

PHOENIX

The background of the cover is a photograph of an outdoor ice skating rink at sunset. People are skating on the ice, and a large, modern, white metal structure with a flat roof stands in the background. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow. The word "PHOENIX" is written in large, white, sans-serif capital letters at the top. A red Santa hat with a white pom-pom is placed on top of the letter "O".

Issue 2 | 2015-2016

Phoenix celebrates Albion's 5th Iustrum

with Bert Schouten, Paul Franssen and Jamili Wetzels

The return of Phoenix Serves

Ice skating: getting off your arse can actually be lots of fun

Q&Alumni with Michiel de Hoog:

"English is not about vocational training: you'll need to create your own fortune."

Tea Time with Sarah Chambers | Showcase with Margit Wilke | Berfin's Bookshelf

and more...



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Letter from the editor



Dear readers,

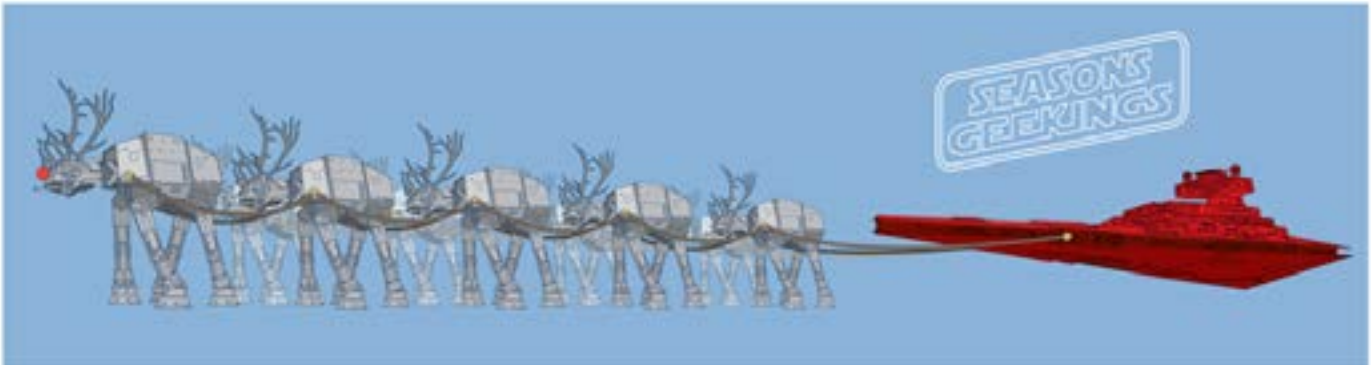
It is with pride that I am able to present to you the biggest Phoenix issue ever made. Quantity over quality, you say? Never. We added some extra ingredients to last time's – I dare say – successful concept to provide a chock-full Christmas special to get you through those dark December days. You can interpret those ingredients literally in a sense, as Phoenix Serves is making its comeback in this issue. We prepared six Christmas dishes to lend a hand with your kitchen creativity.

Another special feature has everything to do with the study association we all know and love. Albion is celebrating its 5th lustrum this year, which Phoenix could not let pass unnoticed. We dug up some ancient Albioneers and asked them to write us a piece to contribute to this celebratory event. Speaking of Albion veterans, I will gladly point you to this issue's edition of Q&Alumni. I had the chance to interview Michiel de Hoog, who chairmanned Albion 15 years ago and now works as a fulltime journalist. If you're aspiring a similar career-path, I'd strongly advise you to read it. And don't forget to pay this time's Minor Market a visit, as Ilse shares her experiences of the HU's Journalism minor.

We have news from Wales as well. Annemay updates us about how she's keeping up in Swansea and our regular foreign correspondent, Ellen Collée, reports how the Welsh celebrate Christmas. What's more, Phoenix has ranked ice skating rinks so you know where to go this wintery season, and Sarah Chambers welcomed us for a cup of tea. Margit Wilke told us all about travelling on your own – just in case you were planning on doing something wild after Christmas or after your studies. Lastly, you'll find some interesting suggestions about what to hear, visit and see during the holidays in our Culture Corner. Half of the Phoenix committee visited the premiere of some Hollywood blockbuster that was released a few days ago – Erik had the honour of reviewing it. Enjoy it, did he?

I wish you all a very happy reading and of course, on behalf of the entire Phoenix committee, the merriest of Christmases.

Jos de Groot
Editor in Chief



Albion through the years

These are a few pictures from a 1988 (I believe) SUDS production of a South African play, called Episodes of an Easter Rising by David Lytton—originally a radio play. It was a co-production between the English departments of UU and the local Teacher Training College, directed by an Englishman working at the TTC called John Strange. The top picture shows me and a student called Margaretha (I cannot recall her last name, nor am I sure of the correct spelling of her name); the bottom picture is me again, this time with Ingrid van Meerten, one of our students who was very active in English-language amateur theatre at the time. In this production, I was a South African plain-clothes policeman, who has to trace a black resistance fighter who has taken refuge with two elderly ladies on some remote farm—Ingrid and Margaretha being the elderly women. In a later production with more or less the same cast, we brought a medieval morality play called Mankind; true to type, I there had to play the devil Titivillus. That production, however, had to be done under a different name, ETU for English-speaking Theatre Utrecht, because the name SUDS had in the meantime been hijacked (as we perceived it) by a different group!

Paul Franssen



Before I enlisted as an Albion board member-to-be, I was under the impression that Albion and the Albion board had the potential to be quite meaningful to students of English. Of course, it did and still does have this potential. However, I discovered that this goes both ways: Albion and its members can be very meaningful for members of the board. This is not just the added benefit for a student trying to build a respectable resume, but also the experience of interacting with other people in a completely different way. Usually, a student studies, graduates and becomes a member of society with a job. After several years of work, enough promotions may have led to the option to do something substantial and meaningful within the boundaries of the workplace. Although this is perfectly fine, the boundaries of the workplace can be blinding and, as a result, many colorful opportunities might be cast aside. However, when organizing and working together in order to create something awesome (that is, something non-mandatory) while still being a student broadens the horizon. I think that, while working in various different places and occupations, my experience as an Albion board member opened a door for me that led to other doors. When my year as treasurer of Albion had passed I thought that it were just the things that I did during that year that meant something. Now I see that I continue to carry that experience of organizing events and working with great people with me. I recognize this eagerness to do awesome stuff in all my successors and in the members of the current committees as well. I wonder what kind of doors they will open...

Greetings,

Jamili Wetzels
Treasurer of the 19th board of Albion, 2009-2010
Also honorary member



A few snapshots from Albion's past

When I first entered the university in 1964, I was one of 23 first-year students at the Institute for English Language and Literature at 95-97 Maliebaan. All of us joined Albion, of course, but I don't remember any activities, until I joined the Albion committee as vice-chairman (vice-praes) in 1966 and had to organise the activities myself. There still weren't many; the one I remember best was the Interac-weekend in Doorn, which we organised that year, and which assembled students and teachers of English from all Dutch universities. In picture 1 we see a few committee members registering participants at 29 Domplein. The smoker in the middle distance could be me, but could also be chairman Rob de Groot.

Picture 2 shows a few spectators at a volleyball game between universities in Doorn; the girl in the middle was the chairman's girlfriend, and the one on the left was my girlfriend (I'm still married to her). Picture 3 was taken at the end of that weekend; we were apparently clearing up, and I was drinking coffee.

In 1967 I became chairman (praeses) myself. Pictures 4 and 5 were taken at a party in the Unitas building; picture 4 shows fellow committee member Hugo Strötbaum on the right, me on the left, and between us Ineke de Winter, one of our teachers. In picture 5 secretary (ab actis) Iti Maalderink dances with me. Picture 6 dates from the spring of 1968, when we said farewell to Mr De Vries, who was leaving to take up a professorship in New Zealand. I don't recall his initials. We didn't use Christian names to address or refer to our teachers in those days, and most teachers addressed me as "Mr Schouten" (no irony intended). In the centre of this photograph we see Mr De Vries and his wife; the bearded man on the left is our treasurer (fiscus) Hans Bertens, who later moved on to the General Literature department and ended up as the previous Dean of our Faculty of Humanities, before retiring a few years ago. The girl on the right is Geeske, but I confess I don't remember her last name. She was on the Albion committee as well.

On 5 April, 1968, Albion organised a boat party on the Merwedekanaal (picture 7: my girlfriend and me in the middle, Geeske on the left). A few weeks later, there was an excursion to the Institute for Perception Research in Eindhoven, made possible by our new language Professor Cohen, whose previous workplace this had been. Picture 8 was taken in Eindhoven. There is no need to point out who the people in the picture are (I only bought photos picturing her or me, and I never took any myself – I still don't).

I graduated in 1971 and then left for Eindhoven, to work on my PhD. I returned to the English Institute, which was then housed at 6 Oudenoord, in 1978. In picture 9, I am talking to my tutor group during the Introduction of September 1980 (organised by Albion), and in picture 10 you see me dancing with colleague Trudeke van Lint at the Introduction party.

In 1986 I left again, only to return again in 2002. In that year, Albion was 12 years old, having been reborn in 1990. It must have died between 1986 and 1990, but no one seems to know.

Bert Schouten



Albi on snapshots



Edinburgh '07



Dublin '09



Dublin '13



Ski trip '14



Dies '15



Commissiebedankdag '15



Edinburgh '14



Ski trip '15



Newcastle '15





Tea Time with Sarah Chambers

It's almost Christmas time and that's always a good excuse for a cup of tea. (Not that you ever need an excuse to drink tea, of course.) So two of our reporters found their way to Sarah Chambers' home in Utrecht for another Tea Time interview. Our journey was shorter and easier than anticipated, so we arrived slightly early and found Sarah still busy helping out her daughter – "She came home with a bunch of friends to work on a Greek project about Odysseus." After they leave on their quest, equipped with beards and white togas, we sit down at the table with some real English Tea and fresh scones Sarah baked us.

By Lucinia Philip and Kiki Drost

What did you study yourself and how did you end up in the Netherlands?

"My parents are English and Irish, and I grew up in France and Ireland. I went to a bilingual school in Paris and then an international school in England. After that, I studied Geography at Durham. I love travelling and have always

been interested in how the physical world influences society, the connection between environment and economics.

When I first moved to Holland I taught English as a foreign language, but what I really love about English is the literature, so I did a Master's degree in literary criticism. After that, I started teaching at the university."

Do you like the Netherlands?

"Yes. It's a fantastic place to live in a city. Everything is close by, and you can bike almost anywhere, which provides a sense of freedom, especially for children.

I do miss nature. It's not the place to come looking for the great outdoors. I also miss my family and friends.

For now, we are here; we love Utrecht. Since neither my husband nor I are Dutch, it is possible that we might one day move."

Do you have any hobbies?

"Yes. I don't have much time for them, but I love swimming and horse riding. And I love reading, I

love travelling. More time for all of these would be super."

Do you have any Christmas plans?

"Yes, my family is coming over. We'll have a traditional Christmas lunch and presents under the tree on the morning of the 25th of December. I really love Christmas, the getting together with family and friends."

We finish our tea, have another scone and after some more chatting it is time for us to go. Finding our way back was easy enough and we soon found ourselves on familiar ground again. Sarah, thank you once again for your hospitality!

About Sarah

Favourite film

I love a good rom-com, such as 'Sliding Doors', but I also love Spanish director Almodóvar's films, and old black-and-white spy films from the '40s and '50s, such as 'The Third Man'. A recent film I enjoyed was the adaptation of Le Carré's 'A Most Wanted Man'.

Favourite book

I love Victorian novelists: Dickens and the Brontës. Jane Austen as well, but I'm probably more of a Brontë fan. I really enjoy Hemingway and Fitzgerald's portraits of Paris; the city is recognizable even today. I am fascinated by American novels that capture different facets of the immigrant experience. I like travelling to India with novelists Vikram Seth and Rohinton Mistry. I research Nevil Shute whose work captures wartime Britain and the global post-war recovery.

Favourite music

My husband would tell you I like overly happy music; when it comes to pop, I like it upbeat.

Favourite animal

Horse.

Favourite television-series

At the moment, Scandinavian detective series, but when I don't feel like witnessing gruesome murders, I'll catch up on 'Modern Family'.



Phoenix Serves Christmas Dinner

In desperate need of a superb starter, magnificent main or debonair dessert for your Christmas dinner? Worry not! Phoenix Serves has returned to help you out. We present to you two fabulous yet simple, student budget-proof options for each course. They have all been tested and approved, so don't hesitate to pick one (or more) to complete your menu and have yourself and your friends a merry Christmas meal.

Beetroot carpaccio

By Iris Pijning

This super easy Jamie Oliver recipe is not only a pretty frickin' healthy vegan gluten free starter but also one hundred percent student kitchen and budget proof. You'll basically need a single beetroot per person and if you buy your beets pre-cooked the only pieces of equipment you'll need for this dish are a knife and a fridge. Use a sharp knife to thinly slice the beetroots and arrange them on a plate. Drizzle with a dressing of olive oil, lemon juice and zest, onion, sugar, dill, and capers. Cover the plates with cling film and leave them to cool in the fridge for an hour or two before serving. The deep red of the beetroot makes this dish look quite appealing already but you could serve it with some green leafy stuff to fancy it up a little.

The acidity of the dressing combined with the sweet beetroots makes this a light but yummy dish to start off an evening full of Christmas gobbling. My dad, a carnivore extraordinaire, liked it so much that he asked if he could eat it at our family Christmas dinner instead of his classic meaty carpaccio.



Lentil and Chickpea Medley

By Kiki Drost

Most people don't appreciate lentils enough. So here's a very simple and cheap recipe that will not only make a good starter, but will make people reconsider the endless charm of lentils.

What you'll need: • one onion (or more, if you're really into onions) • one tin of lentils • one tin of chickpeas • bouillon powder • bacon (OPTIONAL).

Start by chopping up and frying your onions. After about two minutes, add the chickpeas. Make sure you drain the liquid from the tin, so your medley won't drown in disgusting chickpea-juice. Just let it fry for a few minutes or so and stir every once in a while. You can now add the lentils. Again, make sure you don't drown your food, but this time some of the liquid is allowed to get mixed up in your cooking as you'll be adding the bouillon powder next, and this works much better if it's not completely dry. Just experiment with how much bouillon powder you like, but make sure you don't add too much; you can always add more if necessary, but you can't get rid of it once it's in. Stir every once in a while for the next few minutes and you're done. It's as simple as that.

For those of you who love your dead animals: you can add bacon. Do this before you add the chickpeas and lentils.

It's a very simple dish, it's very cheap, and you're cheating by using bouillon powder as seasoning, but since we're students, that's all okay. Plus, the taste is great, and that's what it's all about in the end, isn't it?

Ratatouille Christmas tree pie

By Ilse Bruls

Look at this adorable Christmas tree pie! Vegan, fairly healthy, and SUPER easy to make, so good news for all my fellow kitchen idiots – even the folding-Christmas-trees-from-dough-part is not nearly as difficult as you'd imagine. I have to admit that mine weren't strictly vegan since I decided to use eggs (which I already had) rather than soy milk to glaze the dough, but they were just as delicious. The fact that you can use pretty much any leftover veggies for your ratatouille also makes them very budget proof! A few tips: store-bought croissant dough works perfectly for this recipe, if you can get over the fact that the first few bites might taste like a croissant with very strange filling. Poke small holes in the bottom of the dough to prevent it from getting soggy, and carefully turn the pies over about halfway through their oven-time if your shitty oven's bottom heating element doesn't work properly. Serve with mashed potatoes if you want your plate to look a little less minimalistic and enjoy your delicious and adorable-looking main course.



Classic Roast Chicken & Potato Mash

By Jos de Groot

Your Christmas main course won't get much more traditional than this: it's big and tasty, looks dandy and is incredibly easy to make.

Assuming your student house's oven might not be top of the bill, remember to preheat it early on at 240°C. Chop up the vegetables – we used celery, carrots and shallots – in some farmhouse chunks and pile them in an oven tray. Then comes the fun part: seasoning the chicken. We chose to prepare the bird with home-made garlic-rosemary butter. Loosen the bird's skin by massaging your way underneath it (yes, with your bare hands). The butter goes in between the meat and the skin; this ensures that the meat will remain tender and the skin will go nice and crunchy. Prick some holes in a lemon and put it inside the chicken whole, along with some fresh rosemary and thyme. Then drizzle the chicken with some olive oil and finish seasoning by rubbing sea salt and black pepper all over it. The chicken goes on top of your vegetable pile and is ready to be baked in the oven for about an hour and twenty minutes on 200°C. You can add a splash of white wine to the tray for some extra flavour and to prevent your food from going dry. Don't forget to turn the chicken upside-down halfway through to get it equally cooked. In the meantime, boil potatoes and mash them with an egg yolk and a considerable amount of butter for a mushy purée. Serve your exquisite dish with a spray of rosemary and a glass of white wine and amaze yourself and your guests with a superb, Christmas-worthy dinner.



Microwave garlic butter

Cut off the top of the garlic head so you can see the cloves. Peel off the outer layer, but make sure the cloves remain together. Put it in a microwave-safe tray and drizzle it with olive oil. Season the garlic with salt and pepper and pour 2 tablespoons of white wine (or water) in the tray. Cover the tray with a lid and heat it in the microwave for 6 minutes on 50% power. Continue to cook in periods of 1 minute. Poke the cloves with a fork to check if they're mushy enough (it took us 10 minutes). If so, take the garlic out of the microwave and use two spoons to squeeze the garlic liquid out in a bowl. Add about 100 grams of butter and mix with fresh rosemary. After some serious stirring, the mixture is ready to be added to the chicken.

Apple Kugel

By Lucinia Philip

It wasn't until last year that the Jewish cuisine and I properly met (sorry grandma), and there is one dish which I would like to share with all of you guys, because it is truly delicious. Kugel is a sweet casserole which tastes like apfelstrudel. While it is usually served as a main course, I highly recommend it as a dessert. Thanks to its size, the casserole is ideal for family dinners. You can choose either to serve the kugel while it's still hot or wait until it's cold, which makes it the perfect dessert because you don't have to worry about the temperature.

Ingredients: • 350 – 300 g tagliatelle or egg noodles, at least 1 cm wide • 130 g butter • 2 tart apples • 250 g cottage cheese • 3-4 eggs, beaten • 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon • 250 g sugar • 2-3 hands raisins • ½ teaspoon salt

Preheat the oven to 180 degrees Celsius. Boil the tagliatelle/noodles in salted water. Drain the tagliatelle/noodles when they are boiled. Melt the butter and add this to the kugel. Coarsely grate the apples and stir these with the cottage cheese, eggs, cinnamon, sugar, raisins and a pinch of salt through the tagliatelle/noodles. Finally, pour the kugel in a deep baking dish of approximately 38x20 cm and place this in your oven for 1-1 ½ hour. Once your top layer is brown your kugel is done. Don't worry if some bits of the top layer are burned, this is almost unavoidable. Enjoy!



White chocolate mousse

By Inge van Nimwegen

Creamy, sweet, and topped with whatever deliciousness you like best: this white chocolate mousse is all you'll want to serve after your already hugely popular main course. What do you need for this yummy dessert? 175 grams of white chocolate (brand of your own choice) 90ml of milk, 2 egg whites, and 225ml whipping cream (a fat content of 34% or more is recommended).

First on the to-do list is melting the chocolate and stirring it through the milk. Next, it's time to whip the egg whites until stiff and add these to the milk-chocolate mixture. The whipping cream must also be whipped, until it forms soft peaks and can be mixed gently into the chocolate substance.

Divide your blend into 4 glasses of your choice and chill for at least 2 hours. Ta-daah, you're almost done already! Possibly the best thing about this dessert: you can make it as semi-healthy or unhealthy as you like, depending on whether you choose to add chocolate sprinkles ('hagelslag' will do just fine) or a selection of red fruit as your topping. A finger-licking dessert for the whole family!

PHOENIX RANKS SKATING RINKS

Ah yes, 'tis the season for two weeks without classes, binging BBC Christmas specials in bed, and moving only to consume excessive portions of sage-flavoured food and drinks with friends and family. At least, that's what I thought it was, until I discovered some people actually exercise for fun during the holidays in the form of ice skating. I know, amazing, isn't it? All over the country, skating rinks have popped up for the holidays so we decided to test five rinks in and around Utrecht and rank the sleigh bells out of them. It turned out that getting off your arse can actually be lots of fun.

By Iris Pijning

5

WINTERPARADIJS AMERSFOORT

Hidden in a modern shopping centre behind Amersfoort's central station is this tent covered skating rink. It's not very big, but the ice floor is decent. Winterparadijs has a big rink and a smaller one where the kiddies can practice behind skating aids. This does mean, however, that when kids get bored on the little rink, they have a go on the big one where there are no skating aids. When we went skating here early in the afternoon, we had to play a serious game of avoid-the-dwarves, which eventually turned into catch-the-dwarves because watching a bunch of seven year olds fall flat on their backs all the time got a bit sad.



WINTERPLAZA UTRECHT

4

I really wanted this to be good because... well, because it's ours. Skating on the Neude has been on my bucket list since I started studying in Utrecht so my expectations were not exactly low. Perhaps I romanticised skating on Utrecht's Monopoly-famous square under a star-filled sky with the sound of bells from the Dom tower through jazzy Christmas songs, I'll admit that. But I just think our beloved city deserves a little more than a small party tent-covered rink, centred around a bin and with chairs from the beer garden as the only available skating aids, right? Talking about the beer garden, that did look pretty great so I wouldn't want to discourage any of you to have a drink and a glide at the Winterplaza anyway.



3

IJSBAAN LEIDSEPLEIN

Just hear those tram bells ring-a-ling ding-ding-a-ding-a-ling-doooo. This little skating rink is definitely the cosiest one on the list. Located in a tiny pop-up Christmas village next to the Stadsschouwburg, this rink beats all others in terms of wintery warm ambience. Grab a bright orange seal shaped skating aid and if you're lucky you might just run into some six-year-old tourists to play seal-tag with between the Christmassy disco music-playing speakers. If you need a place to warm up after your icy adventure, check out one of the Irish pubs on the square for an Albion-esque tipple. If it weren't for the relatively bumpy skating surface and the fact that the rink is rather tiny, which makes skating at any sort of substantial speed pretty much impossible, this rink would certainly be number one. But if you decide to go skating in Amsterdam anyway, Leidseplein is only at a walking distance from the rink at Museumplein so a combination of the two would make for a perfect day out.



2

HILVERSUM ON ICE

At only a fifteen minutes' train journey from Utrecht, Hilversum on ICE is the closest alternative to Utrecht's Winterplaza. And it's also a pretty good one. With a hefty Christmas tree in the centre, this well-sized skating rink offers not only the familiar orange skating aids but also some cross-eyed penguins. Other than the not quite so ambient surroundings of Hilversum's central station, there aren't many negative things to say about the rink. It's just about as sound as it gets in the world of festive skating rinks.

1

ICE* AMSTERDAM

People say size doesn't matter, but when it comes to a skating rink I'm sure I'm not alone in my preference for a substantial length. Museumplein offers the space to build up some speed and to twirl around a bit on the ice. Space that, by the way, you'll also need in order to avoid bumping into some unstable tourists, but honestly, that just adds to the fun if you ask me. The green retro chairs used as skating aids don't glide as well as those seals at other rinks do, but they go well with the ultra Dutch décor of the place. To me, the only downside here was that the music didn't reach the far edge of the rink, but those few minutes of whistling Auld Lang Syne to yourself to give the impression of continuity are absolutely made up for by the rest of the experience.

Minor market

Literature in Conflict



As a student of English, people will often question you about the relevance of your degree, especially when your major primarily concerns itself with literature. As I feel that literature is, in fact, very relevant, and as I didn't want to give up on the fun of taking literature courses, I decided to take the minor Literature in Conflict. This minor focuses on the way literature functions in society.

By Jitske Brinksma

So far, I have only taken the first two courses of the minor, *Verboden Boeken* and *Omstreden Verleden*. I found both courses to be very useful and interesting. In *Verboden Boeken* we looked at literary expression and freedom of speech, and at how social and political factors can affect and control these. We learned about censorship, both from a historical and a modern perspective, and we read novels from different countries and time periods and examined their history of censorship. *Omstreden Verleden* looks at how memory functions when interpreting the past. The memory of the Second World War is central to this course. The third course, which I'll be taking next block, is called *Mensenrechten en Bildung*. As the name suggests, this course focuses on human rights within a historical context. It examines how literature can and has influenced the development of human rights. In the final course of the minor, *Literature and Dissent*,

the relationship between literature and political actualities will be analysed. I personally feel that this minor is especially useful for anyone considering the MA Comparative Literature. This minor will help you explore why literature is important and how it functions within society, so if that sounds like something you would like to explore (further), this is definitely the minor for you!

Journalism



If you're confused because you've never heard of this minor being taught at our beloved university – you're right, because it isn't. Hogeschool Utrecht offers this minor, which is designed especially for university students curious about journalism or simply wanting to try their hand at non-academic writing.

By Ilse Bruls

Because writing is what you'll do: the minor, stretched out over two blocks, is best described as a crash course in nearly all different forms of written journalism. The first week gently eases you into it by explaining the basics of writing simple news articles, but from week two onwards it's a roller coaster ride through in-depth interviews, writing and interviewing on location, investigative journalism, columns and blogs. Gone are the days of merely reading novels in preparation for your lectures: prepare to have on average three deadlines each week, which are often assigned only a few days in advance because "that's how it works in a real newsroom too".

Now, this may sound horrendous but believe me: it's fun. It's radically different from anything you'll ever do at university because here, you'll truly be learning by doing – except during the one or two more theoretical courses in which you'll learn everything there is to know about both Dutch and international media. And yes,

there is the mandatory spelling and grammar class: and whether you love it or hate it, you probably need it either way.

I'd urge anyone with even the slightest hint of journalistic ambition to look into this minor, as it will give you a ton of writing experience and –skills and makes for a very nice addition to your résumé. A disclaimer is, however, in order: since this minor is obviously not offered by the Faculty of Humanities or even by the UU, you cannot simply incorporate it into your study programme. Please make sure to get explicit written permission from the Board of Examiners before signing up: this way your grades can be transferred afterwards and all your hard work won't be for nothing!

Albioneers Abroad



Ellen in Bangor

It's almost Christmas time! There are lights in High Street, there are Christmas trees everywhere, and I have seen a reindeer. Yes, an actual reindeer. There was a small Christmas market here in Bangor the other day, and there were two reindeers just standing there. They were from a 'reindeer renting company' (I didn't know that was a thing either). And let's not forget about the Christmas songs you hear everywhere you go.

By Ellen Collée

I just love this time of year. And it just seems like everyone here loves it too. Christmas is very big here. I didn't know children actually believe in Santa, but I've been told that children up to twelve years old believe he flies around in his sleigh at this time of the year (but to be fair, we believe in Sinterklaas). There are also Christmas markets everywhere. I thought they were a German thing, but people in the UK love them! I went to the one in Manchester, which

is one of the biggest in the UK. I have to admit, it was amazing: the smell of hot chocolate (with Baileys, hmm), the lights everywhere, and all the amazing things they sell in the stalls. And then there is the traditional English Christmas dinner. What we usually do with my family in the Netherlands, is gourmetten or fonduen. Well, they do it differently here. We had our flat Christmas dinner last night and it was amazing. We started cooking at 2 o'clock. Many hours later (who knew gammon had to be in the oven for 3(!) hours), dinner was ready. We had steak, chicken, gammon, potatoes, Yorkshire puddings, carrots, gravy and so much more. We all sat down wearing the best Christmas jumpers you've ever seen. I looked around at my lovely flatmates, glanced at our (real!) Christmas tree and decorations, cracked our Christmas crackers and realised how much I like celebrating Christmas here, in UK style. Then I started eating and I was even happier; it was such

a good meal. And it's not even Christmas yet! I hope you guys enjoy Christmas too. There is only one more thing for me to say: Nadolig Llawen! Merry Christmas, people.

“I have seen a reindeer from a ‘reindeer renting company’”



Annemay in Swansea

Croeso i Abertawe/Welcome to Swansea.

by Annemay Schaap

Oh Swansea, aka 'the city no one knows before they actually go there.' Where should I start? Until the first few days of November, the weather was exquisite: it was dry, the sky was blue and cloudless and the sun shone beautifully over the beach. Yes, you read that correctly: beach. Unfortunately, the weather has gone truly Welsh and it will stay this way until May. I guess the clouds feel sorry for themselves if they don't get to shed their burden for longer than an hour, so they just keep going whenever they feel like it.

This wouldn't bother me much if I didn't have to go outside (YouTube, procrastination and I are very happy), but, being a proper nerd and student, I do go to class, so let the games begin. The wind is passive-aggressively ruining my umbrella and the park surrounding campus has once again flooded. Some brave people carelessly stride through the puddles of foot-deep water, while the rest of us desperately try to not completely soak the dry socks we'd carefully put on, resulting in true athleticism in the early morning.

Once you've entered campus, all is well. The buildings do their best in being buildings, lecture/seminar rooms do not have any sockets to charge batteries and the library does not do air conditioning, nor natural light. Who would have thought the Uithof is not necessarily the worst campus on the planet? It's true, Swansea does not have the most fancy university you'll ever see, nor will it have the best weather or drainage system. However, what it does have is authenticity. The university has in all its randomness, something cozy and comforting. The city centre is a scramble of different buildings and concrete which are all equally ugly. It has a small square with a waterfall, a random ruin, a big screen and a Waterstones. The centre is very close to the beach with one of the world's biggest tide differences. Swansea bay has the most beautiful beaches I have ever seen, and all Welsh people I've met are incredibly kind (also excessively drunk).

Swansea has become my home and I think Utrecht people can learn a lot from Swansea folk. People here don't give a about what anyone might think of them. I've seen many 60-year olds dancing in bars, drinking, having fun as if

they were 20 and the best thing is that my friends and I joined them. They know the true meaning of "it's better to be absolutely ridiculous than absolutely boring" and I hope they can pass their knowledge to me before I return.

“Who would have thought the Uithof is not necessarily the worst campus on the planet?”



Q & Alumni

with Michiel de Hoog

I, for one, can assure you: the question ‘How do I become a journalist?’ keeps many students busy. Michiel de Hoog (36) pondered over the same thing many years ago and now works as a sports journalist for De Correspondent. He studied English and History at Utrecht University when Bachelors and Masters didn’t exist yet and he was chairman of Albion’s 10th board. This late ‘doctorandus’ tells us how he got his dream job.

By Jos de Groot

Q: How do you remember student life?

A: “It’s absolutely great. I lived at the Wed at the time, above a café that’s now called Madeleine. I could roll to my lectures at Trans and still got in late. I went to Tivoli each Thursday and I loved hanging out at the Bastaard, a café popular amongst writers and journalists. Ronald Giphart used to go there, so that was the place I wanted to be.”

Q: What was Albion like 15 years ago?

A: “When I became chairman of Albion in 2000, it was quite a mess. We had to start from scratch: the membership files were gathering dust in a cellar somewhere at Achter de Dom and we were struggling to get a subsidy. Peter de Voogd [then teacher at the En-

glish Department, ed.] helped us settling complicated matters at a notary office. I’m not sure we bettered the situation entirely, though. But we had a lot of fun too! I remember all those collaborations between study associations – does A5 still exist? I’ve been on the travel committee as well. Organising a trip to Edinburgh is the coolest thing I have done as a student. I believe doing committee work or a board year is very important; every student should be able to do such things next to studying. It’s a standard advice I heard 15 years ago as well, but I think it can’t be stressed enough. Imagine how many résumés companies have to plough through: yours will stand out if you’ve done more than just studying. Furthermore, I dare say I mastered the art of meeting because of my board year. For sure, Albion has been a great addition to my studies.”

Q: Why did you choose to study English?

A: “I had no clue what to do when I finished middle school at the age of 17. A little voice inside my head told me to choose a decent study, something that would be useful in the future. At the same time, I was just a teenager fascinated by English pop music and cinema – I watched *Trainspotting* dozens of times and I could sing along to all

the English pop groups of back then. I was interested in all things English, but didn’t consider studying it. I started studying Business Communication, God knows why. I quit after a year and then tried studying Law, that’s what you do when you’re out of other options, right? Just two introductory weeks down, I already knew I wouldn’t stick with it. My instinct kept telling me to study English, which is what I ended up doing. I didn’t dream of becoming a translator; I just followed my interests. Studying English felt a bit like a rock and roll choice for me.”

“Paul Franssen helped me through it all.”

Q: Did you know, at the time, what you wanted to do after studying English?

A: “Most definitely. I have always known that I wanted to become a journalist. Back at school, I was advised not to study Journalism at the Hogeschool though. It was said

“Studying English felt a bit like a rock and roll choice for me.”

not to be that great of an education and – most importantly – I knew it didn’t really matter what you studied if you wanted to become a journalist. In hindsight, that turned out to be true for me.”

Q: How did you become a journalist then?

A: “I wrote a lot aside from my studies, mainly about sports. I once wrote a piece about my ridiculous passion for sports in which I admitted that I knew nearly nothing about the Balkan Wars, but everything about Ronald Koeman’s weekly wage at FC Barcelona. That resulted in a job as freelance news reporter for Het Parool and later also De Volkskrant. After having published some columns and small articles, I started receiving bigger assignments, from other media as well. At the age of 25, I was offered a 2-year contract at De Volkskrant. It appeared as an offer I couldn’t possibly refuse, but I did hesitate at first. I realised that taking the job could result in not finishing my studies. The adjunct chief editor convinced me that two years of work experience at De Volkskrant would mean quite a lot as well. I quit my studies and

began working as a fulltime journalist.”

Q: Did it turn out as the right decision?

A: “At the time, no. I was named Utrecht correspondent at De Volkskrant, which was quite absurd as I had never written a news report. I didn’t actually like it either – I’m way fonder of telling background stories and writing impressionistically. I started doubting my choice and it turned out De Volkskrant wasn’t too sure about extending my contract. I stayed on as part time copy editor and I took up studying again. I had to take a few more courses and write my thesis, which I finished a week later than officially allowed. Paul Franssen helped me through it all and in 2008 I finally graduated.”

Q: Then how does an alumnus of English Language and Culture end up as sports correspondent?

A: “Along with millions of men in the Netherlands, sports is something that comes naturally to me – it’s absurd, really. Sadly, I was never able to put my passion for sports into fulltime practice, yet my interest remained unchanged. ➤





“The English language has become leading: the world debate is conducted in English, even more than when I started studying.”

During my second spell at university, after those two years at De Volkskrant, I read a great deal of American journalism. Don't get me started on that – it's tremendous. I learnt that there's more to sports journalism than attending matches and memorising facts and statistics; sports can also be approached more intellectually, which means watching football and writing about it in an academic manner. It's a way of writing that's hard to practise at a daily paper like De Volkskrant, but it suits De Correspondent extremely well. Hence, I wrote them a piece and I was hired. It's been a bit of a messy process, but it did get me my dream job.”

Q: Do you think English Language and Culture is comprehensive enough to prepare a student for postgraduate life?

A: “Unless you want to become a translator or a teacher, it doesn't

provide you with much practical knowledge. It does teach you skills, though. Many important and beautiful things have been written in English; I started reading in English much more and much more easily because of my studies. The English language has become leading: the world debate is conducted in English, even more than when I started studying. Of course, you can read in English without having to study it, but studying English gave me the ability to open up to many other ways of thinking. And still there are so many subjects I didn't enjoy enough, such as linguistics: it's about psychology; the human brain, how do people learn? If you open up to those questions, you can learn such a great deal. Those things are incredibly useful, but not directly applicable. English is not about vocational training: you'll need to create your own fortune.”

Curriculum Vitae Michiel de Hoog

Experience

2014 – now Correspondent Sport at De Correspondent

2012 – 2014 Editor at Radio 1 for 'Lunch' and 'De Ochtend'

2011 – 2012 Editor 'Buitenhof'

2010 – 2011 Freelance journalist

2005 – 2010 Journalist at De Volkskrant

2001 – 2004 Freelance journalist at Het Parool and De Volkskrant

Education

2007 – 2008 English/History of International Relations

1997 – 2002 English/History of International Relations

1990 – 1996 Eindhoven's Protestants Lyceum

Associations

2000 – 2001 Chairman of Albion

1999 – 2000 Member of Albion's Travel Committee

1998 – 2000 Member of Albion's Quill/Phoenix Committee

Q: Do you have any tips for alumni and current students of English with regard to finding a job?

A: “It might sound stupid, but if you want to be journalist, then be a journalist. Start writing articles; find yourself an internship; get on your feet and do what journalists do. If you want to be something, you should find people in your aspired field of work and try to get in touch with them. That's not immodest, it shows how desperately you want something. I believe most people would feel flattered.

Perhaps this all sounds easier said than done, but, in hindsight, I regret not having done more of it during my time as a student. Don't be modest, be curious – that's the best advice I can give.

Q: What do you like better: life as a student or as an alumnus?

A: “I think I like my work better than my studies, but sometimes I do miss the loads of free time you have as a student to learn interesting things. When you get off school, going to university simply is the next logical step: the oppor-

tunity to learn so much doesn't feel like a present. Isn't it strange that you're allowed to immerse yourself in, let's say, Philip Larkin for weeks? For a short time, you're the master in your own tiny subject while under the guidance of fantastic professionals. It's something you'll never do again. It's Michael Lewis, one of my personal journalism heroes, who made me realise that, in fact, my work is an attempt to repeat the best parts of my studies.”

“Isn't it strange that you're allowed to immerse yourself in Philip Larkin for weeks?”



Today I would like to start off with some low-hanging fruit: the comments section of a political Facebook page. I have a strange fascination with the squalor of internet comments; I think that studying them can be enlightening and even amusing. So let me give you an ex-

ample from the Facebook page of C-SPAN, an objective news agency. One user reacts to the statement that Donald Trump is “not qualified” to be president: “Everything Obama has done Qualifies him to be sentenced to Life in Prison!” 92 people liked this clear and simple message. Another user opines: “Hillary is a lying, disgusting, traitorous person! What in the hell has happened to the American people?????” 62 likes. (Note the expressive use of punctuation.) Lastly, a comment with a whopping 205 likes says: “Im a proud nra [National Rifle Association – ed.] member. First thing I did after the San Bernardino shooting was make a donation to them. Hillary Clinton is a liar, a thief, and a murderer.”

By Erik de Vries Lentsch

Again, what I’m doing here is somewhat cheap, but I think these comments illustrate a recent change in the Republican party and that, to me, is a central issue of the elections.

The Republican primaries of four years ago had a crown prince from the very beginning: Mitt Romney. He was relatively moderate in his views, which made him attractive to swing voters, and swing voters are usually the key to the White House. During several weeks of the campaign, however, it seemed as though Rick Santorum might have been able to beat Romney, even though Santorum was a more radical right-winger (and, in my humble opinion, an all-round arse hat).

I was expecting the current primaries to follow much the same course, with Jeb Bush as centrist crown prince and Donald Trump as temporary challenger. Now I’m still fairly certain that Trump will lose out in the end, but I’m no longer sure if a moderate Republican will win the candidacy in his place. Jeb Bush’s campaign is faltering and the three men leading the polls are all cut from the same ultraconservative cloth. Ben Carson, who believes no Muslim should become president, is at 14%. Ted Cruz, who has proposed to stop Syrian and Iraqi refugees from entering the US if they are Muslim, is at 16%. Donald Trump, who wants to ban all Muslims from entering the country, whether they are refugees, immigrants or even travellers, is at 30%. Do you see a pattern?

Anger. It’s been brewing in the GOP for a long time. Fear of terrorism has developed into hatred of Muslims; ‘compromise’ has come to mean ‘betrayal.’ And so, these elections, Republicans will not decide just which particular character will be given the nomination for president, but whether centrism has any place left in their party.



At last, December has finally arrived. The month for obligatory chitchat with boring family members, for putting on your best acting performance to convince everyone you’re really happy with your new oven mitts, and of course, for shamelessly devouring everything

edible. My expertise lies especially in that last part. Quite ironic, as every year December also leads to the realization that you once again forgot the ever original ‘I am going to lose some weight this year’-resolution of last year. As a result, you have to take the drastic measure to skip the whip cream topping on your hot chocolate. Well, I found a solution for that unbearable decision.

By Laura van Lokven

Since we live in the fantastic #fitgirl era, we are constantly made aware of the fact that even a grape has the fat percentage of 63% and that we definitely need to go for 3,4 second jog to burn it off because as you know, ‘everything goes straight to the hips.’ But what we are not made aware of are the ways in which we unconsciously burn calories. That’s why I took the opportunity to make a list of these wonderful non-exercises to make you the slyest fit girl of them all.

Non-exercise 1: Chewing

Apparently, if you chew gum for 12 minutes, you will burn approximately 11 calories. Not much of course, but image what happens if you would chew away on a phonebook. I bet the results would be amazing.

Non-exercise 2: Texting

An hour of texting about your friend’s colleague’s next door neighbours’ new dog toy will give you 132 burned calories. So, let the gossip games begin.

Non-exercise 3: Eating while standing

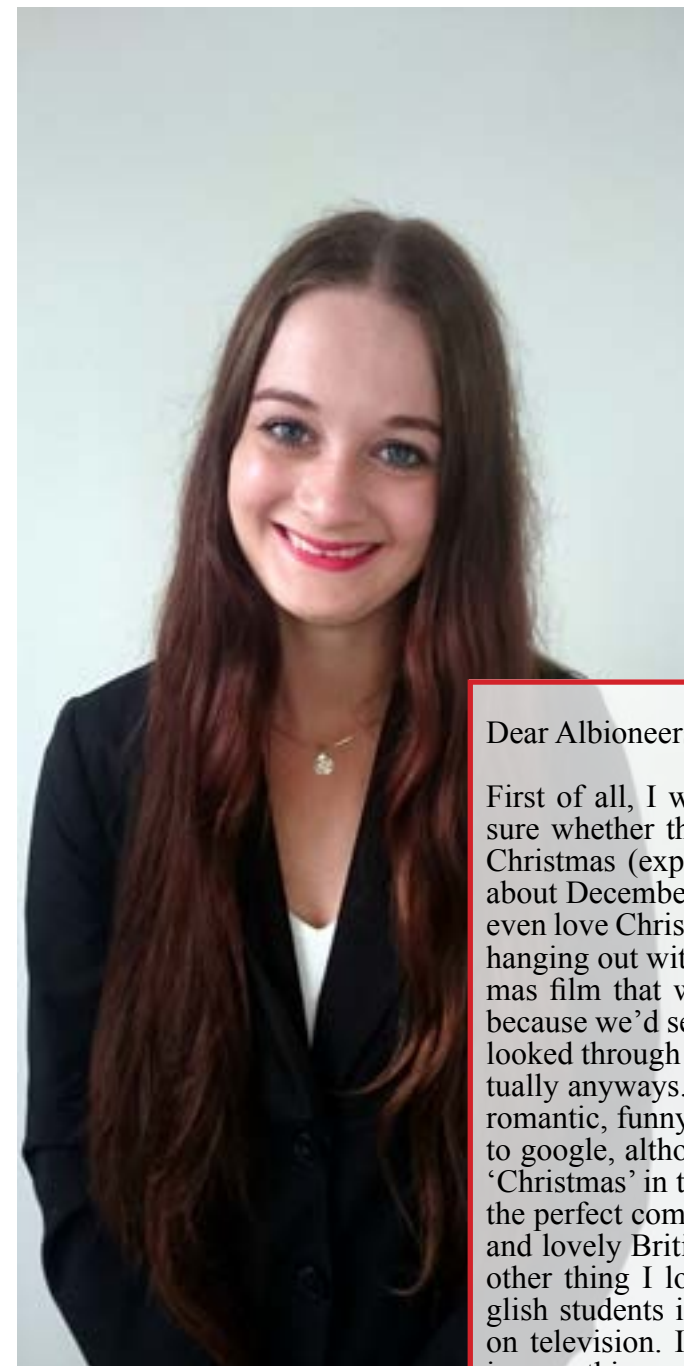
Eating while standing burns more calories than while sitting down. I know science can be very incomprehensible and sometimes, logic seems far away, but the fact is that you use more muscles while standing. So when you find yourself falling prey to a triple burger with extra bacon, realise that everything is perfectly fine as long as you eat it while standing up.

Non-exercise 4: Laughing

Having a good laugh can make you lose 1.3 calories a minute. I know this piece of excellent writing has put a smile on your face (you’re welcome), but if you really want to lose some pounds, feel free to contact me. I’ve got a great picture of my first year at secondary school. And honestly, the fierce combination of glasses and braces can give anyone a laugh attack. It sure did at my graduation.

Hopefully, these useful tips can help you get in perfect shape for the holidays. To my knowledge, Doutzen Kroes chews and texts everyday so who knows where it can get you. If not, who cares. Happy feasting to all!

Word of the Board

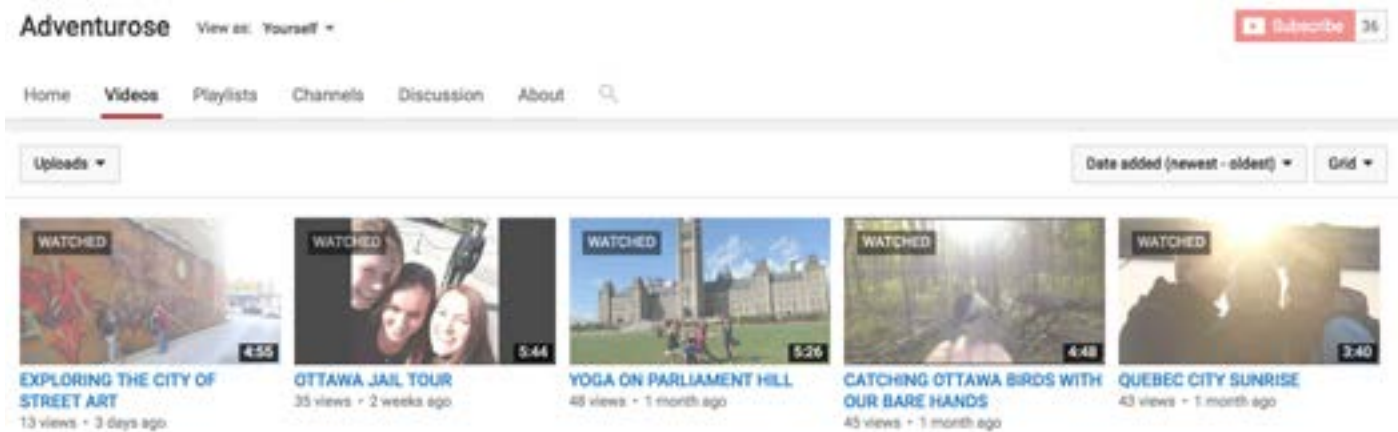


Dear Albioneers,

First of all, I would like to wish you all a happy holidays! I’m not sure whether there is anything in this world that I love as much as Christmas (expect maybe Albion, or chocolate). The amazing thing about December is that there are so many films on television. I might even love Christmas films more than I love Christmas... I was recently hanging out with a friend, and we wanted to watch a romantic Christmas film that was like Love Actually, but not Love Actually itself, because we’d seen that one a thousand times already. We googled, we looked through IMDb, but we ended up watching the actual Love Actually anyways. None of the other films matched our criteria: British, romantic, funny and of course, Christmassy. It was also very difficult to google, although we wanted to watch a Christmas film, films with ‘Christmas’ in the title tend to be not so great. Love Actually was just the perfect combination of Christmas, ‘aawhh he’s so cute’ moments, and lovely British accents; very suitable for us English students. Another thing I love about Christmas time that’s characteristic of English students is the Harry Potter marathon that is always broadcast on television. I have all the DVDs in a lovely collection, but there is something special about it when shown on TV. You might get the impression that my Christmas break is all about films, but that’s not completely true. I’m also planning on properly celebrating the holidays. On these celebratory days, I can put on my favourite, new dress (bought especially for the occasion), spend time with my crazy but loveable family and eat my favourite dinner. My grandmother always makes rolled chicken roast, because it’s my most-liked. I wish all of you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! Eat delicious food, watch horrible Christmas films, hug your family, and listen to as many Christmas songs as you can while it’s still acceptable.

Lots of love,

Georgia-Rae
Secretary 2015-2016



SHOWCASE

Margit's travels

It is true that many Albioneers enjoy reading books and watching television series. However, there are several students within our community that do actually get off their lazy asses once in a while – some even take those asses to the other side of the world, like Margit Wilke, who received her Bachelor's degree earlier this year and soon after spent 2,5 months abroad.

By Inge van Nimwegen & Iris Pijning

How did you come up with the idea of travelling after your graduation?

"The story isn't all that simple! Originally, I had plans to visit the African continent with my sister, but this fell through because of reasons outside of my control. Then: what to do next? I wanted time for myself to think about a Master's Degree, and now I had saved some money for our trip to Africa. I figured I might as well travel somewhere else instead!

A friend of mine was studying in New York, so the idea to visit her quickly formed. I found out that I could do a stopover in Iceland on my way to New York, so that made it much more interesting."

Where else did you go?

"After New York I also travelled to Canada, made a cool circle around the East Coast, and eventually stopped by the West Coast as well, going on a road trip and visiting California. So although at first, the idea of 'travelling the world' wasn't necessarily the goal as such, now I'm hooked on it."

How did you plan your trip?

"I'd booked my plane tickets and my hostel in Ice-

land up front, that's all. I'd brought my laptop, which made booking hostels and such very easy. And there's Wi-Fi everywhere! Even in Iceland, in the middle of nowhere, there was still Wi-Fi. Pretty bizarre!"

You kept a vlog, documenting your travels. Why?

"During my Bachelor's, I was always searching how I could balance my love for literature with my ultimate passion: film. Although I took many film courses, I wasn't able to do anything with it, with the practical side of things – just experimenting with making short fiction films. This was a test for myself as well, to see whether I was still into making movies at all. Turns out I was!"

What NOT to forget when travelling - a useful list by Margit:

- Pyjamas.
- Travel towel. A light, thin towel, which saves lots of space in your bag, and lots of money at hostels.
- Adaptor for charging your electronic devices.
- Credit card. Some hostels don't allow payment with other types of card.
- Something you enjoy doing at home. I love running, but I'd left my running shoes at home, which I very much regret. So if you normally run, bring appropriate attire. If you enjoy reading, take an e-reader with you. If you wish to watch movies, bring your laptop.

What are some of the things Margit learned?

...there are both bad days and good days on the road.

"There's definitely both. After a while, you know for yourself which are going to be which. For me, travel days were the worst, the weird feeling of being 'no-where.' So whenever I arrived at a new place after a travel day, I tried to keep my thoughts together. What worked for me was getting a map of the city and something to eat."

...the best moment is when something that was troubling you beforehand goes fine, and you realise 'this was not something I needed to worry about.'

...making friends isn't difficult.

"At first I did think, 'what if I'm all alone all the time?' But it didn't happen often. You'd always find someone to hang out with at the hostel where you're staying. Essentially, you don't go to a hostel unless you're looking to socialise. And if some days I didn't have any friends, I'd pick up my camera and focus on filming. Eventually I'd made so many friends that it was hard to even find time to film! Your regular friendships last one, maybe two days, but once you've gotten drunk with someone, you'll be friends for at least a week."

...it's important to realise that if you're tired of acting social, you can always retreat to your sleeping bunk and ignore everyone.

...you can sleep in someone else's bed by accident.

"It was on my first night in Iceland, it was pretty late, and I was really tired. I picked an empty, tidy-looking bed by chance, thinking it hadn't been taken by anyone. The next morning at breakfast I was told that it was actually someone else's bed... But the guy in question wasn't mad, just amused, luckily."

...cycling in New York is a great experience.

"At first I thought it'd be dangerous, but it's actually not all that bad! You're very limited in what you can see and do in New York if you stick to walking only."

...you have to accept you're a tourist.

"Especially walking around with your camera in your hand. But New York taught me that literally no one cares what you do."

...you don't necessarily meet bears when you visit Yosemite.

"When I visited Yosemite for two days, me and some others hiked to the highest point of the valley. It was astonishing! We didn't see any bears or any moose, unfortunately, but we did see a fox."

...do not joke around with border security.

"Pepper spray given to me by a friend almost got me arrested at Boston Airport! Lots of women in New York carry it with them for protection, but I knew it

was illegal in Holland so I asked an officer where I could throw it away, the pepper spray still in my bag at that time, before boarding the plane. The security man looks at me, dead serious, and says: "It's already illegal, Miss." Little did I know that in America, only registered US citizens are allowed to carry pepper spray!



Culture Corner

Book

Edward Said Orientalism

Reversing the Looking Glass

In this review you'll encounter something you might not be used to finding: non-fiction. We all know it as fiction's cousin, who shows up at the party only to discuss his collection of novelty tin soldiers from the early 19th century. I can't hope that this review will make you look at non-fiction in any other way than that analogy, I do hope, however, that you'll find the tin soldiers to become more and more interesting.

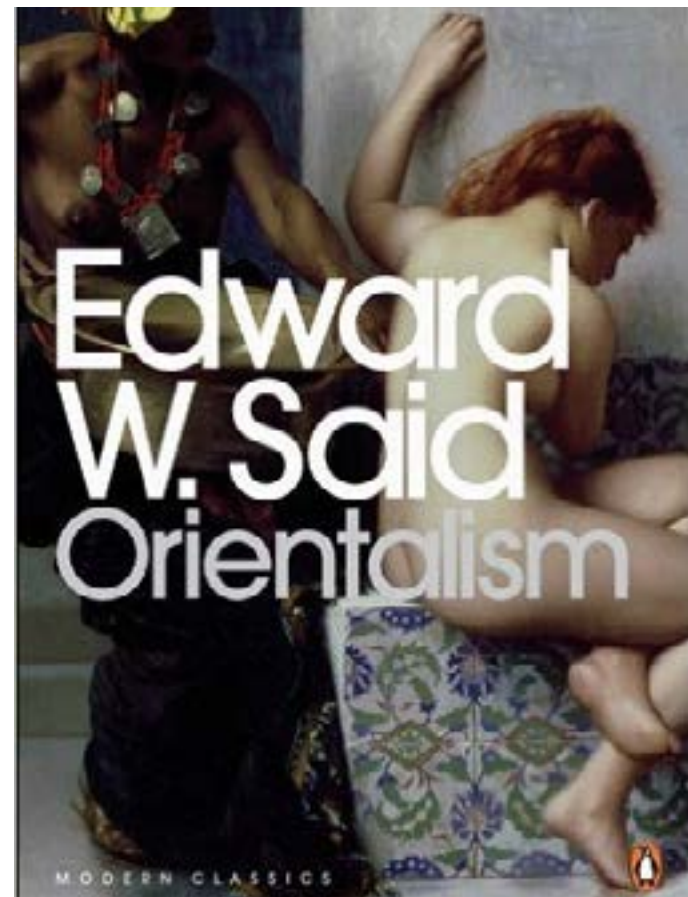
By Maarten Gooskens

On to the subject at hand: Edward Said's Orientalism. To understand a review of Orientalism, it would help to explain what it's roughly about. This man Said has written a whole book on the Orient (the combined geographical area we commonly refer to as the Middle-East and North-Africa) and how this massive span of land came to be summed up by that one word. Orientalism reflects on European representation and how Europe, through time, has established an idea of the Orient based on numerous generalisations (Arabic, Islamic, Mohammedan, the list of names goes on).

“Non-fiction. We all know it as fiction's cousin, who shows up at the party only to discuss his collection of novelty tin soldiers from the early 19th century”

However, what makes this book so interesting is how true it rings. Reading Orientalism means being confronted with generalisations you find yourself making, but also on a bigger scale. Said's Orientalism can be applied to our politics, to our culture, and to our way of interpreting the world around us. It is striking how his ideas of Orientalism can be so readily applied to the world around us, in more ways than just the Orient. This might seem very confronting, but Said has done a grand job of making the book accessible.

He cuts it up into three parts: Explaining what Orientalism is and how far it reaches, how Orientalism came to be, and Orientalism from the late 19th century to more contemporary examples. As you go along, you discover patterns in representations through time, but Said also demonstrates the importance of canonical literature and the impact it can have on our world-view. And perhaps most importantly of all, although Orientalism may have been first published in '78, it is only becoming more and more relevant today. Orientalism will offer you some insight into the workings of our modern world, but it can also open your eyes to the reasons why we now find ourselves in such turmoil. Yet, we cannot fully turn to Said's book for answers. Alas, Said hasn't been around since 2003, for as we can tell from his book: he would know what to say.



Exhibition

Museum Catharijnecon- vent Bruegel's Witches

I believe that the dark and filthy parts of the human mind, the parts that are labeled taboo, contain a great fountainhead of creativity. Any subject that is deemed off-limits naturally becomes potent and exciting to artists. When a scapegoat appears in society, it attracts all of this creative energy like a lightning rod. So it was, I think, with the European fear of witches that started in the 15th century: it sparked the imagination of generations of painters (as it also sparked piles of wood to kill women).

By Erik de Vries Lentsch

The exhibition 'Bruegel's Witches' examines how this imagination was largely formed by a single painter, Pieter Bruegel the Elder. He produced two prints that became very popular and established several key elements of witch lore: the broom flight through the chimney, the black kettle, and the host of demonic creatures that participated in the witches' Sabbath. Museum Catharijneconvent shows how artists used these elements in their work for centuries after Bruegel's death.

The painters must have found great joy in creating variations on the magical symbols and the fanciful demons dancing around the dreaded women. The monsters that lurk in the shadows of the images can be disturbing, but are more often charming. Another fascinating trope of witching imagery is the Main de Gloire, a corpse's hand that is made into a candle and has the ability to make the owner invisible.

Aside from paintings, a few real-life items related to witchcraft are also on display. One of these is a beautiful wooden chair with a high back. It is adorned with the emblem of 's-Hertogenbosch and with several carved toads. Its purpose, however, was not quite as exquisite as its appearance; it was used by medieval mobs to carry witches (or unchaste women – the line was blurry) out of town as they were banished.

One small room of the exhibition is reserved for a broomstick with a bike saddle and a pair of 3D-glasses. It offers the digital experience of flying around the Dom and over the canals of Utrecht, which I found to be silly, underwhelming, and too short, but I was grinning like an idiot the whole way through (an experience similar to losing my virginity).

The end of the exhibition, a small oversight of witches in films, is anticlimactic, but the whole thing is an interesting and beautiful peek at the imagination of the magical and the demonical. I recommend you pay the museum a visit during these dark December days.

Event

Karaoke Naughtiness: a Singalong Party at Utrecht's Bodytalk

A dreary Tuesday night in the city of Utrecht. What to do, where to go, whom to drag along in your reckless plans? Walking down the Oudegracht on December 8th, these exact questions were on my mind. From a distance, faint hints of semi-pure singing could be heard coming from one of the cosy-looking cafés situated along the canal. What was going on here, inside Utrecht's most famous gay bar Bodytalk, was their regular karaoke night.

By Inge van Nimwegen

As we entered we were struck by the beauty of the Christmas decorations hanging along the walls and ceiling as well as the decorations worn by the visitors, and especially that of the wonderfully sassy host. The tricky part about organising any karaoke event is that its success depends almost entirely on the visitors' participation (and a little on the list of available songs to sing, of course).

“The singing is precisely as mediocre as you'd expect: the perfect recipe for a great night out!”

Both, in the case of the Bodytalk, were no problem at all. There was a continuous stream of people, both sober and drunk, willing to take a shot at their favourite tunes, ranging from Meat Loaf (cliché!) to Beyoncé (daring for two boys!). You did not need a microphone to let your voice be heard, as many demonstrated; singing along to other people's choice of song was also perfectly fine, as long as it was done reasonably softly.

Most striking about this bar is the atmosphere. Everyone's your friend as long as you approach them in this way; the drinks are as good as anywhere else, and the singing is precisely as mediocre as you'd expect. It's the perfect recipe for a great night out! With 00.30h approaching, the last songs were sung and the last drinks were drunk, and everyone returned home happy and hoarse.



Album

Kneebody & Daedelus Kneedelus

Fresh Middle Ground

On an almost annual basis producer Daedelus has been releasing music (be it a full-length album or an EP), and 2015 is no exception. However, this year he has taken a slightly different turn in the form of a collaboration with jazz group Kneebody to create Kneedelus.

By Maarten Gooskens

This seems to be a natural progression for Daedelus, as he too has been placed on Brainfeeder's path towards a jazzier future. Daedelus' work has always been very frantic. When you see him perform live he seems unable to stand still and this has always been reflected in his music. However, the last few albums have hinted at him having calmed down. He had started to incorporate more mellow vocals and leaving his instrumental hip hop behind. This worked very well on his latest album, *The Light Brigade*, but less so on the one before, *Drown Out*. But with Kneedelus Daedelus seems to have struck gold again. The instrumental work of Kneebody blends seamlessly with Daedelus' rhythmic signature style.

The album sweeps you off your feet right away with "Loops." Daedelus doesn't hold back, but Kneebody's trumpet keeps it in control. This trend of opposites-yet-a-perfect-fit continues throughout the album, but there's room for rest in-between, beautifully embodied by "Home." And ever since Aphex Twin closed *Drukqs* with "Avril 14th" I fell in love with a soft piano finale, and "Not Love" truly gives the listener closure.

Although I am completely sold on the combination of these two unique flavours, the album does tread on a certain middle ground. My guess would be that a jazz purist wouldn't fancy it too much for its electronic muddling, and that conservative Daedelus fans would see this as a wrong turn in his oeuvre. I would urge those people to find some solace in what lies in-between, because it is definitely worth a listen.



Album

Chvrches Every Open Eye

Possibly the best album of 2015

Although this album has been out for a few months now, I still thought it was worth a review in Phoenix. Why? There are a lot of things that make Chvrches an awesome band. The fact that they're Scottish, for example. Or that the singer, Lauren Mayberry, is very small, funny, and an outspoken feminist. And last month, I went to their concert in the Melkweg, which was so good it fuelled my enthusiasm even more.

By Simone Schoonwater

But back to the album itself. It is Chvrches' second full-length record, and even better than the first one. The music is still largely electronic, but with a characteristic style I am yet to hear from any other band. Lauren's voice has grown better, and she sings the often mysterious, gripping, and almost poetic lyrics with a new-found force. When this CD is playing, I have no choice but to sing along, whether it is very softly (when other people are around) or extremely loud (when I'm alone in the car). Besides the songs that make you want to sing and dance, such as 'Leave a Trace,' 'Make Them Gold,' and 'Empty Threat,' the album also contains some slower songs, 'After Glow' for example, which will impress you even more with Lauren's singing abilities. And then there's the beautifully built-up 'Clearest Blue,' one of my favourites.

**"This is not a CD you should
play quietly in the back-
ground"**

All in all, I think *Every Open Eye* is the best album of 2015. This is not a CD you should play quietly in the background – no, you need to blast this at full volume and emerge yourself in it. I promise you it will be worth it.



Album

Adele 25

The soundtrack to a wine-fuelled melancholic evening

If you've recently caught a glimpse of a newspaper, the 8 o'clock news, or simply set foot outside your front door, you will know that these are uncertain and turbulent times for our society. One look at the average Facebook newsfeed, however, proves that not even the migrant crisis is quite as polarizing as Adele. You either love her or hate her; you've either recently spent four mornings in an hour-long Ticketmaster queue or you've Facebook-attended an anti-Adele event.

By Ilse Bruls

Since I've done none of those things, I hope to be somewhat objective in my attempt at reviewing her latest album. 25 has more than lived up to the hype and is on a steady course to break the sales records of her previous bestseller 21, and rightly so: it is very, very good. To say that it is more of the same would be doing it a disservice, but Adele hasn't drastically changed her previous recipe for success. The piano ballads with glass-shattering high notes are still there – in fact, they make up pretty much half the album, with *A Million Years Ago* and *All I Ask* being the highlights. On the other hand, there are the bombastic *I Miss You* and *River Lea*: heavy on the drums and very evocative of Florence and the Machine. *Send My Love (To Your New Lover)*, a collaboration with pop music god Max Martin, has all the ingredients to become the next monster hit: it's sassy, snappy and you won't be able to get it out of your head. *Sweetest Devotion* closes out the album: I found it to be a somewhat forgettable track, but this being Adele, "somewhat forgettable" means "only slightly less stellar than the others."

"Not even the migrant crisis is quite as polarizing as Adele"

This album might not be the one to win over the most resolved haters, but Adele doesn't need to: by sticking to her guns, she's struck gold once more. For the sceptics wanting to give it a cautious try: ease yourself into it by using it as the soundtrack to a wine-fuelled melancholic evening. I hear there are still tickets going for approximately five times the original price, so you might just find yourself at the Ziggo Dome in June after all.

To prevent gems of the past from falling into oblivion, Lucinia reviews an under-exposed or forgotten film that she believes is absolutely worth a watch.

Film

Melancholia

“The Dance of Death”: a combination of a beautiful art form with something that many people are frightened of. That is exactly what we see in Lars von Trier’s *Melancholia*.

By Lucinia Philip

Before I start, I have to say that the opening scene of *Melancholia* is one of my all-time favourites. In 8-9 minutes we get to see a summary of the entire film in slow-motion, like a painting coming to life, as we witness the planet *Melancholia* dancing around before crashing into our beloved Earth.

The film is divided into two parts. The first part introduces us to Justine (Kirsten Dunst) who is about to marry Michael (Alexander Skarsgård). A majority of Justine’s part takes place at her wedding, where we get to meet her dysfunctional family. The introduction of her family gives us a better understanding of who Justine is as a person, and we quickly learn that she is suffering from depression and tries her best to please everyone around her, especially her sister Claire (Charlotte Gainsbourg), who is a control-freak. For her family, however, this does not seem enough, and soon the wedding turns into a nightmare for Justine. Part two focuses on Claire and her fear of death, as everyone finds out that they might be gone in a couple of days. Ironically, it is now Claire who has lost control and seeks comfort and help from Justine, who actually seems content with the idea of our planet being destroyed.

Normally a Von Trier film can make you feel quite uncomfortable because of its shocking content, but this is not the case with *Melancholia*. The feeling you get after seeing *Melancholia* is probably much worse than being disturbed. The film leaves you with melancholic thoughts, especially if you’re a sensitive person or if you’ve dealt with depression. I wouldn’t necessarily say that the film was extremely depressing, but it is the combination of brilliant scene-setting, acting and cinematic techniques that keeps haunting you. At certain points, however, the film can be quite dull, because of scenes that aren’t really relevant for the story. These scenes do add something to the film, though, because they captivate the experiences and emotions of the sisters even when nothing is happening. Sharing the melancholia and fear of our main characters with the audience is ultimately what this film is about, and in this, Von Trier has certainly succeeded.

Film

Star Wars VII The Force Awakens

The *Star Wars* saga told the story of an idealistic young man who became drunk with power and ultimately ruined everything he had fought to achieve. That man, of course, was George Lucas.

By Erik de Vries Lentsch

Lucas had relatively little control over the making of the highly loved original trilogy (films IV-VI), but then, tragically, he went on to write, produce, and direct the prequel trilogy. I say tragically because Lucas was seduced by a quicker, easier method of filmmaking, heavily reliant on bluescreen and with little attention to character. The result: a cinematic equivalent of a McDonald’s Happy Meal. So now, with JJ Abrams writing and directing, *The Force Awakens* represents an opportunity for the franchise to redeem itself. Has it been successful?

The answer is yes. This is not a perfect film and not a perfect *Star Wars*-film even, but it has heart, grit, and a great deal of humour. The new generation of heroes is likeable and well-defined, especially main character Rey, played by Daisy Ridley. She is a lonely, lowly scavenger on a desert planet, until she is hurled into the conflict between the Light Side and the Dark Side represented by the Resistance and the fascist New Order. To see Rey’s development and endurance is a joy; as with the other new characters, I look forward to seeing her story unfold in coming films. Unfortunately, *TFA* is so relentlessly fast-paced that we are hardly grounded in her world before it is turned upside down. Long gone are the days when audiences could be excited by Luke Skywalker walking around on a moisture farm for thirty minutes.

Speaking of 1977, *The Force Awakens* pays tribute

to (or rips off, depending how you look at it) many elements from *A New Hope*. Chief among these is the appearance of yet another Death Star. The name is different this time, ‘Starkiller Base,’ but other than that it is exactly the same and to me, looks more like ripping off. On the other hand, fans will be glad to hear that Han Solo is given lots of screen time to display his undiminished charm.

Further points: the visuals, both digital and practical, are amazing; everyone will love BB-8 (‘R2D2’s spherical successor’); Supreme Leader Snoke, the new Emperor, is a little underwhelming; his evil apprentice Kylo Ren is interesting; and the climactic lightsaber battle is intense. All in all, you were probably going to see this film anyway, so all I can really say is this: I fully support your decision.



Berfin and I have been fellow students for almost a year and a half now – high time I met up with her to discuss her favourite books. We talked about her love for Dutch literature, clones, her attempt to read a Turkish novel, and much more.

By Simone Schoonwater

Berfin's Bookshelf

What was your favourite book growing up?

"The Kinderen van de Grote Beer series by Carry Slee! There were eight books, each for every year of primary school. I loved them so much I kept re-reading them until I was 15 years old. No, actually, that's not true – the ones I have at home I still read sometimes, haha.

What is your favourite book now?

"The Chosen by Chaim Potok. I didn't know much about Judaism, and this book taught me a lot: about the central ideas, Zionism, orthodox Jews, et cetera. But it is also a very subtle story about two friends. I love how the book combines those two elements. I like other Jewish-American literature as well, Everything is Illuminated by Jonathan Safran Foer for example."

What was the last book you read 'for fun'?

"The Shock of the Fall by Nathan Filer. It's about a boy with schizophrenia who lives in an institution. He looks back on his life up until now, when he's 18, I think. The death of his brother has influenced him a lot; that's a big part of his story. I would recommend it!"

Which book do you think is extremely overrated?

"That would be Tirza by Arnon Grunberg. And no, I wasn't spoiled before I read it! I just felt that only the last 50 pages actually covered the subject what the book was supposed to be about – you know, Tirza herself. Everything else was just about the main character, whom I found boring and unengaging. Also, the beginning of the novel had more depth than the ending, which felt hastened and not well-developed."

Which book are you most ashamed of for not having read (yet)?

"Twilight or Fifty Shades of Gray! No, I'm kidding, although I haven't actually read either one. I'm most ashamed that I've never read a book by a Turkish author, either in Turkish or in translation. It's a shame because I have been raised bilingual in both Turkish and Dutch, and many family members still live in Turkey. I did try a Turkish book once, it was called My Name is Red, written by Orhan Pamuk. I stopped reading after five pages, even though it was a translation – I found it too difficult!"

If you could recommend me one of your books, which one would it be?

"Besides The Chosen? I'd recommend De Engelenmaker by Stefan Brijs, a novel about the doctor Victor Hoppe. He returns to his hometown, a small village he hasn't set foot in for twenty years. The villagers are narrow-minded people and they respond warily to his arrival. What they do not know is that Victor is busy with human cloning, so they do actually have a pretty good reason not to trust him, haha. It's a fascinating novel, full of religious symbolism and it was built up really well."

If you were to write a book, what would it be about?

"It would definitely be a novel about a dystopia or utopia. Not like those young adult ones written all the time; more like George Orwell. I would include all my social justice and feminism and criticism on politics and society, haha. I have a pretty outspoken opinion on those matters."

What is your favourite English word?

"'Sonder'. It's not the word itself that I like but the meaning: it's the sudden realisation that everyone around you has a life that's as detailed and rich and extensive as yours. I just find it fantastic there is a word for that unsettling experience."

"I guess I like books that teach me stuff about religion!"

What is your favourite film adaptation?

"V for Vendetta! Okay, I haven't read the graphic novel to be honest, but it's my favourite film. It combines dystopia with politics."

Which book are you looking forward to reading?

"Religion for Atheists by Alain de Botton. What I've heard is that he explains various religions to the atheist reader: where they come from, what they are based on, and what you can learn from them even if you're not religious. I guess I like books that teach me stuff about religion!"

Who is your favourite character?

"This question is so hard! I think I'd say Jay Gatsby. I like him because he's mysterious and intriguing, but also because I read an amazing theory by someone saying that Gatsby might have been black. Apparently, the novel is littered with details hinting at this, and for me it explains so much about how people react to him and his status in society. It's somewhere on the internet, you should look it up!"





Calendar

January		Febuary	
5	Monthly Drinks	9	Student Assembly 2
6	hALV	9	Monthly drinks
11	Study Afternoon	10	SUDS One Act Festival
14	Scriptieworkshop	11	SUDS One Act Festival

COLOFON

This issue of Phoenix was made possible because of:

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Would you like to contribute to Phoenix on a freelance basis? You can! Did you write a kick-ass column or review or would you like to share your fascinating hobby with the world in the next Phoenix Showcase? Contact us via albi-onphoenix@gmail.com, and we'll see what we can arrange.



*"I will honour Christmas
in my heart, and try to keep
it all the year."*

- Charles Dickens