

PHOENIX

Issue 3 | 2015-2016



A Phoenix view of Utrecht Centraal

Q&Alumni with Rachel Hopman-Welter:

“Everything’s possible as long as you’re passionate about something.”

Rozemarijn showcases De Bildung Academie

Tea Time with Allison Kirk | Albioneer in Istanbul | Chantal’s Bookshelf

And more...



Page 6



Page 12



Page 24

Content

Utrecht 2.0	4
The Piano	6
Final Destination	8
Train of Thought	9
Phoenix Ranks: Food at Utrecht CS	10
Tea Time with Allison Kirk	12
Columns	14
Word of the Board	15
Showcase: An Unusual Gap Year	16
Minor Market	18
Albioneers Abroad	20
Q&Alumni	22
Culture Corner	24
Bookshelf	28
Calendar	30
Colofon	31

Letter from the editor

Dear readers,



At Phoenix, we keep trying to refresh, expand and surprise (no really). During our committee meeting prior to the making of this issue, we pondered over how to accomplish those objectives. Kiki threw the idea of interviewing the many strangers that gather around Utrecht Centraal's piano every day. Her suggestion sparked a discussion about what kind of stories on Utrecht Centraal we would be able to write. How come the station seems to be under endless construction? What place is the least bad idea to go to for an on-the-way bite or drink? And why are we sometimes advised to proselytise while in a hurry? Find the answers to those questions in this Phoenix, which in a sense can be considered a small special about your favourite train station.

All of our familiar features are here as well. Lucinia and Kiki went to Amsterdam for a cup of tea with Allison Kirk, who introduced them to her cat, whereas Simone visited Chantal van Zeeland for a chat about her bookshelf at good old IBB. Rozemarijn Brus faced the same problem as I did a few months ago: with a bachelor's degree in the pocket, but without having found the right master yet, what's up next? She decided to try De Bildung Academie, a special type of education you might want to learn more about. Ilse interviewed Rozemarijn for this issue's Showcase about her interesting choice. Q&Alumni features Rachel Hopman-Welter, who went on to work in the publishing industry after she'd become a graduate of English. Any chance you started studying English because of a love for books? Rachel proves it can get you a job.

We have a chock-full Culture Corner, as well as another view on the American elections by Erik and a column on laziness by Bart Vermeulen. Speaking of which, time to get lazy! Sit down, have a cup of tea, and enjoy the beautiful stories and interesting features we have put together for this Phoenix.

I almost forgot we now have an official committee photo, check out our faces below!

Jos de Groot
Editor in Chief



Utrecht 2.0

Although we have the tallest church tower of the Netherlands, the stories we tell about the city in which we live and study normally aren't about how Utrecht is the biggest or the best at anything. We Utrechters love our cosy city centre, the canals our town is known for, and the fact we don't get completely overrun by tourists during summer (yet). Our train station deserves some more attention, though. With hundreds of thousands of travellers passing through it every day, Utrecht Centraal is the biggest and most important train junction of the Netherlands. Once the large-scale renovations are finally finished, Utrecht's train station will perhaps feature in our proud stories in the near future.

By Jos de Groot

You probably come across Utrecht Centraal a few times per week, so you might be wondering what all those cranes, construction workers and break-ups are actually for. I, for one, remember leaving Utrecht for the weekend and losing my way when returning on Sunday, as the walkways had suddenly changed. Since 2011, Utrecht's train station has been under construction. Plans for a large-scale renovation were already discussed in 2000; Utrecht was in dire need of a large, modern and future-proof public transportation terminal. Since the station's last renovation in 1973, when Hoog Catharijne was built (which, at the time, was the largest shopping mall in all of Europe), Utrecht Centraal has been fitted to handle 35 million passengers a year. Currently, 88 million passengers come through the station yearly, a number that's expected to increase to a 100 million in 2030.



The first notable success was achieved in July last year when a big part of the new station hall was opened. It went from 8,000 square metres to 21,000. Another 4,000 will be added when the project is finished. The roof of the new station has been updated as well. The light that came through the old one had a blueish tint, which gave Utrecht Centraal a weird sense of '70s sci-fi. The new roof is undulant, through which the already enormous station hall appears even more spacious. What's more, from now on it's possible to get from the one side of the station to the other without having to go through Hoog Catharijne. A new boulevard directly connects the city centre with the city office building (the 'Stadskantoor' that was delivered in October 2014), from which you have a magnificent view of Utrecht Centraal's many train tracks. Speaking of which: those are under construction as well. Given the expected increase in passengers, plans are to have Utrecht Centraal work 150 trains an hour – fifty trains per hour more than in the current situation. We'll have to endure some more delays and detours than usual, but the end-result is expected to be worth the temporary bother.

Utrecht's huge, hyper-modern train station should be ready this year, but it's part of a way bigger renovation project known as CU2030 (read: 'see you too 030'). TivoliVredenburg is surrounded by skyscraper-sized scaffoldings and the once separated singels are set to meet each other again in 2019. For the time being, let's just keep wandering those cosy canals while gaping at the Dom tower, as Utrecht 2.0 is far from finished.



THE PIANO

Whenever I am meeting someone at Utrecht Centraal, I always tell them to meet me at the piano. And when I have to kill some time before my train leaves, there's a good chance you'll find me there as well. The piano seems to have a magical quality that keeps drawing me near, even though I don't play. What is it that makes this simple instrument so interesting? I tried to find out by asking other people; pianists and listeners.

By Kiki Drost

Girl with ponytail

Sitting on a table, hopefully watching the piano, waiting for someone to start playing.

"I'm waiting for my bus. I live close to Utrecht, so I'm at the station a lot. If I have to wait, I always wait here. I think I'm here once or twice a week. One time there was an entire band playing; there were drums and a harmonica and so many people were watching them! I heard Waylon and Claudia de Breij were here recently, but I've missed that."

The janitor

Eyeing the junkie who is sitting behind the piano, not playing, but undressing and then dressing himself again.

"He comes here all the time. I think he's done a bit too much drugs in his life. He's a bit weird, but harmless.

I often have to empty the trashcans, so I'm close to the piano quite a lot. I find it annoying. It's loud and always the same. [I have to give this man credits for his Dutch pun "altijd hetzelfde liedje"]

Some of it is quite good, and it can be nice, but mostly they either play bad, or the same songs. There's one boy with a hat and glasses who plays here every day. He's really good, but I'm a bit bored with him. There's also a blind man who plays here sometimes. I enjoy his playing."



Japanese student

Keeps looking around, taking a little stroll and then repeating this process.

"I'm waiting for someone. She's my Japanese tutor. I'm learning Japanese just for fun. She called the stationmaster and asked if there was an official meeting point. There isn't anymore, but he suggested the piano. I am a bit early, so I've been listening for a while."

French Lady

Is sitting on a bench with two bags next to her.

"I am meeting someone in front of the AH To Go, I didn't know they had a piano here. I think it's a good initiative, one of the best. It's a good way to connect people; music is a language everybody knows. I think it's brave of people to play here, very brave. If I could play, I think I would too. It's interesting to see what people play; in a way it's a part of their personalities.

Is there more than one AH To Go? Oh no, then this must be the wrong one. Next time I'll meet people at the piano."

Rolling Tobacco

Is using the – now unplayed – piano as a table

"I walked out of the AH To Go, where I work and needed a place where I could both put my coffee and roll a cigarette,



this object seems adequate. There's one boy who plays the same four numbers every day, at around ten. Not the whole songs, just a small part of them. He could do with learning some new ones. Apart from him, I like it: it's a nice distraction from all the beeping sounds."

Two girls

One is playing, the other is singing. Although mostly both are just giggling.

"I only play a little bit. This is the first time I'm playing. I often considered playing, but I never found the courage before."

"We came to the piano specially; we don't have to be at the station. We finally dared to play, because they aren't that many people around right now."

Solitaire Player

Playing a game of cards on his iPad, glancing at the piano every once in a while.

"I'm meeting someone here. I live abroad, so I didn't know they had this. I like it! I was sitting over there, but when I saw this bench was free I moved here to listen. It gives some gratification in a world that's full of misery. Good thing they don't have stations in Somalia, otherwise I'd want them there too."

Silver earrings

A woman who interrupts the pianist to ask him what he's playing.

"He's playing something by Amelie, which is a movie apparently. It sounds beautiful. Music touches something inside of you and gets you out of your thoughts for a few moments."

Italian PhD student

Complete with dark curls and Italian accent.

"I live and study in Enschede, but I have to go to Utrecht once a week. I always practise playing the piano here. I don't have one at home, so my weekly ten minutes I get here is the only practise I get."

Yellow and blue

A mother in a yellow coat and her son in a blue one.

"We're waiting for someone. I think it's a good idea. Normally you're just waiting, now you have some entertainment. I used to play a bit, but I don't think I'd be much good now."

Playing while calling

Keeps playing for a long time, and gets lots of applause.

"I was calling someone I met when I was playing the piano in Amsterdam. I love playing the piano, and I do it quite often. I have to admit that the applause and the compliments I receive do play a part in why I love this so much."

Photographer

We eye each other with interest. Are you taking pictures too?

"I like taking street pictures. When someone is playing and it sounds good and there's a big audience I go here to take some pictures. What I like about the piano is that it makes this very fleeting space a place you can take a moment."

Final destination

When I rush down the escalator of the Central Station to get to a lecture, I often catch a glimpse of two mysterious figures who, regardless of cold or rain, guard their posts next to a small stand saying “Wat leert de Bijbel echt?” The figures can be young, old, female or male, depending on the day, but they are always neatly dressed and patient. I’ve often wondered what message they are trying to spread and what organization is helping them do that. To find out, I read one of their booklets, and I can tell you: it’s mostly what you think it is.

By Erik de Vries Lentsch

The figures are Jehovah’s Witnesses. About one hundred of them are active in Utrecht and their mission is coordinated by the international church, which is why the booklets are available in so many languages – they need to reach the widest possible audience. It also explains the simplistic and generic nature of their language and their pictures. Yes, there are pictures. Hilarious pictures: ‘90s stock photography mixed with clumsy, colourful illustrations that remind me of Socialist Realism.

The images fit the message, which is one of hope: soon the world will end. Plague, famine and war are everywhere, just like the Bible said. The hopeful part is that God is about to establish Paradise and that all the woes of the world will be eliminated. The current problems are merely signs of what is ahead. It sounds too good to be true, and the writer of the booklet is quick to acknowledge this. However, she or he says, the bible says it will happen. Therefore, it will.

I’m not being ironic or condescending when I say that I would love to look at the world with such certainty and with such hope. And I think it only makes sense that, when you think you’ve discovered a truth so epic and so happy, you would want to tell everyone about it. In a way I’m surprised that Jehovah’s Witnesses (or Christians in general, for that matter) aren’t literally screaming in people’s faces that they’ve found the way to live forever in perfect happiness.

Our social reality, however, generally prevents people from doing this. And when I read what else the booklet has to say, I’m glad that’s the case – because apparently the recipe for God’s approval includes giving up on Christmas and, more sinisterly, the submission of wives to their husbands.

In this way, Jehovah’s Witnesses are like the earliest Christians. Their morality is old-fashioned, they do not celebrate Christmas, and they think that the apocalypse is just around the corner. And so I like to think of them as a relic of ancient times – something like a faded, primitive fresco in an early church, standing beneath the escalator of a train station.

TRAIN OF THOUGHT



I honestly think I am one of the few people who enjoys traveling by train. Especially around the rush hours, when a zoo of all kinds of travelers manifests itself on the platforms. Every time, the arrival of a train then seems to create the starting signal for a survival of the

fittest. The participants, however, are always divided the same; you have the feisty housewives planning on spending the day at some boring convention with ‘the girls’, the business people who strategically place their briefcase or trolley in such manner that any chance of passing them would result in a death by severe leg cuts, and lastly, my kind, the students. When the train rolls in, everybody somehow starts walking in line with the train, as if some will try to make the ultimate action film move and jump on a riding train. However, after no one makes an attempt and one is to finally enter the vehicle by elbowing a five-year old and overtaking an elder woman, I always choose a spot near the window.

By Laura van Lokven

There, staring out the window, my fascination for train travel begins. Seeing the Netherlands flash by, I can endlessly dream away. Because, while the train cuts through the fields like a razor through the flesh of that tricky ankle part during a hurried shaving, I often only then seems to be aware of the speed of time. For me, the train seem a strange vehicle, placing me in an untouched position while time and space rush by behind the grubby plastic windows. Nevertheless, the vehicle is shared with strange creatures, such as the smelly man making today’s Sudoku or the woman that loudly discusses a new electric bicycle, apparently bought by a boaster called Jeanette. These people seem not to share my melancholic conclusion of getting older. They seem unaware of the fact that the train does not only take you from A to B, but gives you the physical impression of seeing life rush by as you pass the warm homes of thousands of people. As the train comes closer to my hometown and lowers its pace, the memories start to pickle my brain. Then the realisation finally sets that though I may return to my former place, time has brutally made it my past. Train travel makes me understand that.

“Good afternoon.. due to a broken overhead wire, this train will be delayed with approximately..” fills the compartment and interrupts my thoughts. The Dutch train has a special power in that way, it makes you realise things always change, while actually, in case of the NS, they never do.

PHOENIX RANKS

FOOD AT UTRECHT CENTRAAL

It's a well-known fact that "student" is basically synonymous with "train travel expert". Indispensable during those long hours we spend on the tracks? Decent food, of course! The sheer number of restaurants and take away places at Utrecht Central Station can be a bit overwhelming, but Phoenix has got you covered: this ranking will tell you exactly where (not) to get yourself a train-proof meal at our favourite station.



5

JULIA'S

By Jos de Groot

Pasta: that one dish basically any student is able to brew some kind of variation of. Hence, when looking for dinner at Utrecht Centraal, pasta might not be your first choice. NS' pasta paradise Julia's looks appealing and ought to represent freshness and Italian authenticity. How one is supposed to taste these self-proclaimed values, however, is unclear. The 'cooks' fast-boil a handful of frozen pasta and pour an indefinable sauce with it. Within moments your meal is warmed up. A topping of some bland arugula and you're good to go. Julia's is less dreadful than many eateries at the station, but good pasta? Nope, your own cheesy, pesto-fuelled creation probably beats this stuff any day.

4

DE BROODZAAK

By Ilse Bruls

Ah, good old Broodzaak: pretty much the only constant factor at every Dutch train station. Travelling to a station you've never been? There's only about a 50% chance there'll be restrooms and you better hope the buses leave from a somewhat logical place you can find in under ten minutes, but you can be sure there will be a Broodzaak there somewhere. De Broodzaak sells a perfectly average assortment of generic tasting sandwiches, snacks and drinks; a mozzarella sandwich is probably the most "exotic" thing you'll find here. They have perfectly average prices to match, making this a safe bet for grabbing a quick lunch on those days you just don't feel like getting out of your comfort zone food-wise.

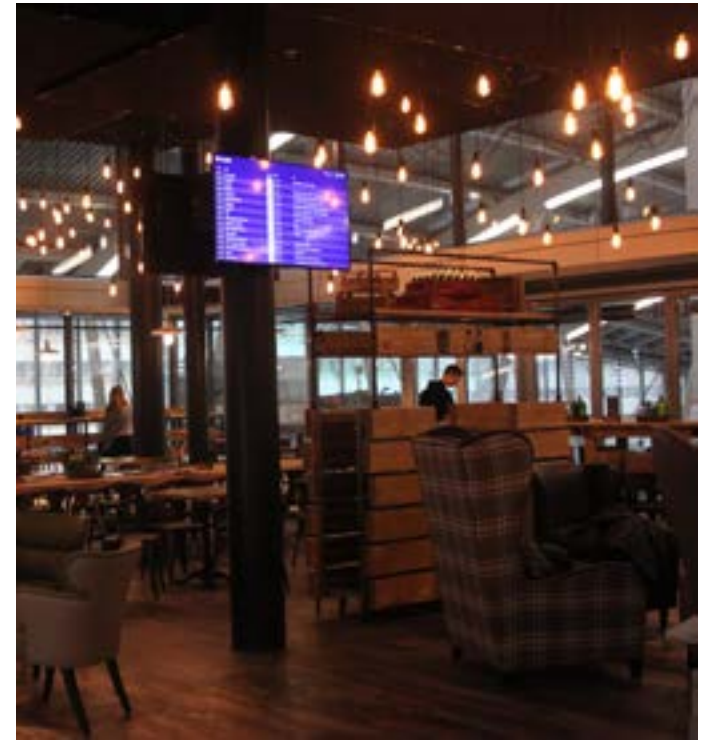


3

BISTROT CENTRAAL

By Simone Schoonwater

The first thing you notice when walking in here is that it's stylish. And modern. And not totally depressing, which most restaurants at Utrecht Centraal are – looking at you, Smullers. This is a place you'd actually like to sit for a while, lounging on the classy armchairs or the regular ones, both of which are very comfortable. Because Bistrot Centraal is on the higher floor, you have a nice view, allowing you to spy on other passengers. I ate a ciabatta roll with ham, rocket salad, and truffles here (no, not the fun kind). It was good, but the price lived up to the refined ingredients. They sell various sandwiches, rolls, smoothies, fruit juice, coffee, pasta, and pizza here, no doubt all very tasty. However, you'll have to be prepared to spend some money, since even a simple croissant was close to 2 euros if I recall correctly. Let's put it this way: you can get cheaper food at Utrecht Centraal, but it will probably taste more like garbage. I'll leave the choice to you.



2

ENOKI

By Iris Pijning

A new addition to the borderline food-hall that is Utrecht Centraal is Enoki: a small booth opposite the Julia's where you're bombarded by words like bāhn mì, sushi, bento box, and miso soup. This Asian take away stand sells food that will either excite you or put you off. If you ask me, the fruit salads with ingredients like mango, mint, papaya and basil are a welcome change from your average cup of apples, grapes and strawberries. Other striking menu options are lime, mint, and chilly infused water, seaweed salads and a selection of leafy teas. Unfortunately however, taking spicy herby yummy veggies on your commute comes at a price. The average box of rice and greens will set you back about seven euros. My personal favourites are the relatively affordable tofu spring rolls that are assembled in front of your very eyes, giving the illusion of a finer form of dining worthy of emptying your bank account.



1

HET KOFFIEHUIS

By Ilse Bruls

Located on the brand new upper floor of Utrecht Centraal, Het Koffiehuis is the newest offshoot of the ever-succesful DE formula. And we all know what that means: excellent coffee. But don't let the name fool you, because Het Koffiehuis offers a whole lot more: sandwiches, pastries (their carrot cake is to die for, and have you seen those chocolate muffins?), smoothies and adorable tea pots. It might not be the cheapest place around but it's certainly not ridiculously expensive, and trust me: it's well worth the couple extra pennies and the stairs you have to climb to get here.





Tea Time with Allison Kirk



On a rainy Thursday morning our two reporters find themselves once again on their way to one of our beloved teachers. This time we're visiting Allison Kirk in Amsterdam. We get out at the wrong bus stop, because Amsterdam thought it a good idea to give two different bus stops the same name, but luckily Allison's house isn't very far away and with a little help of Google Maps we end up finding the right address. We ring the doorbell and are greeted by Allison and her boyfriend. She makes us some tea while he introduces us to their cat. When we're all settled we begin our interview.

By Kiki Drost and Lucinia Philip

Where are you from and how did you end up teaching in Utrecht?

"I'm from north east Alberta, in the west part of Canada, which is mainly farm land. I grew up on a sheep farm. After high school I moved to Edmonton to study for my BA in linguistics. I then moved to Montreal and did my MA, on linguistics again. My

thesis was about Ancient Greek determiner phrases. After this I did my PhD in Leiden, on word order in New Testament Greek. They had trouble finding someone to fill the post and it came at the right time for me, so I moved to Leiden. I didn't manage to get a post-doc in this field, so I started teaching at Webster University in Leiden and at Utrecht as well. Compared to the students at Webster, UU students seem very motivated; they are more serious and more willing to do the work. I enjoy teaching, but I'm not planning on staying long. I'm not even sure if we'll stay in the Netherlands. I'd like to get back into research, although I like teaching too. I hope to find a position where I can do both."

What do you miss about Canada? And what do you like about The Netherlands?

"I really miss the personal space and the landscape. I have less space now than when I lived in the countryside. Living in a big city also has its perks. The chance

of running into people is smaller and there are always great shows to see in Amsterdam. I also like the food and regular markets here. We don't really have markets in Canada or the States except for really expensive ones. Overall, the cultural differences between Canada and The Netherlands aren't huge; but there is one custom I'm not used to. The Dutch are very direct and I prefer Canadian openness over Dutch directness."

Do you have any hobbies?

"Yes, I have been playing the guitar for 20 years now and I love to read. I enjoy being in nature and camping, that's something I miss about Canada. I like to cook, bake and eat, but I guess eating isn't really a hobby as it is mandatory. Making cards, sewing and being creative are also things I like doing."

Tell us about your cat?

"His name is Jimmy. Or James Tiberius Kirk the third: my boyfriend's a Star Trek fan and my name's Kirk too, but it's Jimmy for short. We got him as a Sinterklaas present three years ago, when he was three months old. He's really sweet and very photogenic."

When our interview is done, the pictures taken and our tea is gone, we leave Allison's warm, dry and cosy apartment to go back home. (Although maybe we made a stop at the Waterstones and American Book Centre first – since we were in Amsterdam anyway... But that's a different story.) Allison, thank you once again for your hospitality!



About Allison

Favourite book:

Infinite Jest by David Foster Wallace. I love the writing style. It's very complicated and long, the writer uses lots of details and seems to care about the reader.

Favourite film:

That's harder. I'm not a big movie fan. I had a favourite film, but I can't think of the title... Oh, it's Tideland. It's quite disturbing. I also like the Ted movies.

Favourite television-series:

I like The Big Bang theory and How I Met Your Mother, so sitcoms. Seinfeld is good too. I don't really watch it anymore, but during the 90's it was THE show.

Favourite music:

Elliot Smith is one of my favourite artists. I mostly like folk and acoustic music, but I also enjoy louder stuff, like Patti Smith, who I recently saw performing in Amsterdam.

Favourite colour:

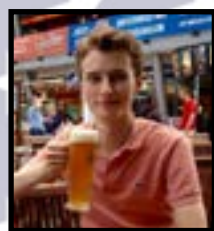
My favourite colour when I was younger was always purple, so I'll just go with that.

Favourite animal:

Uhm...I guess I'll just say cat.



Underdogs



We all like to imagine ourselves as underdogs, particularly when a political issue is concerned. There is little heroism in fighting for causes that face little opposition. That's why we tend to exaggerate the powers working against us. For example, most of Wilders' acolytes seem to think that their distaste of multiculturalism is a maverick position, even though it is shared throughout the European continent. I once heard Jeremy Clarkson lament what he called 'the War on Speed', which is a non-existent government campaign designed to keep petrol-heads like him from fully enjoying their racing cars on the motorway. And when I was a fifteen-year-old right-winger, I thought that Dutch welfare programs had been growing continually since the 1950s (now I know that the 1980s saw the rise of neoliberal politics).

By Erik de Vries Lentsch

Religious people especially are prone to this type of self-victimization. Being a martyr, after all, is a step up from being an underdog. So Mike Huckabee, Republican governor and presidential candidate, has repeatedly said that the United States is "moving towards the criminalization of Christianity", because gay people are given more and more rights. Ted Cruz has expressed a similar fear that, in a country where forty percent of people believe that the earth was created in six days, Christians are being ridiculed, even oppressed, by the liberal media.

America's favourite fantasy, however, is that of citizens struggling against a government Goliath. It underlies the foundational myth of the country, the Boston Tea Party and the American Revolution. It is so deeply ingrained in the American consciousness that it would be foolish for politicians not to take advantage of it.

And so in every election cycle the candidates, however different, all use the same slogans – 'take back Washington', 'send a message to Washington' – to show that they stand with the people against the political establishment. This, of course, puts them in the awkward position of having to pretend that they are not part of 'the Washington machine' themselves. Jeb Bush, son and brother of two presidents, has insisted that he is not an insider because he doesn't live in Washington. When Hillary Clinton was asked whether she was enough of an outsider to bring change to the political landscape, she said: "I can't think of anything more of an outsider than the first woman president". Apparently her genitals are enough to negate the four years she spent as Secretary of State and the eight years she spent as Senator. Bernie Sanders, admittedly more of an outsider than Clinton, says he is trying to start a 'political revolution', but that really amounts to instituting a moderate social-democratic program.

Everybody wants to be a David. And everyone picks their own Goliaths. But there is a blurry line between the giant and the boy.

Sporting Ego



Everyone that knows me, will also know that I am strongly attracted to laziness. This laziness extends to the depths of my brain, culminating in what is often referred to as "brain farts". These include extreme procrastination when it's least desirable, having to protect my phone as interested hands attempt to uncover the truth behind my embarrassing mistakes on Trivia Crack, and random moments of switching off completely and being pulled inside an entirely separate mental vortex of thought. An example of the latter came just last week, when my brain decided that it'd be best to stop concentrating on traffic and rather focus on, for example, something humiliating from my past. While the unfortunate old lady whom I crashed into was unharmed, feelings of shame engulfed me like a cloak of shadows as she announced to me it was her birthday.

By Bart Vermeulen

How ironic is it then that my biggest obsession in life, and partly the subject of this particular magnum opus, is a sport? I'm talking about the wonderful game of tennis, a sport that requires a great amount of concentration for an extensive period of time, something I clearly lack in other aspects of life. The variety of points and their construction, the beauty of a well-struck shot blitzing through the court like an arrow, the constantly changing tactics, the momentum shifts and the exhilaration when you end up the victor after an intense battle. There are many reasons why I find it such an incredible sport, but the core beauty to me is its individual nature. That makes me wonder: "Why?" Why the affinity towards an individual sport rather than a team sport where I could let fellow players compensate for my lack of focus? On the professional side, a fair share of tennis players have claimed to have ultimately chosen tennis over football, despite being told they would be successful in either, fully knowing that it is far easier to earn big bucks in football. In fact, two of the world's best-known players, Federer and Nadal, have had to choose between these two sports as their profession (they have, arguably, made a fairly decent decision).

From experience, I know that my lazy tendencies disappear as soon as I step onto a tennis court. Never mind my attitude in other sports, in tennis I lay it all out there, run down whatever I can. I am more concentrated than an orange's vitamin c content. There is this urge, this unquenchable thirst for doing something great on court that I can claim all for myself. Maybe Federer and Nadal prefer individual glory hunting as well, which led them to their choice. On the other hand, there's an equally strong fear of "messing up for another" pushing me away from team sports. So maybe it isn't merely a case of feeding the ego. Maybe the ego is in conflict, trying to prove itself yet shying away from the feeling of responsibility for a team.

Word of the Board

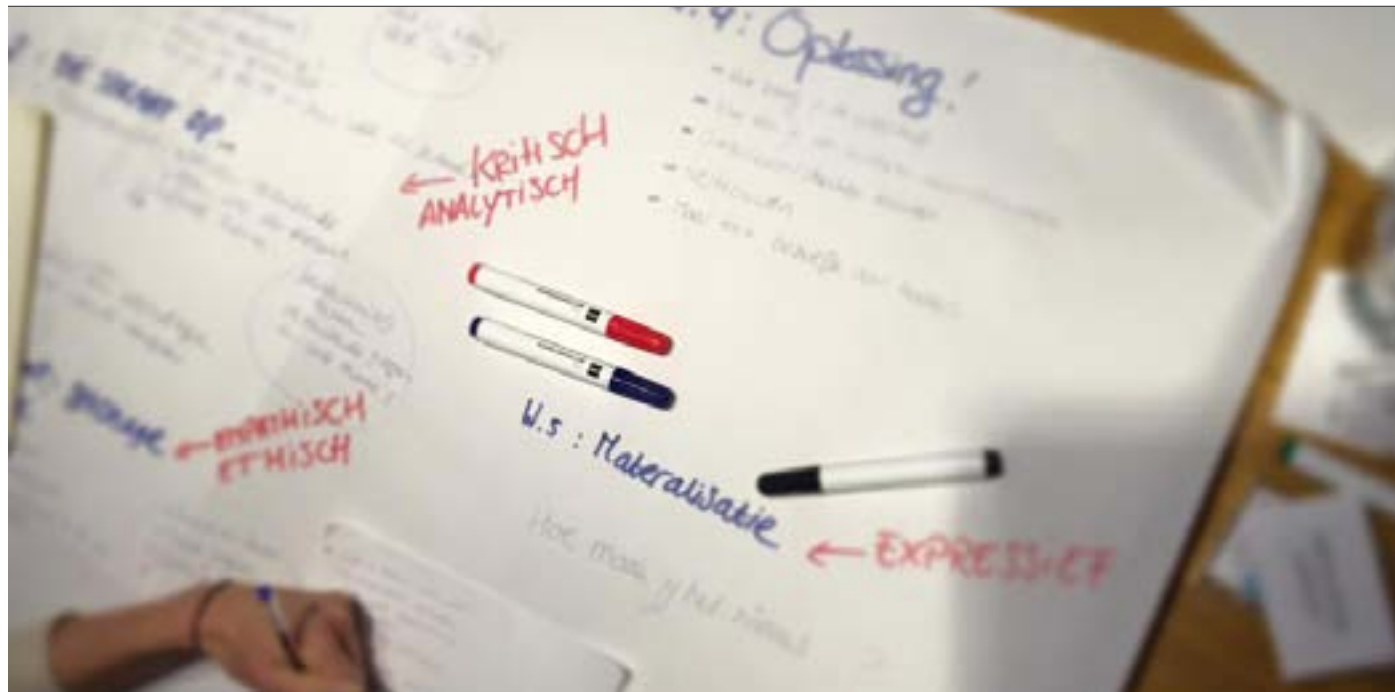


Oh January, how contrasting you have been. In between moments of absolute despair over my nearly empty bank account and drained bottles of wine, I found myself admiring a new author. It was a lonely night at home, blinds closed, Adele blasting on the background, and a glass of wine in my hand, when a quote on good ol' Tumblr appeared and saved me. It didn't take long for me to order a very cheap copy of *Letters to a Young Poet* by R.M. Rilke from which that specific quote was extracted.

It seemed as if it came just in time, as January proved to be that significant halfway point where I started to doubt everything I've done and everything I will be doing in the next 1.5 years. Rilke provided me with a renewed sense of creativity, motivation and enthusiasm that I wasn't able to find within myself. I wouldn't recognize the person I was a year ago, as especially the last eight months have changed me (in a positive way). That speed of personal development scared the living hell out of me, because I wanted answers but could not find them.

In came Rilke, who told me "to have patience with everything that remains unresolved in your heart. Live the question". I told myself to take the advice because let's be honest, the difficult question of to go or not to go out on a random Tuesday evening had resulted in a fine ending and alcoholic shots with whipped cream on top. And that's how I want to live my life from now on: always giving it a little extra. Now, you might think "jeez that got serious real fast", yes, it did. But isn't that what January is for? To reflect on the past year, write down resolutions for the next year, and cry over everything and everyone before deciding to be excited about the questions of the future. As I'm writing this, the sun is shining, my room is a mess, and I have no idea what to do with my spare time because I'm not used to having this much time on my hands. But that's okay, because as chaotic and hectic my life may be at times, it's mine. And if anything, I'll make sure it's one to remember.

Laurien Schonewille
Treasurer



SHOWCASE

Rozemarijn's unusual gap year

Taking a year off after getting your bachelor's degree and prior to getting started on your master's is becoming increasingly popular among students. A whole year to work, travel, or just marathon TV series: what's not to love? Or you could try something less cliché: like Rozemarijn Brus, who spent the first half of the year learning about herself and her place in society at De Bildung Academie.

By Ilse Bruls

What is De Bildung Academie?

"It's a new education initiative developed by students and teachers from the UvA and VU who were dissatisfied with the current state of higher education. They feel that being university-educated should mean that you have an analytical mindset and are able to think critically about stuff outside of your own field of study, but many students lack that ability. De Bildung Academie is designed to help students step out of their comfort zone and make them more socially engaged. It also allows you to examine yourself more critically: who am I? Who do I want to be, and what do I want to mean to others and in society?"

How did you first hear about it?

"Last year I took the course Retorica here at UU – everyone should take that course, by the way! – and Eugène Sutorius, one of the founders of Bildung, came by during one of the lectures to talk about De Bildung Academie. I thought it sounded interesting so I looked into it a little more – I knew I was going to take a year off after my bachelor's but didn't quite know what I wanted to do yet, and figured this could be it. At first I thought it might be sort of elitist, or all

new agey and spiritual, but I went to an information evening and it turned out to be nothing like that at all, so I signed up."

What exactly do you do?

"Over the course of a semester you enrol in three different modules: I did Rhetoric, Art, and Digitalization. Every module is different and the way in which you have classes differs, but there is nearly always a huge practical component. And a ton of interesting guest speakers: journalists, lawyers, politicians, teachers from ArtEZ, the founder of Amsterdam Art, and so on. Every module consists of five weeks of classes – if you can call it that, because they're not classes in the traditional sense – and after that you have a week for a so-called 'materialization', which is basically a project. It can be anything: from writing a story to teaching a class at a high school. After that, there is time to reflect on what you've learned during the module."

What were some of the most fun things you did?

"During Rhetoric we had to give a speech at het Vondelpark. I had to sit on the back of a bicycle and one of my classmates cycled me around as I cheered on random runners. Some other classmates did something similar on the train: they just stood up in the middle of a full train car and started speaking. During Art we visited a ton of museums and we did something called art-based learning. For one of the exercises we did we had to think of a question we wanted answered – a question about ourselves, our future, anything. With that question in the back of our minds we then had to sit in front of one painting for an hour and do nothing



but look at it – and after that hour we all found that we knew the answer to our question. That was a very weird experience that certainly made me think 'what the hell am I doing', but the weirdest thing was that it actually worked.

The long hours can be a downside: classes are from 9-5 almost every day, and sometimes from 5-10 in the evening. And some topics we discussed I found less interesting than others, so it did feel like a chore sometimes. You do have to be very motivated to keep up, but the group is great and it's a very open, challenging and inspiring environment."

Would you recommend De Bildung Academie to Albioners uncertain of what to do in their year off?

"Absolutely! I think everyone can benefit hugely from it, but we as students (or graduates) of English

especially. Our bachelor is great and teaches a lot of valuable skills, but it's also very focused on either literature or linguistics and that can create a sort of tunnel vision. I think developing a broader view is very important and will also help you function better in your own field of study. Being socially engaged, too, because our bachelor isn't very topical either. I've personally learned a lot about myself and now have a much better idea of how society works and what I can bring to it. Being curious and having an opinion on everything is important, and Bildung really aims to bring that out in you."

Curious? Visit <http://debildungacademie.nl/> for more information.



Minor market

Education



Being a teacher: “Oh, so you want to teach?” Whether you want to or not, you can’t escape the assumption that you will be a teacher when you’re an English student. I can’t tell you if teaching is your thing, but what I can do is provide you some insight into what the course is like, and what I thought of it. So that’s what I’m going to do.

By Adriaan Walpot

Facts: The minor takes up four blocks; from February until February. You will take two 15 ECTS courses. This means that you can quit after one semester, but you won’t have a teaching qualification. However, you will receive 15 ECTS if you complete the first part of the minor. You will be in a tutorial with the same people during the whole year (super fun!).

In comparison with other minors, the education minor is really easy. The course is more at an HBO level and you only have two exams of which the answers are basically already given away. On Tuesdays there are tutorials, in which general didactics and didactics in English are alternated. Aside from the tutorial it is compulsory to do an internship a day and a half a week. You get to decide on which days you do this. The materials discussed during the tutorials mostly

consist of practical tips to improve your teaching skills and some psychology and pedagogy on the side.

The real challenge of the minor is surviving the internship itself. You pretty much get thrown in at the deep end, which may be a good thing if you’re up for it. After a couple of weeks of observing other teachers you’ll be asked to take over small parts of the classes and teach students in small groups. The next step is to take over entire instructions and by the second semester you’ll have a class to yourself.

All in all, the education minor is a pleasant change from all the boring theoretic courses at university.

Celtic languages and cultures



Being student of English, you’re likely to have received the question: “But what will you become? What can you actually do with an English degree?” As an answer you giggle shyly and try to change the subject to anything but your future career. If you want to add to this feeling of ‘I’ll just live off government welfare, at least I did something I enjoyed as a student’, I heartily recommend the Celtic minor (or Keltische talen en cultuur, as it is called in Dutch).

By Kiki Drost

The minor is mainly focussed on Celtic literature. The first course, Introduction to Celtic Studies, is – as can be expected based on the title – a general introduction, which could also have been called ‘Forget everything you thought you knew about Celts’. After this course you’ll know a bit of their history, literature and languages. The second course, From Tain to Tolkien and Beyond, focusses mainly on (medieval) literature and its nachleben. It’s a bit like the English course Adapting to the Novel, only with Celtic myths, which is nice. Block three will have a course called Literature and History of the Mediaeval Celts, which – I presume – will focus on literature and history. Block four will bring you back to English, as the last course is Great Heroes: Medieval to Modern, which is a collaboration of the Celts and the English.

One of the nicest things about

the Celtic department is that it’s so small; there are only fifteen first-year students, and teachers are quite surprised and excited when a course attracts enough students to create two groups! So they’re actually really grateful if you choose any of their courses, let alone their minor.

This minor might not appear to be the best choice jobwise, but you’ll stand out, because there aren’t many people who take it, and that’s worth something. It has fun courses, nice teachers, and the best thing: you won’t actually have to learn Welsh, diolch i Dduw!

Albioneers Abroad



Ellen in Bangor

By Ellen Colée

In the first week of the academic year there is this thing called serendipity. It's a form of market where every club and society in Bangor has its own stall. You can walk around and talk to the people who are part of the club and you can choose to sign up. Everyone told me that this is something you should go to when you're new in Bangor. So my flatmate and I went there. It was at the university and it started outside in the quad. We walked around and then I saw these people running around with a stick between their legs. QUIDDITCH! Since I'm a Harry Potter fan I thought this would be very cool. So I said to my flatmate that I wanted to talk to them. He gave me a weird look and told me he knew I wasn't going to join them anyway. I told him that I

wanted to join them because hello, QUIDDITCH! So I talked to people on the team, and they explained the game to me. They showed me too. After about three minutes I realised that it is not amazing when you're not able to fly (even though I do think everyone should take a flying lesson at Alnwick castle!!). They glue the snitch at the back of one of the 'brooms'.. Come on, that's not very exciting, is it? Disappointed, I walked back to my flatmate. His response? "Told you so".

We walked inside, and I hoped there was something I would like. Or at least enough to choose from. And there was. I was amazed to see that there were around 200 stalls set up in the two biggest halls in the university. The halls were packed with students. When walking in many people started to talk to us right away. Every single

person from each stall talked to us, trying to convince us to join them. There were so many stalls, so many people to talk to. Even though this was all very chaotic, everyone was very friendly. In the end I joined the following clubs: tapdancing, books, canoe, swimming, theatre (the guy just kept talking; how could I say no?), mountain hiking, international, languages, linguistics, board games, free running and a few more I believe.

Now, it's been 4 months and I tried a few of these clubs. I haven't been to one every week though. I have been to the hiking one 2 weeks in a row now, so I'm trying to keep that up. However, sometimes I feel like those mountains can wait. Sometimes I just want to stay in and watch Netflix all day. I am a student after all. And isn't that what we all do sometimes?

Solange in Istanbul



“Istanbul: a hell of a chaotic place compared to the peaceful city of Utrecht”

By Solange Manche

I am listening to a Turkish song by the band Light in Babylon. It is a song of lamentation, like a lot of Turkish songs that people sing together after having drank way too much. Today is different. In the facebook post via which I got to the song, the band wrote: “Istanbul, you are in our hearts when others try to bring darkness upon us, let's choose to walk in the light, together”. This morning ten tourists died near the Blue Mosque. A friend of mine left Istanbul for Christmas on the day there was a bomb explosion at the airport. A few months ago there was an attack on a metro-bus station. Certainly, Istanbul does not sound like the dream destination after all what happened, and that's why I chose the picture of the grumpy panda graffiti near the historical Galata tower. An image I have in mind when Turkey's wonderful president (a name I will not mention here because of the country's serious surveillance policies) misbehaves again, or something else dislikable happens.

Istanbul might not really appear the way it is in daily life when judging by news. It is true that there are a lot of mosques and quite a few religious people walking around, but the city on the golden horn, to be honest, is quite disappointing in realizing my somewhat Orientalist dreams. I have never seen as many transsexuals as I have in this country, and bars are fully packed at three in the morning on Sunday nights. After a Turkish friend told me that she went to the wedding of her partner and now also sleeps with the bride, I concluded that people seem to engage quite easily in a ménage à trois. The next day, at the arts club of my university, I got an offer for a threesome, which I kindly declined of course.

The dried out scorpion that lies on my doorstep, the occasional water pipe or narghile that I smoke, lentil soup, and cats approaching you when wanting to be pet do make me feel that I am in a different country. Istanbul with its 18 million inhabitants is a hell of a chaotic place to be compared to the peaceful city of Utrecht, but very inspiring and truly an experience on its own. I could go on about how people are incredibly politicized and hit the streets when they have grumpy pandas on their mind, and about how Syrian street children are being taken care of by café owners, and how artists are way more critical... but I'll leave it at that. If you ever have a chance, take a 90-day visa and stay in Istanbul!

Q & Alumni

with Rachel Hopman-Welter

Ask an average student of English why he or she started studying English and chances are the reason lies in a love for reading books. No different for Rachel Hopman-Welter (39), who started studying English at Utrecht University in 1996 and neatly graduated four years later. Rachel's résumé proves that a love for books can actually get you a job; she has worked for several publishers, both in the Netherlands and abroad.

By Jos de Groot

Q: How do you remember student life?

A: "I wouldn't necessarily describe it as the best time of my life, as my work has given me very much as well. But it was great nonetheless! I have fond memories of the Flo-

rin & Firkin, of their Greek salads and fries, and their pub quizzes. Nightlife was incredible and I have travelled a great deal during my studies. I remember Maarten van Rossem lecturing on America and Ton Hoenselaars using a dozen synonyms in all of his sentences. Is Simon Cook still around? Half of the girls in my year were in love with him."

Q: Why did you choose to study English?

A: "I had no idea what to do when I finished middle school. My grandpa suggested studying Law, typically a major you choose when you don't know what to do. I managed to stick with it for half a year. My fellow students came to class carrying a suitcase and the Volkskrant and wore shiny shoes, while I wasn't all that serious yet. I quit and started working and actually thinking about what I wanted to do. Since I was very little I have loved reading. I was the kind of girl that'd read underneath the blankets until three in the morning – I still am, actually. I couldn't imagine a life without books, which made me think of studying English. I loved travelling and I figured studying English could help me visit many countries. Working for a publishing company was right up my alley and seemed a reasonable ambition."

Q: Did you find a job in your field of study right after graduating?

A: "Yes, I actually had no trouble finding one. During my studies, I worked part time at a language institute in Rotterdam. I continued working there after I had graduated, while looking for a more serious job. Uitgeverij 010 was right at the other side of the bridge: a small publishing company specialised in books about architecture and art which was run by two men. They were hiring; I applied and got the job. It was as simple as that!"

Q: What is it you do when you work for a publisher?

A: "There are so many things you can do, which makes it incredibly fun. Because Uitgeverij 010 was so small, I did practically everything, like maintaining contact with authors and literary agents, editing and translating texts, and approaching bookshops to sell our books. I went to book fairs to tell about our books to have people from all around the world buy them. The work reached from coordinating marketing campaigns and distribution processes to sending copies to newspapers and talking to journalists about our books. Working for a publisher is the very definition of 'doing something with books' for a job."

Q: How did you end up working for international publishers?

A: "Yet again, without much difficulty. I simply found a vacancy at Taylor & Francis, a publisher located in the United Kingdom. I was hired and worked successively two months in the Netherlands and one month in England, and so on. The headquarters of the next publisher I worked for, John Wiley, were located in New York. They used to host two congresses a year, one in the United States and one in a European country. I've been to Los Angeles, the West Florida Keys and Latin America, but also to many Scandinavian and Southern European countries. I've come across so many people from different cultures, I'd advise anyone to work for an international publisher."

Q: Did you develop a certain speciality while working for those publishers?

A: "Through the years, I have grown into the role of advisor. The books you use for your studies are prescribed by a teacher. It has been my job to visit universities and academies to convince teachers to choose our books. I remember that Paul Franssen, who had coordinated my bachelor thesis at university, once applied for a review copy when I worked at Taylor & Francis. It was very nice to get into contact with him so unexpectedly, but he didn't prescribe the book. Shame!"

Q: Why is it you no longer work for an international publisher?

A: "My oldest daughter is six years old. When she was born, I was still travelling a lot for my work. She spoke her first word when she was eight months old, but I wasn't there to hear it – I was attending a conference in Spain. That's when I realised things had to change. I've seen so much of the world in six years' time and I very much enjoyed travelling, but when you have children, priorities change. I wanted to work for a Dutch publisher and found SDU in The Hague, at which I've been working for two and a half years now."

Q: How tough would you say finding a job after having studied English is nowadays?

A: "It depends. Everything's possible as long as you're passionate about something, really. I was convinced I wanted to do something with books and I think I've been able to convey that feeling, as it came from my heart. I obviously was at the right place at the right time, but my passion for books got me where I am now."

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

A: "I mainly enjoyed the studies; I didn't experience it as very hard, as something which thoroughly prepares you for meeting impossible deadlines or difficult targets. Working life can be harsh sometimes, but English is a bit soft. Very enjoyable, but soft."

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

A: "Be flexible. In case you fail to find your dream job right away, don't be scared of getting your hands dirty in a smaller job; it might just be a stepping stone to

help you get where you want to be. And for those looking for a job in publishers' land: keep an eye out for boekblad.nl. Many publishers post their vacancies on there, I found my job at Taylor & Francis via Boekblad."

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

A: "It's incomparable, really. Both lives have their assets. The amount of time you have on your hands as a student is amazing: enjoy it while it lasts! On the other hand, once you've graduated and you've got a job, the means to do the things you love become easier accessible. You're completely responsible and you can make your own choices; as a student, there's always your parents and teachers to reckon with."

Q: If you were to have the chance to start studying all over again, would you make the same decision?

A: "Yes, without a doubt. I've had the most interesting jobs and I met two of my best friends whilst studying English. Perhaps the labour market is a more difficult place than when I graduated, but my love for books would make me study English again any day."

Curriculum Vitae Rachel Hopman-Welter

Experience

2013 – now	Team manager at SDU Uitgevers
2011 – 2013	Account manager at MYbusinessmedia
2008 – 2011	Academic account manager at John Wiley & Sons Ltd Publications
2007 – 2008	Key account manager Benelux and France at Taylor & Francis Publications
2005 – 2006	Academic Representative Benelux at Taylor & Francis Publications
2003 – 2005	Office manager at Uitgeverij 010
2000 – 2003	English and Dutch teacher at Business Talen Rotterdam

Education

1996 – 2000	English Language and Literature Specialisation Children's Literature
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Culture Corner

Film

The Hateful Eight

Quentin Tarantino's films generally ask their audience for a few things: tons of patience, a lust for blood and gore, and a keen eye for good story-telling. Bring those to the cinema and you'll have a wonderful time. The Hateful Eight, Tarantino's latest winter western, is no exception.

By Jos de Groot

The snowy mountains of Wyoming form the décor of Tarantino's eighth film, which is set a few years after the American Civil War. A stagecoach carrying John Ruth, known as "The Hangman", and his prisoner Daisy Domergue is on its way to Red Rock, a town where Domergue is meant to be hung. The wagon is first brought to a stop by bounty hunter Major Marquis Warren, who got lost in the snow and intends to ride along. After quite a debate, Ruth consents and allows Warren to accompany him and his prisoner. The second unexpected co-passenger who appears on the scene is Chris Mannix, who claims to be Red Rock's new sheriff and needs to get to town as quickly as possible.

"The Hateful Eight unfolds itself as a brilliantly staged whodunit, told the Tarantino way."

It's important to note that, at this point, the film has been playing for a good forty minutes and we have seen nothing but dialogues. Over half the cast hasn't even been introduced yet. Is this a problem? No, not necessarily. Although the build-up is incredibly long, the conversations are enjoyable and foreshadow the exorbitant action that's bound to come.

Caught in a blizzard, the stagecoach stops at Minnie's Haberdashery where the travellers seek refuge. The owners are nowhere to be found, yet four shady men reside at the lodge: Bob, a Mexican who is looking after the lodge until Minnie returns from a family visit; Red Rock hangman Oswaldo Mobray, cowboy Joe Gage and former Confederate General Sanford Smithers. It soon turns out each man present has a record of horrible deeds, hence the film's title. The plot revolves around the question what has brought these men together and how they will – or won't – cope with each other.

If you're not a fan of Tarantino's earlier works, I'm quite sure you won't like his latest either. For those who did see and enjoy previous Tarantino films: The Hateful Eight is not a snowy version of Django Unchained. In a sense, The Hateful Eight unfolds itself as a brilliantly staged whodunit, told the Tarantino way. The performances of the entire cast are outstanding and the climatic action scenes make up for the lengthy introduction. The Hateful Eight has an interesting yet simple plot, compelling characters, and plenty of bloody action to keep Tarantino fans satisfied.



Film

Carol

Oscar-nominated lesbian drama

With all the criticism the Academy has received this year, it appears they have done one thing right: nominating Carol for several Oscars. Both Rooney Mara and Cate Blanchett, the lead actresses in this film, will hopefully have received their golden statues by the time you read this review. So what is it that makes this film so amazing?

By Simone Schoonwater

Carol tells a simple love story – except that it takes place in a time when that kind of love was not considered simple or natural at all. It's the 1950s, and two women falling for each other can only lead to problems. Much is at stake, especially for Carol, since she runs the risk of losing custody over her children if her secret is exposed (yes, unfortunately it was legal then for your children to be taken away from you if you were gay). The only solution seems to be to get away from it all, so Carol and Therese go on a road trip together. Because everything has to be so sneaky, this film builds sexual tension to a point where you will literally yell at the screen to JUST KISS ALREADY. Cate Blanchett is phenomenal as Carol, and I cannot imagine anyone seeing this film without falling at least a little bit in love with her – though I may be a bit biased in this matter. On top of that, this is not a romance where you are sure the two main characters will end up together anyway. Whether a happy ending may be in the offing for Carol and Therese is not revealed until the very last moment.

But be assured: this is one of the most moving, real, heartbreaking, beautiful, and romantic films I have ever seen. The only thing I can do is advise you to go watch it as soon as possible. I rest my case.



Film

Shadows (1959)

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.

Most directors move on to their next project when one of their films flops. John Cassavetes is not one of those directors. His film Shadows was first released in 1958, but after receiving bad reviews, Cassavetes remade the entire film with the same cast and released the new version in 1959. This time around, Cassavetes received a lot of praise for his film and he is now considered the father of independent cinema.

By Lucinia Philip

Shadows is about three African-American siblings and follows them for two weeks. Hugh (Hugh Hurd) is a jazz singer and is the oldest and most responsible one of the three. Despite the film being about African-American siblings, Hugh Hurd is the only actual African-American actor. The other siblings both have a light skin tone, which makes it harder for people to recognize them as African-American. Having two white Americans play African-Americans is quite a risk and is also one of the reasons why the film is controversial. The second sibling is Ben (Ben Carruthers) who is almost the complete opposite of Hugh. Ben is a trumpeter, but he spends most of his time either being a grumpy cat or trying to pick up girls with his friends. Lastly, there is Lelia (Lelia Goldoni). She is their 20-year old baby-sister who wants to be seen as a strong, independent woman. Lelia meets the casanova Tony at a "literary affair" and they immediately fall in love. I don't know a lot about dating in the '50s, but I'm pretty sure that most people wouldn't tell someone they love them and ask the other person to move in with them when they've only known each other for a couple of hours. Watching the relationship between Lelia and Tony was very strange and uncomfortable because of this.

There are more moments in the film where you're not quite sure what's going on. We don't really get to know the characters – all we know is what they desire, and therefore it is hard to tell whether their actions make sense or not. The lack of personality was quite disappointing and as a result, the film failed to impress me. The reason why I do recommend Shadows is that it's a good and fun film to watch and a great introduction to the world of black-and-white cinema for those who are only familiar with modern films.



Book

Richard Flanagan Gould's Book of Fish

Drowning in pretence

Plenty of (post-)colonial novels have been written on Africa, India, and the Americas. However, Richard Flanagan gives us a look at the convict era of Australia and Tasmania. We read along with the protagonist as he writes his book from several different confinements, landing in each one in a more bizarre manner than the last, and using a variety of inks (fish blood and other bodily fluids). And so the initial publication of the book came with the different parts in different coloured print. A stylistic gimmick, which does the book no favours. Luckily, my edition was black on white.

By Maarten Gooskens

So does Flanagan succeed in offering a fresh look on the world of the convict colony? Yes, and no. Yes, because the story takes place in real locations and Flanagan explores the convict mind thoroughly, taking the reader on a rather wild ride through several institutions in the colonial penal system. No, because Flanagan has gone slightly overboard. Many of the locations and characters can be considered quite over-the-top. This doesn't have to be a bad thing, but as a reader, you become conflicted between the account of the narrator and what Flanagan is trying to show you. It is as though Flanagan desperately tries to fill a gap in the post-colonial canon and has done it a bit rushed.

“So does Flanagan succeed in offering a fresh look on the world of the convict colony?”

Yes, and no.”

Don't get me wrong, I would recommend this book to anyone. However, I would provide every reader with the instruction to take it with a grain of salt. It's nice to read about a very different place in a very different time and I am always a fan of bizarre characters. But, although it has its plus-sides, Flanagan is trying to cram too much into too short a story, which for some reason isn't easily digestible. It is by no means a bad book, and a very unique take on a previously undiscovered treasure of a subject, but it's certainly not without its flaws.



Album

Archy Marshall A New Place 2 Drown

A New Album 2 Review

Before I actually get to the album, I would like to say a few words on the music reviews in Phoenix. Don't worry, it's too few to warrant a separate article, just a little get-together between you, the reader, and me, the reviewer, before we get down to business. When I pick the music for these reviews, I try not to make the obnoxious choice and go for what is most obscure, nor do I try to make the obvious choice (although we do want room for that too). The 'Alternative Mainstream' would be my aim with these reviews, and I do hope that, if you're familiar with what I'm reviewing, you'll find the time to disagree with me, and if you're not familiar with it, to at least give it a shot (which is easier than ever these days).

By Maarten Gooskens

So with that in mind, I would like to invite you to take a look (and preferably, a listen) to Archy Marshall's A New Place 2 Drown, which isn't so much an album as it is the soundtrack to a project by Archy and his older brother Jack. But focusing on the music: Marshall has previously released bits and bobs under the name Zoo Kid, but it wasn't until his debut full-length album 6 Feet Beneath the Moon as King Krule that he was recognised not only as a great producer of various (hip-hop) beats, but also as a wonderful vocalist.

Alas, we find very little of his deep bass voice here. Marshall has stuffed it in the background, only popping up occasionally to lend a hand to the grimy atmosphere of the album. And that is where this album excels. Marshall delivers a very dark and gloomy album, opening with the dub-heavy "Any God of Yours" where we catch the first glimpses of his voice. However, his voice comes in, not in full effect, on "Swell", lurking behind a higher-paced beat. And the pacing of the album is what makes it most enjoyable. Marshall knows when to pick up the speed and when to bring it back down again.

Yet the album, although certainly not bad in its own right, left me dissatisfied. Here I was hoping for more of 6 Feet Beneath the Moon. Yes, I know it's bad to want more of the same, but his style is definitely recognisable on this album, and it's just a shame he didn't develop and release more of his other strong point: his voice.

Concert

Together PANGEA

Solid garage rock at Utrecht's Ekko

Six Dutch cities, six shows, with our very own Utrecht last in line. Tiny gigs are my favourite, and Ekko provides just the right spot. I consider myself very lucky that the guys of Together PANGEA have chosen to play many small shows rather than a single big one – which they would've easily sold out.

By Inge van Nimwegen

The night is opened by a Dutch band from Rotterdam, going by the name Iguana Death Cult. Its four guys play loud, psychedelic rock'n'roll with energy to spare. Accompanied by matching psychedelic visuals in the background, they provide the audience with a musically and aesthetically pleasing set. Their energy is admirable, but it becomes painfully clear from a lack of reaction that this is not what most of us hipster-trendy looking twenty-somethings are here for.

What we did sign up for is the dirty-yet-catchy garage rock as played by Together PANGEA. (Don't let the name scare you off, please). Essentially, they are a three-piece accompanied live by an extra guitarist. They have travelled here from Los Angeles, but they look as much at home in this intensely sweaty venue as they would in the state of California. Speaking of which: the hints of typical Californian singing harmonies are produced by singer/bassist Danny Bengston (the most American hipster-looking singer you will ever witness: pornstache, unwashed bleached hair partly hidden underneath a hideous head garment and a shirt with the sleeves cut off) and singer/guitarist William Keegan. Keegan's angsty howl is one of the most characteristic vocal tricks a frontman can display.

Drummer Erik Jimenez plays strong, steady drums. Their sound is best described as garage rock, but infused with blues, some indie, and even some punk-pop, resulting in catchy songs that are just-not-suitable for Dutch radio.

Together PANGEA's lyrics are angst-ridden accounts of relationships, being high, getting wasted, and feeling anxious. All this crammed into a nice 60-minute set. Tracks like 'Sick Shit', with its repeating lines of "these things mean nothing to me / and my d—k is soft", are sung along by the entire crowd. Swinging rock'n'roll anthem 'Badillac' can count on a solid moshpit and plenty of crowdsurfers, as well as a massive sing-along.

Pits and crowdsurfers: always good, proper fun. Outside of the pit we find older men drinking beer and younger teens who want to watch the set rather than indulge themselves with the rowdier audience in the middle. What's new? But the action is focussed on the pit, where even singer/guitarist Keegan finds himself playing a couple of songs, met with loud cheers and roaring screams from the audience.

Party

Play! Natural Dance Party

There's nothing like dancing, right? Wrong! There's dancing on bare feet, while wearing a costume and without following any steps; there's Play! Natural Dance Party.

By Kiki Drost

I'm assuming most of you have never heard of Play, and an explanation is needed, so I'll give it a try. PLAY is a Utrecht based initiative that was created by Florien in 2011. Since then she, and a small team of helpers, organise parties and workshops. In their own words: "PLAY = a community for people in their twenties and thirties who want to feel they are alive! Life is such a rich experience that wants to be lived! How do you get into the depth of yourself and in contact with each other in an authentic manner, without the help of alcohol or drugs? Not having to do anything, everything is allowed, come as you are!" Is this getting too hippie for you? Let me add to that feeling by sharing their keywords: "positive vibes, openness, natural high, freedom, healthy, PLAY revolution, floor, meditation, mindfulness, true to yourself and connection with each other."

“Is this getting too hippie for you?”

So okay, that's all nice and well, but what can you expect to see when you go to one of their parties? Last big party was "PLAY! Midwinter Night's Dream". There's always a theme. The theatre where the parties are held is usually beautifully decorated by a team of volunteers. This time the ice palace they created would be worthy of Frozen's own Elsa and Anna. The evening started off with a workshop; some exercises to get your body warm and to meet the lovely people you'll be spending the evening with in a playful manner. After this, there was a DJ, free workshops (such as a cuddle-workshop and an ice-man workshop), free concerts and fun things to do. The evening ended in a lay-down piano-flow concert, where you all lay on the floor (usually cuddling, since you love all your new friends) and listen to someone playing the piano.

Does this sound like the amazingly great, although slightly weird, thing you'd have enjoyed? Check out the dates for the upcoming parties. Does this sound like it's too far out there and way out of your comfort zone? Could be... But maybe, just maybe, you'd really enjoy it if you'd just give it a try, so check out the dates anyway.

After making the huge mistake of taking the stairs to Chantal's room (which is on the second-highest floor of the IBB tower), I arrived in a near-death state, completely out of breath. Luckily, she was kind enough to offer me lunch, eat the homemade brownie I brought her, and chat with me about her bookshelf.

By Simone Schoonwater

Chantal's Bookshelf

What was your favourite book growing up?

I always participated in library contests, which meant that you had to read 25 books over the summer, for example. Besides Harry Potter I liked the Eragon series. When I was about 12 or 13, my mother started giving me classics featuring strong female characters, such as *Pride and Prejudice* and *Emma*. We lived in the US at the time, so I read them in English. Some of them I already liked back then, others not so much, haha.

What is your favourite book now?

Uhm, there is a difference between my nice-to-read favourite and the book which I still think about a lot. The first one is any book in the *Song of Ice and Fire* series. Sometimes I just take one and read one of my favourite parts. But the thinking-about book is *As I Lay Dying* by William Faulkner. It gave me such satisfaction when I finished it. I thoroughly enjoyed reading it.

What is the last book you read for "fun"?

The Virgin Suicides. It wasn't exactly fun, more like depressing. It's about sisters who start plotting

their own suicide. When I read a book in my spare time I want it to be amazing, because it so rarely happens that I get to pick a book myself. Unfortunately, this book wasn't that amazing.

Which book are you most ashamed of for not reading?

Too many! For example *The Great Gatsby*, *The Kite Runner*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*... I haven't read many classics, except those my mum gave me. Oh, and *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho. It has stood on my shelf for ages and I have lent it to three other people now, but I haven't read it yet myself.

"I mostly think in doom scenarios, apparently"

Which are the books you've only read halfway or less?

I stop reading a book pretty quickly if I don't like it. Many of the books we've had to read for a course I didn't finish, such as *The Known World*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and *Possession*. I thought: I'm not even reading this by choice, why

should I continue? I expected the same to happen with *The Virgin Suicides*, because I already knew the ending. Somehow I did manage finished it.

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

A Thousand Splendid Suns by Khalid Hosseini. The main character is an Afghani girl who is forced into an arranged marriage. Although she doesn't like her life, she narrates it beautifully. Hosseini's style is wonderful and the story really leads somewhere. It makes you think about stuff.

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

I tried my hand at writing when I was younger, but I always got distracted. If I ever wrote a book, it would probably be about our own time, but how it could have been if there had never been any wars and there was a cure for every disease, even old age. What would technology be like nowadays if its development hadn't been slowed down in the Middle Ages, for example? It comes down to what our world could have been like if mankind had never endured any setbacks. What I think it would look like? Probably overpopulated, haha! More like a dystopia. I mostly think in doom scenarios, apparently.

What is your favourite English word?

Pluviophile! It means somebody

who loves rain.

Team literature or linguistics? Literature. Sorry, Koen

What is your favourite film adaptation?

Pride & Prejudice, the version featuring Keira Knightley. I have seen it about 20 times. Not that it's necessarily very good, it's just very enjoyable to watch.

Who is your favourite literary character?

Charlie, the protagonist of the *Li-onboy* trilogy. When I was younger, I wanted to be him so bad! He could talk to all kinds of cats and joined the circus. It's quite striking since I don't like cats at all, haha. But if I could talk to them, I probably would.

Which book are you going to read next?

The Sound and the Fury, also by William Faulkner. Nicole Reith, who was my teacher for *Ethnic Experiences* in the US, said this was his best book. And I was a fan already, so I was convinced to go buy it.

What is the best novel you read for a course?

Beloved by Toni Morrison, also for *Ethnic Experiences*. It was really interesting and I wanted to know so bad how it would end! Now that I think of it, this is once again a depressing book, haha.





Calendar

February

17	Extra ALV
17	BarbapapA5
19	Alumni Event
22	Film Night
23	Dublin Information Evening
25	Symposium #2

March

1	Gala: La Nuit du Cirque
2	Ragstock Indoor Festival

Albion presents:
Lustrumweekend

When:
24th till 26th of June



More info TBA at the Monthly Drinks of March

As you all know, this year marks a special occasion for Albion, as we celebrate our 25th anniversary. We have already had an amazing and fun day dedicated to Albion's 5th Lustrum in October thanks to the efforts of our previous board. However, the fun does not end here! We, the Lustrumweekendsub, think this year should have a spectacular finale, and therefore we're busy organising a thrilling weekend for all Albioneers to round off another great year for Albion and blast into the summer vacation! We don't want to give away too much yet, but trust us, you won't want to miss this weekend. The weekend will take place from June 24 to 26, so mark the dates. Intrigued and excited? Then make sure to come to the monthly drinks on the 1st of March, where we will provide more information and a sign-up sheet so you can claim your spot on the trip. We're looking forward to seeing you all there!

COLOFON

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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.



*“Railway termini are our
gates to the glorious and the
unknown. Through them we
pass out into adventure and
sunshine, to them, alas! we
return”*

- E. M. Forster