunity presented itself to me last spring.

We were nearing the end of spring semester. The days were getting longer and warmer: it was a sleepy time of year. The whiteboard in my High Intermediate Reading & Vocabulary class was splashed with vocabulary words from an NPR article on east Australian rainforests. With little attempt to temper my passion, I was ebulliently pointing out the literary devices delectably woven throughout the exquisitely composed writing. I prompted my students to consider the cognitive effects of the author's generous use of allusion, personification and metaphor. Immediately afterward, a student raised her hand, asking to read her extra credit narrative to the class.

While reading her story, which, regrettably, was about a neighbor's dog doing its business in her front yard, the student chose a rather colorful verb to describe the act. When her classmates broke into boisterous laughter, my student—a soft-spoken and courteous East Asian—looked at me with surprise.

After the student finished reading her story, I returned to the whiteboard, and demand, “What exactly do you teach in here?” Thankfully, I was spared that. However, what struck me about the experience was not the whiteboard full of synonyms for excrement or even the lengthy discussion of the topic itself, but rather the reaction of my students. The same sleepy-eyed students who had yawned through allusion, personification, and metaphor, staring in the general direction of the clock's lazy minute hand, were now bright-eyed and attentive. They continued posing questions and feverishly taking notes, eager to capture each new phrase before I had to erase it to make space for more.

I answered their questions until their curiosity was satiated before resuming the more aesthetically pleasing style of writing we had been exploring. However, it’s humbling to be reminded of the unique opportunity we enjoy to provide a safe haven for international students where they can ask real-life questions, even when those question revolve around doggie doo-doo.

Devorah Feldman is a Professor of ESOL.
In the Spirit of Moliere
by Veronique Mazet

Illustrstage, my theatrical troupe, presented Moliere 2009, one of our floating productions of what I call “cultural theater,” during Carnival ab! and later in April. This montage homage to the great French playwright met my definition of success—Moliere 2009 entertained people for a couple of hours, and educated them a little bit about French culture—in a sneaky way.

The idea of Moliere 2009 was to introduce the comic playwright to a non-French-speaking audience. The script included French and English, the two languages mirroring each other so that everyone could understand. I wrote the script based on three famous plays by Moliere—Les Femmes Savantes (1672), L’école Des Femmes (1692) and Les Fourberies de Scapin (1671), and included some original verses, popular songs and a few surprises.

As a professor of French, I want to make French culture appealing and accessible to as many people as possible, whether they speak the language or not. So several years ago under the name Illustrstage I started to write and direct these cultural shows. Why the name Illustrstage? It’s a tip of the hat to Moliere, whose own company was named L’illustre theatre. I hope the name provides some continuity for people to recognize our floating productions. I say “floating” because we are not an ACC program per se, nor are we a class, so we have to go with the flow of regularly scheduled classes and the many drama and dance performances. Our dates are never the same, and we sometimes have very long gaps between productions. Moliere 2009 was four years in the waiting!

For the productions, I always choose French topics relevant to an American audience and themes that present good staging potential. Our first production, Spectacle dans un Bistro, was a staged collection of lively French poetry, including an excerpt from Rostand’s Cyrano de Bergerac. Femmes, femmes, femmes showcased famous French dames, from Joan of Arc and Victor Hugo’s Esmeralda to Coco Chanel and Edith Piaf. Toulouse-Lautrec at Moulin Rouge told the true story of the Moulin Rouge, its people, the dancers, the singers and other artists, in particular the famous impressionist Toulouse-Lautrec. The programs that we distribute before each performance summarizes the research, introducing the cultural and historical reality the shows are based on.

Because I write my own scripts, I can change as we go to suit an actor’s needs, skills or personality. I strive to make use of every talent to its fullest. Depending on the talents available, I can include songs, dances and visuals in the form of a concurrent slide show. If I discover a talent and the script has no place for its expression, I simply change a scene or write a new one. I encourage everyone to participate in the revisions. Toulouse-Lautrec at Moulin Rouge went through something like six rewrites!

Our casts have included numerous members of the French faculty lots of current and former students, a UT professor of architecture, a police officer and high school students.

This year’s production was made possible by the financial and moral support of Arts and Humanities Dean Lyman Grant and the help of the Drama department. Merci beaucoup! Veronique Mazet is an Adjunct Professor of French.

Drama Faculty Take Dramatic License

Drama Department Chair Shelby Brammer directed ACC’s Fall 2008 production of David Auburn’s Proof, featuring ACC Professor of Mathematics Paul Wright in the lead role. In Spring 2009, she presented her sabbatical project, a short film called “The Flea Circus” (co-produced with her sister, Adjunct Associate Professor of Creative Writing Sidney Brammer), an adaptation of her father Billy Lee Brammer’s novel “The Gay Place,” as part of Carnival ah! (See Ovation 2008.)

Adjunct Assistant Professor Arthur Adair serves as faculty advisor to the Experimental Student Performance Lab at ACC, which offered a Summer Play Festival of plays written and directed by students. Arthur also directed ACC’s fall production of The Bacchae by Euripides, which was entered in the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival, where he has been invited to act as a Vice-Chair, as part of Region VI Society of Stage Directors & Choreographers Student Directing Initiative. He was also Project Manager for Carnival ab! (See Ovation 2008.)

Adjunct Professor Jodi Jinks managed the Community Arts portion of Carnival ab!, and directed the Spring 2009 production of Will Eno’s The Flu Season.

Adjunct Professor and Artistic Director of Tongue and Groove Theatre Company David Yeakle’s original production of The Red Balloon won the Austin Critics Table Award for Best Ensemble Performance. David also appeared in The Flu Season.
Former Student Stays Involved
by Akasha Banks Villalobos

I recently spent time at ACC’s Rio Grande campus after nearly five years away. It was a trip, to say the least; a lot has changed (better cafeteria set up for one.) I had come back to that familiar third-floor stage, ready to rehearse a play produced by the ACC French department, written and directed by the multi-talented Professor Veronique Mazet. This was the fourth French production of its kind; I’ve been in them all and enjoyed each one. It was wonderful to be back on campus and to have the opportunity to perform again after so long.

I attended ACC from June 2001 to May 2004 and loved it. In fact, I only begrudgingly left after receiving a letter from my financial-aid provider letting me know that if I did not move on to a four-year institution, I would no longer be eligible for aid.

I left ACC with two associate degrees (in French and Radio-TV-Film) and transferred to the University of Texas at Austin with a 4.0. I now teach Technology Applications (filmmaking, multimedia, digital graphics, and animation) at Garza Independence High School here in Austin and highly recommend ACC to all my students.

One of the most valuable aspects of ACC, in my opinion, is its ability to offer any class to any student, regardless of his or her declared major, which. I also never had a problem registering for the classes I wanted or needed, which was, again. I took advantage of the many different class formats offered at ACC, including in-person, distance learning, internship, and audit, and found benefits to each one. The professors at ACC are excellent; I had nothing but good experiences with them.

Toward the end of my time at ACC, I concentrated on filmmaking and drama and had the opportunity to assistant direct ACC’s production of Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*, an experience from which I learned a lot. I often fantasize about having enough free time to return to ACC in order to take classes in digital graphics, animation, game design, music production, choir, drama, art, dance, etc. And I hope that time isn’t too far off.
Defining “Philip’s Shadow”
by James Froeschle

“Philip Norman Fagan was an adventurer of the coolest kind.”

When I first heard the artist and longtime Warhol assistant Billy Name say this in a taped interview for Philip Randolph Fagan’s biography of his late uncle, my first impression was that this was loving hyperbole in tribute to a good friend and creative colleague.

But as I began to edit the younger Fagan’s interview footage and archival material into a documentary of this man’s life, the realization of how understated this quote actually was slowly dawned on me: The true journey that Philip Norman Fagan undertook, from racing motorcycles in his hometown of Fort Worth, Texas, to his influential stint in the famed Warhol Factory, and ultimately into war-torn Southeast Asia, was much more than one man’s journey. As the film’s director Philip R. Fagan (who teaches in the RTF department) explains, his uncle “seemed to embody the very soul of the tumultuous social revolution that was the 1960’s. His far-flung adventures and search for enlightenment led him into the eye of that decade’s storm.”

The documentary-in-progress *Philip’s Shadow*, which was awarded a 2008 Texas Filmmakers Production Fund grant, is only one component of the Philip Norman Fagan Project facilitated by the younger Philip Fagan. The film serves as a companion piece to a written biography and an archival preservation project which includes 1950s motorcycle racing memorabilia; original artworks by Andy Warhol, Paul Swan and Bror Utter; never-before-seen photos of Philip, Warhol, Swan, and Philip’s avant-garde performances with Alejandro Jodorowsky in Mexico City; New York underground films; and correspondence from Beat literary icons such as William Burroughs.

Philip Norman Fagan was born in 1938, and his life journey would encompass an unbelievably broad range of experiences. While in high school, he set local records racing motorcycles in the Dallas-Fort Worth area and an international speed record at Bonneville in 1956. Next, it was off to the Navy, Japan, and a dalliance with the Southern California Beat scene. Returning to Fort Worth in 1961, he joined the Ballet and Theatre Department at Texas Christian University. While appearing in several productions there, he also befriended and posed for artists Dickson Reeder, Bror Utter, and other members of the legendary Bohemian collective known as the Fort Worth School of Painters. Reeder also introduced him to the work of the famous French mime Marcel Marceau. He became fascinated with the art of pantomime and wanted to study with Marceau but, as one of his TCU friends Johnny Simons remembers, France was too far so he decided to hunt down one of Marceau’s associates in Mexico City—Alejandro Jodorowsky. Under Jodorowsky’s direction, Fagan would perform in a series of controversial avant-garde plays in Mexico that offered a future glimpse into the artfully bizarre films (*El Topo, The Holy Mountain, Santa Sangre*) that would bring Jodorowsky international notoriety. He has described Fagan as “an extraterrestrial angel.”

Next stop—New York City.

New York in 1964 was the global center for art and literature, and Fagan made himself home deep in the heart of it. He would befriend Beat icons William Burroughs and Allen Ginsberg and star in the underground films of Gregory J. Markopoulos, Jonas Mekas, Marie Menken, Jack Smith, and Andy Warhol. Within a short time, he would become Andy Warhol’s closest assistant, working on some of the pop artist’s seminal works including the famous *Flowers* series. But even in the inner circle of what many of the time describe as the cutting edge of the international art scene, Philip was still searching. Although he lived and worked with Warhol, he was never drawn into the debauched lifestyle of the famed Factory. His relationship with Andy eventually soured, and by 1965, it was time to move on. Fagan would continue his search for enlightenment with a five-year walk across war-torn Southeast Asia.

Fagan’s life was filled with adventure and reads like a great Beat novel or boy’s adventure story. A short summary of his experiences inevitably fails to do him justice. But what has fascinated me, as I edited the documentary, viewing the hours of interview footage, was that each person interviewed, no matter whether he knew Fagan for five days or five minutes, had an intense connection to him. For some it was love. Some fascination. Others admiration. And for some a mix of all three. However, from the moment he appears in the first frames of Warhol’s film *Screen Test #1*, what becomes clear is that Fagan wasn’t just “an adventurer of the coolest kind.” He was the adventure. He allowed those around him, for however brief a time, to glimpse what freedom really is.

*James Froeschle is an Adjunct Professor of Radio-Television-Film.*
Images courtesy of the Philip Norman Fagan Archive
She Listens to Time
Elizabeth Garton Scanlon

The able ticks of a table clock, heavy and whole, sound out an afternoon’s walking music. Sun on the sheets, radiant white, it’s warmer inside than out and she has just left the bed.

It is Tuesday, a day for work or not, depending. Each door down the row swings and slams with its own well-oiled reasons. He wants to know what’s the hurry, my sweet.

Lately it’s not as easy as it once was. What a list she keeps, sweeping the soffits of gluey webs, turning every potted bulb like a planet. Remember her as a liquidy cat? Lazy, rolling?

Remember moments unbusied as lamplight or tea? What’s the matter with desire, the quiet kind, that it can be ignored like this. He wants to know and she can’t answer for all the bells, the striking.

Elizabeth Garton Scanlon is an Adjunct Associate Professor of Creative Writing.
Ovation

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