

PHOENIX

ISSUE 4 | JULY 2018



The Pop Culture Issue





Index

Index	2
Letter of the Editor	3
Best of Journalism	4
Culture Corner	7
Poem	10
Word of the Board	11
Don't get me started...	11
Tea Time	12
Humans of Albion	15
Bookshelf	16
Committees 2017-2018	18
Phoenix Ranks	20
Interview with KB	22
Albioneers Abroad	24
Showcase	25
Phoenix Serves	26
Minor & Master Market	27
Festival guide	28
Q&Alumni	30
Phoenix 2017-2018	31

Letter of the Editor

By Lola van Scharrenburg



Here it is, the last Phoenix of the year! It is tempting to write a sappy story about how much I enjoyed my year as editor-in-chief and how much I learned from it (which I definitely did!) but I'd much rather talk about the contents of this issue. With this issue's theme being pop culture, we hosted a literary food & cocktail party with recipes taken from, or inspired by, our favourite novels. We ranked Utrecht's cinemas, and provided you with a festival guide to come back to during the upcoming festival season. We also had a lovely interview with Johanna Hoorenman and of course revisit all of our recurring categories, pop culture style. And one of the things I am most excited about personally is that we teamed up with the Journalism course that was given in block 3, showcasing some of the best writing that was produced

during the course. Now that I'm writing this, I realise that the articles in this issue speak for themselves and really don't need 300 words of introduction, so I'm going to break my promise and use my last 100 words to be a little sappy anyway. The past year at Phoenix has been an amazing experience for me, and hopefully for the rest of the Phoenix team as well. Speaking of them, I am hereby giving them a massive shout out. Everybody put in their best efforts, produced great content and making me super proud to be associated with this year's The Phoenix issues. I look forward to seeing what my successor will make of Phoenix next year, but I'm sure it's going to be great. But since we have to wait a month or four to find out, I would like to wish you all a wonderful summer break in the meantime.

Love, Lola

Between Refuge and Refugee

By LEDA SERIKOGLU

Lena Moushegh, 36, arrived as a refugee in the Netherlands from Iraq in 2009. Now she is a legal advisor who helps others in their journey for a better future.

Moushegh began working for the Dutch Refugee Council (VWON), situated on the premises of the Refugee Centre (AZC) in Almelo in 2016, after her degree as a dentist, awarded by an Armenian university, was deemed insufficient to practice medicine. Rather than getting dragged down by this, she decided to change her vocation by going back to school. "I settled on social legal service, which is partly law and partly social work, and because I'm interested in helping people, this seemed perfect for me. It's challenging and difficult, but that's the thing that attracted me. Also, for school I needed related work so I ended up at the VWON and now I am a legal advisor there."

There are misconceptions concerning refugees, Moushegh says, like that they "don't bother to learn the language." However, people who say this haven't met enough refugees to know that. "We put in a lot of time and effort into learning the language."

The treatment of refugees is a contested issue. Whether it is the countries they flee from or travel through, fear of persecution, exploitation and abuse are everyday battles. Eritreans, Moushegh says, "are going through more difficulties than the Syrians", because they flee in secret and often without papers, to avoid the brutality of the Eritrean regime. They are easy prey in their multiple illegal border crossings to reach Europe. Meanwhile, Syrians who arrive from Turkey, where 3.7 million refugees are hosted, have told Moushegh of their people being left to roam the cities without assistance, being mocked, beaten, or detained after being stopped on the streets by the police.

This is what makes Moushegh's work very important to her; she can help people who are not only displaced, but often dehumanised. "I am the connecting link between the refugee and the lawyer, or the refugee and the Immigration [and Neutralisation] Service (IND)." Moushegh provides help with bureaucratic procedures, which range from explaining pro-

cedure to filling out various applications that are too difficult for the client.

If there is a problem in the process, the IND, who are responsible for granting asylum and require detailed and cohesive information concerning anyone seeking it, can implement an extended asylum procedure. Sometimes, Moushegh says, "the IND can't come up with a decision immediately, so they decide to let the refugee wait a maximum of six to nine months to do the needed research." Should they be rejected, legal advisor Moushegh re-analyses all the documents for missed points or mistakes made, because for her "the client is the priority." IND is suspicious of the testimonies; Moushegh says that to a certain extent they have to be. However, this does create situations where people who desperately need asylum can be rejected. "It all depends on how the refugee tells their story." If refugees can't put their story in a chronological order they are unlikely to be believed. "This is where we come into play by working with the lawyer. With us, the clients are less tense and less stressed. We take our time listening to them, and all the information we gather gets sent back to the lawyer, so he can use it in the appeal."

To Moushegh's dismay, there are many limitations to the system. "There is an organisation called Nidos and they're responsible for underage refugees, who come here without parents. Our experience in Almelo is that the guardian isn't really informed about the asylum procedure. Most of those kids get rejected, because they don't let the kids come to the refugee centre to get the advice and the guidance that they need in terms of the procedure. When we finally get a child who could sneak away from his guardian with his papers and I read the interviews, it is heart-breaking to find what they had to go through, especially with the knowledge that the IND doesn't believe them."

Despite everything, the most gratifying experiences for Moushegh are when the hard work pays off and seemingly impossible tasks become reality. "Eritrean family reunion cases are very difficult, she says, because they don't have documents to prove their relation to their family. For one client, who'd been waiting for one and a half years to get reunited with his family, it actually worked out and they arrived. I guess he was well liked among the residents, because he was carrying his kids very proudly through the camp – to everyone who said hi, he said, 'these are my children, this is my wife' – introducing them to everyone. When you see these kinds of moments, you finally get the reason why you do it. Bringing happiness to those who you can help. That's an amazing feeling."

"I think media will become increasingly interactive" *VARA's traditional broadcasting position in a world of new social media*

By Kai Bijnen

In a media landscape where new and social media play increasingly large roles, few people below 40 ever turn on their television anymore. As a result, broadcasting companies have to turn to different methods to keep engaging their audiences. VARA, a public broadcasting association that celebrated its 92th birthday last year, has evolved from its strictly social-democratic voice to appeal to a broader audience. In 2014, it teamed up with another public broadcasting association, BNN, to enhance their variety in programs.



Jur Marringa – member of the VARA team since 1995 and chairman since early 2018 – gives his opinion on the ever-changing position VARA holds in a society ruled by new social media.

"I think media will become increasingly interactive," Marringa says. "Programs are already being expanded with additional websites, apps, extra content and platforms where people can find that kind of additional involvement. That's where the future is headed towards."

Because of the decline of ratings in traditional media broadcasting, parliament has cut 60 million euros from VARA's budget. Marringa stays positive, though: "We work with a lot of freelancers, so that allows us to be pretty flexible. And this gives us the opportunity to experiment with different ways of

broadcasting. Less money isn't necessarily a bad thing for creativity."

There are, for example, special programs in the making that are exclusively put on the internet, says Marringa. That way VARA tries to find specific audiences and appeal to their interests. When asked how this fits in their policy to reach a broad audience, he responds that although the intention is to make the topics as broad as possible, VARA still wants to focus on depth and quality. "Besides, it's impossible to please everyone." Their fusion with BNN is also meant as a move to expand their repertoire. BNN is largely aimed at teenagers and young adults, precisely the group that uses traditional media the least. "BNN does more entertainment related programs. Combined with our progressive interests I think this is a great opportunity to create quality programs and reach out to audiences we wouldn't reach otherwise."

He agrees that it is a challenge to create that appeal. Although the tv-guide still exists, Marringa admits he never uses it anymore to look up programs; he uses the internet. "I don't think anyone still uses it. Maybe it still holds nostalgic value for the older audience, but soon it'll probably be replaced by the internet completely."

VARA has existed for more than 90 years, and BNN more than 20. Marringa is not worried about the future, but he does say it is hard to predict exactly where new media will take us. "Ten years ago we wouldn't have been able to predict new media and social media would have started playing such big roles, either."

What, then, makes for good broadcasting in this age of new media? "I think critically evaluating politics is especially important and interesting.

Investigative journalism plays a crucial role in our approach to broadcasting programs with depth," Marringa says. "I hope we'll be able to keep doing that with VARA, even in the new media. It's definitely a special way of doing things in which you can distinguish yourself."

As for the future, he would like to include more diversity and create societal cohesion. "The VARA is here to draw attention to certain issues in society. I think our programs should reflect that intention."

"Though the medium changes, what we believe in is still there."

Marringa does believe VARA will continue to have a place in the contemporary media landscape: "Though the medium changes, what we believe in is still there, and we'll continue to try to find ways to put that out into the world." By using new social media and their fusion with BNN to their advantage, VARA plans to appeal to their young audience.

"Our biggest challenge right now is to keep changing while remaining true to our origins."

The musical that's little more than a concert

By Marleen Jorna
Review - **

Two years after its Broadway premiere, *On Your Feet* now runs in the Netherlands. The story about the Estefans' life, produced by two of the biggest names in Dutch musicals; Joop van den Ende and Albert Verlinde, draws big audiences. It is a crowd pleaser in terms of music and dance, but a let-down in terms of casting choices and storyline.

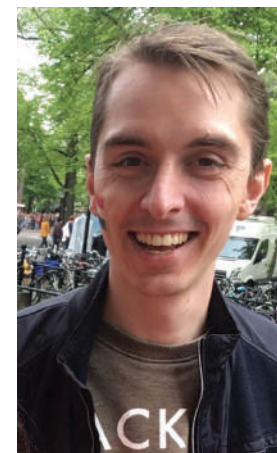
On your feet starts with a spectacular light show and an impressive band playing rhythmic tunes. Their versions of Gloria Estefan's hit songs like "Conga" and "Rhythm Is Gonna Get You" are powerful. The set and props nicely fit the Miami-based story, portraying a sunny, relaxed wonderland. The dancers' clean, uplifting performance in colourful, swaying outfits completes the picture. These elements deliver the promise that the marketing line "The Rhythm Is Gonna Get You" creates, namely a spicy Latin atmosphere.

However, this atmosphere is brought down by bad casting choices. The leading actors, Vajèn van den Bosch as Gloria and Jim Bakkum as Emilio, fail to convey Latin vibes. Van den Bosch and Bakkum's composed singing and stiff dancing make their Dutch descent painfully clear. Nurlaila Karim in the supporting role of Gloria's mother is one of the few successfully casted actors, stealing Van

den Bosch's spotlight when she performs the Spanish song "Mi Tierra" (my homeland).

Additionally, the storyline, written by Alexander Dinelaar, is dull. The pace does not slow down as big moments in Gloria's life are touched upon, making the story flat. Gloria and Emilio's first meeting is an awkwardly short encounter at Gloria's parental home in which Gloria agrees to come to Emilio's Miami Sound Machine rehearsal. About half an hour in, Emilio and Gloria suddenly sing about their great love for each other, while the audience has only seen them exchange a few words. Even their rise to fame seems like a walk in the park. Although radio stations and record labels are initially hesitant to believe in the Estefans, they are convinced startlingly fast by their talents. This results in *On Your Feet* being little more than a concert.

Disappointingly, the groovy band and dancers make up little for poor casting choices and the uninteresting plot. The rhythm's gonna get you, but the story won't.



Freek Metsch: The beauty of Dungeons and Dragons

I have started playing *Dungeons and Dragons*, the fantasy role playing game in which you gather around a kitchen table with a handful of friends to be an elf or an orc for a few hours. You might have seen it on the popular Netflix show

Stranger Things. Unfortunately, for some people the name still conjures up an image of sweaty guys in a basement. A game for 'nerds'.

People still seem to look down on nerds. This tenacious image of the socially inept basement dweller continues to plague the culture. Sure, superhero popularity is at an all-time high and being a *Star Wars* fan has never been more acceptable, but anything that falls outside the mainstream is still shunned by popular culture.

We're been bombarded with negative stereotypes of nerds constantly. Even when nerds are portrayed as 'cool and smart' in *Revenge of the Nerds* they are still socially awkward and just as sexist as the jocks. The more modern *Big Bang Theory* with their know-it-all cast of geek clichés certainly hasn't helped the cause either.

Dungeons and Dragons has been fighting prejudices for a while. The community was under fire by religious fanatics during the Satanic Scare back in the 80s. They claimed the game promoted ritualistic sacrifices and witchcraft.

It's a damn shame. *Dungeons and Dragons* has so much to offer to anyone with a grain of creativity. Ever since I started playing, it feels as if my imagination has been set free.

At face value the game is just a system to roll some dice, but it's actually the perfect medium for collaborative story-telling. And nobody will force you to play through the typical Anglo-Saxon tropes like finding the Holy Grail or rescuing the fair maiden. Your story can be anything you'd like and you're encouraged to make the experience entirely your own.

The game is designed to get you out of your comfort zone and be someone else. The game's designers have made it extremely easy to pick up the game and start playing your own character that same night. And if you take up the task of dungeon master, the person in charge of creating the world and moderating the game, you get to play a whole range of unique characters and personalities.

The game creates an endless buffet of awesome experiences. Your imagination is the limit. So challenge those preconceptions and (re)ignite that creative engine that you haven't used since primary school and get your friends together for a night of dungeon delving. You won't regret it.

Culture Corner

How a Hot Night out with The Chippendales left me feeling Cold

By Indie Reijnierse

Watching *The Chippendales* – a male striptease geared towards every female fantasy – was entertaining to say the least. According to their website, I could expect to have 'a bitchin' good time, watching Chippendales dancers ripping off their shirts for my pleasure and delight.' While I will not deny having a 'bitchin' good time', nor will I deny to have enjoyed watching gorgeous men show off their bodies, - I mean, who wouldn't? – I will say that the best part of the night wasn't the actual show itself - but rather our commentary of it. It had been a while since I had laughed so much that I had to gasp for breath and clutch my stomach, while at the same time trying to relieve the cramps in my cheeks. The fact that one of the guys brought out his electric guitar at every possible opportunity, lead us to believe that his childhood dream of becoming a rock star had failed. Seeing as he was as lousy at guitar as he was conceited, this was probably the only way for him to get an audience to listen to his toe curling, ear-bleeding music. Of course these guys have every right to be conceited, I mean, they have thousands of women swooning over them every week, and get paid for it! If that doesn't get to your head, I don't know what will.

At least the other audience members appreciated the original intention of the show. A woman – who we assumed was there for her bachelorette party, guessing from her princess' tiara and her fairy wand – was pulled from the audience and asked to compete against other women and their Chippendales partners. The contestants had to act out their favourite sexual position with their Chippendales. The bachelorette didn't even hesitate for a second, and with a big smile on her face, she pushed her Chippendale to the ground and went at it with him Cowgirl-style, causing an eruption of laughter from the audience. What a woman, what a confidence, and what a lack of shame. Needless to say, she's our hero now.

Culture Corner

Ready Player One: Oh My, Look at the CGI!

By Vincent Potman

Ready Player One is a mediocre movie, and having been directed by Spielberg, that is kind of a disappointment. This mediocrity stems from the fact that it focuses so heavily on the visual aspect that very little substance remains. The great graphics do fit – for the most part the movie takes place in a Virtual Reality – but this doesn't erase the underlying fact that it is entirely generic.

The year is 2045, and we find ourselves in Columbus, Ohio. Specifically the Stacks, slums that are composed of stacked up trailers, largely the result of society and the world not doing so well. This is where Wade Watts, our protagonist, lives and it is not a happy place at all – for anyone. So, just like everyone else, he'd rather spend most of his time in the OASIS, a virtual reality world where anything is possible. The only limits are your imagination. As such, it is immense and the Easter Egg – left behind by the man who created it, one James Halliday – is the most sought-after artifact in existence since it makes the finder Halliday's successor. Not only is it hidden, it is also under lock and key. Indeed, the keys to this kingdom are three in total, but none have been found yet. This is because the first challenge, an impossible race, has yet to be completed. Wade, or Parzival in the OASIS, is one of the people still fully invested in the challenge. When he finally succeeds, we follow him as he travels through this wacky and wondrous world in search of the other two keys, with friends and enemies not far behind.

Truly, the OASIS is beautifully rendered, and with the movie being full of nods to Geek Culture, it is nothing less than a visual spectacle. Look a little deeper, however, and you suddenly see some faulty code. Or, to put it another way, the main characters are bugged, some of the blandest to ever grace the silver screen. I wasn't invested in their success or their failure even a little bit, and this really pulled me out of the movie – sure, I was seeing the OASIS, but I wasn't experiencing it. Avatar, for all its flaws, at least succeeded in doing that. So, no, it's not exactly triple A, but it was still enjoyable, especially since seeing basically the whole setting play by the Rule of Cool was, well, cool.

Americanah by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

By Nurai Mertens

"It's the kind of book you don't want to put down, but you don't want it to end either."

Sometimes you read a book, and it's so good that it stays with you for a long time. If you're lucky, this happens once in a while – maybe once a year. I remember first reading Americanah by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie during the summer of 2015 and being absolutely in awe of her and her writing. It's the kind of book you don't want to put down, but you don't want it to end either.

You may know Adichie from one or two TED talks she did, called "We Should All Be Feminists" and the corresponding manifesto. An excerpt of this TED talk was also sampled in Beyoncé's song "***Flawless", which I'm assuming you all know. (And if not, where the hell have you been?) Her TED talk, titled "The Danger of a Single Story" is also definitely worth checking out in my opinion (especially if you're interested in (English) literature). Americanah, her latest novel, tells the story of Ifemelu and Obinze, two teenagers who grow up in Nigeria and move away after university to get away from the military dictatorship that Nigeria is under. The novel follows them throughout their lives – first in Nigeria, then we follow Ifemelu as she goes to the US and Obinze as he goes to London, and years later, back in Nigeria. It discusses what it's like to be an immigrant, especially an immigrant of colour, in Western society. It deals with the struggles of identity, belonging, and perhaps even the biggest struggle of all – love (yes I know this is cheesy, don't @ me okay).

Since reading Americanah, I've read all her other works – her two other novels Purple Hibiscus and Half of A Yellow Sun, her short story collection The Thing Around Your Neck, and her two non-fiction essays We Should All Be Feminists and Dear Ijeawele, or A Feminist Manifesto in Fifteen Suggestions – and I have loved them all. I am now (im)patiently waiting for another.



By Tess Masselink

Looking around me, I see fauns, witches, pirates, beasts, ladies, thieves, kings, queens, elves, orcs and many more fantastical creatures. No, this is not the beginning of a crappy and full of clichés fantasy novel; this is what you will see when you go to the second largest costume and cosplay festival in Europe: Elfia. This event is notorious for the people who go there and the gorgeous costumes they wear. Some people spend an entire year preparing their costumes for festivals like Elfia, others just grab together some funny looking clothes and makeup and look just as cool.

Elfia takes place twice a year at two different locations: Haarzuilens and Arcen. I went to the edition that takes place at Haarzuilens on the grounds of Kasteel de Haar. Indeed, the event taking place on the grounds of an actual castle, makes the entire affair even more magical and fantastical.

While walking around the festival with my good friends, looking with wonder at everyone's beautiful looks and passing by all kinds of stalls with handmade candies, cakes, jewellery, clothing, weapons (like swords and bows with arrows), even books by new authors and more, I was feeling like I had entered an alternate reality much resembling medieval times and Middle Earth combined with sci-fi elements and the occasional furry (may the Gods help us).

Elfia really is a costume event where it doesn't matter what you are dressed up as, as long as you are having fun! No one will judge you. On top of that, any fandom you can think of will be represented one way or another. Whether there are tons of people dressed up as Quidditch players or just one person is carrying an extremely well-made B.E.N. (Bio-Electronic Navigator) from that one underrated Disney movie based on that one great novel by that one cool Scottish writer (Treasure Planet based on Treasure Island by R.L. Stevenson), it is all there and it is amazing!

Anastasia the Musical - Cast Album

By Nina van de Voort

A few weeks ago, I flew to New York City to see one of my favourite musicals Anastasia, with music by Stephen Flaherty and Lynn Ahrens, based on the 1997 film Anastasia. It tells the story of a young woman, Anya, who gets involved in "the biggest con in history": convincing the Dowager Empress Maria Romanov that she is her long-lost granddaughter Anastasia Romanov, who supposedly survived her whole family's execution in 1917. Since not everyone has the opportunity to go to New York and thus a review of the musical would be quite pointless, I will be reviewing the cast album, which features (save for a few reprises) every song from the show. Next to the classics like "Once Upon a December" and "Journey to the Past", the album also features a whole array of new songs (17 in total). A few of my personal favourites are "My Petersburg" and "Stay, I Pray You".

The beautiful voices of the cast are the highlight of this album. A few real stand-outs are Christy Altomare, whose delivery of the "Journey to the Past" is beautiful; Derek Klena, who harmonizes with his co-star Christy in the best way possible in "In a Crowd of Thousands", and Ramin Karimloo, who plays a new character Gleb, and sings one of the most beautiful songs on this album: "Still". One song that definitely is worth listening to is "Quartet at the Ballet", which has 4 separate voices singing 3 separate lyrics in different melodies at the end. And of course, since the musical is partially set in Russia, it also features your occasional Russian choir.

A mix of amazing lyrics, beautiful voices and an intriguing story: that is Stephen Flaherty and Lynn Ahrens' Anastasia. If you are able to, I would really recommend seeing the show on Broadway (or if you speak German: it opens in Stuttgart this fall). If not (which is totally understandable), the cast album is there to satisfy your needs, and it's available on Spotify.

Tunnel Vision

Cobwebs gathering in the corners,
Of eyes, melancholic like a mourner's.
Dust travelling in the distance,
While I walk the path of least resistance.

Yet I stumbled, fell and tip-toed,
On my way to a fork in the road.
Now, sunrays ablaze penetrate the haze,
Shedding light on darker days.

No longer worrying where I tread,
But looking ahead, carefree instead.

WORD OF THE BOARD

By Alessandra Polimeno



When I was 10 years old, I went to my first concert ever (not by myself of course, my sweet mother sacrificed herself and joined me). I dyed a piece of my long blonde hair pink and put on way too much eyeliner. You can probably guess where I was heading: Avril Lavigne. She was my ultimate icon of slightly rebellious pop culture.

But I grew older, and so did my music taste. At 14, I was allowed to go to a concert on my own (which means, without the guidance of my mother) for the first time. The band of my choosing for this exciting first-time experience was the indie rock band the Vaccines. In my teenage mind, these nonchalant guys were the coolest thing in the world. Even though their music is really not that heavy, I encountered my first mosh pit, and I absolutely loved it. I learned that mosh pits are not at all about hurting and hitting other people, but about losing yourself to the music for a while. And of course, it's a great way of channeling all your energy and getting it all out.

This Vaccines concert triggered a drive inside of me to spend most of my money on concert tickets. I dived into mosh pits alongside my forty-five-year-old dad at a System of a Down concert, stood in line for hours to see Vampire Weekend and saw Editors, a.k.a. my fave band ever, six times. I lost count of all concerts I went to, but I guess it's more than 50.

Now, my hair is pink again, but this time I'm headed to the wonderful world of Down the Rabbit Hole in a few days. For me, this festival represents everything I admire in modern day music (such as Fever Ray and ODESZA) while it also embraces older influences (like David Byrne and QOTSA). This is the second year my friends and I go to this festival together, and I hope that in a few decades, we are those cool old people that are still partying and enjoying music together.

Don't get me started... The Necromancy that is Nostalgia

By Vincent Potman

“...nostalgia is trying to animate
the corpse and pretending it's
not a corpse.”

There's this recent trend of things being brought back to life that should stay dead. I wouldn't call it an apocalypse yet, but it's certainly a virus that's spreading through the domain of pop culture. The name of this virus is nostalgia.

Now, nostalgia has always been around and in small doses it causes no harm, but in larger quantities it starts causing trouble. Before we start going into why, we have to separate what I mean from similar concepts like retro. See, being retro is different, since you are not hankering for things of your own youth, but things of a different decade. You want to recreate the past, the one you've never lived. Essentially, being retro is creating new life from what was once dead, while nostalgia is trying to animate the corpse and pretending it's not a corpse. This is why one shabbily dressed zombie, looking familiar, might elicit a good reaction – it will have successfully fooled you. Have more than one walking around at the same time and suddenly you start to notice the difference. It's not your old buddy Steve anymore but his walking corpse, and that's a lot less fun to watch. Hell, in some cases there wasn't even a desire to see them again, or it may be that seeing them again makes you aware of faults that were not part of your fond memories.

This is a shame, because under the right circumstances it can be done right. This is why sometimes sequels or spin-offs can work out. Really, the difference between nostalgia working and not working, is perfectly illustrated by Star Wars: Rebels and Episode VII. Rebels was an expansion on the familiar lore, and it didn't try to be a carbon copy of what came before – especially not where style and core audience are concerned. Episode VII, meanwhile, did exactly that and wasn't targeting a new generation: it was directly marketed to the old guard, whilst simultaneously trying to draw in a new crowd. Needless to say, it was so obvious a copy, a zombie painted to look alive, that many weren't entirely satisfied. Honestly, nostalgia works in moderation, and it being your sole marketing strategy is rightly shunned, since it is nothing less than necromancy.

Tea Time with... Johanna

Interview by Indie Reijnierse & Laurel Sanders

Photography by Laurel Sanders

Written by Indie Reijnierse

On a sunny Monday morning, we were lucky enough to be invited into the home of one of our beloved teachers, Johanna Hoorenman. Our first Dutch Tea Time interviewee of the year! After we found our way through the maze that is Amsterdam, we rang the doorbell and were greeted cheerfully by Johanna. We were practically melting under the heat of the summer sun, and Johanna offers us some sweet relief from the heat, by serving us ice cold water - glassed with slices of lemon - as she invites us onto the balcony. It's sweet and small and offers just enough room for the three of us to huddle together. While we get up close and personal, we start the interview.

In class you mentioned that you did your Ph.D thesis on animal poetry. What did you study and how did it lead to that?

"I studied English at the Vrije Universiteit at Amsterdam, and as I may have indicated earlier, I took the scenic route through the curriculum, so I was what you would call a lang-studeerder. I didn't really think about what I wanted to do for my masters' thesis until it was time to pick a supervisor. The only person that I thought was a really decent supervisor was this guy called Diederik Oostdijk. He specialised in poetry, but his list of students was oversubscribed so I figured if I wanted to do my thesis with him, I'd have to do it on poetry, because that's the best way into his list. So I decided to focus on Elizabeth Bishop, an American poet that I really, really liked. One thing that was very interesting about her work was that the poems that were most anthologised, were all of her animal poems. They seemed to be doing exceptionally well. We figured that this was one of the most interesting things to explore about her poetry. What is it that she does with these animals that makes those poems so successful and how does she write about them? So that became my thesis' focus."

Johanna tells us that while researching for her thesis, she realised that there wasn't a lot of secondary literature on animal poetry, so she decided that would be perfect for a Ph.D.

"That's how I got into the animal poetry. It turned out to be fascinating and full of anthropology and philosophy and posthumanism, very exciting subjects! I've worked



on that for a number of years, very enthusiastically, but I'm also broadening my scope now towards romance fiction. I must have also mentioned that in class, because I get very excited about it. [laughs]."

When we mention that the theme for this issue is centered around pop culture, Johanna gasps and excitedly jumps up in her chair: "Can I talk about the romance a little bit?"

How could we say no? After we give her our nod of approval, she disappears into her living room and reappears later, balancing a stack of books in her hands. "My research is into this really weird and fascinating subgenre of romance novels."

Are we going to talk about Jane Austen or are we going to talk about those trashy pocketbooks with sexy cowboys and Vikings on the cover?

"Both! It's a continuum, it's not a separate thing. Obviously Jane Austen was pop literature of its day, and not generally considered highbrow literature. These were novels for ladies who had learned to read, because education for women was not a given at that time."

Of course there is a distinction between Austen's books and the mass-produced supermarket novels, but they all focus on love and uplifting narratives. And I also think that when so many people read the supermarket fiction, it is important to look

critically at what kind of ideas they are consuming in such quantities.

Johanna adopts a critical tone as she explains that although other popular genres are taken more seriously, "romance fiction still remains seen as a very trashy genre of pulp that is formulaic and really mustn't be taken seriously." She tells



us she's very interested in what happens when you do take it seriously.

"The subsection that I'm writing about is Native American themed romance. I am looking for instance at the way in which these books shape American cultural memory of colonization and conflict. Unlike African American novels that are written predominantly by African American authors, and marketed broadly to a wide array of readers, Native American novels are written by non-native authors and read by non-native readers. So it's basically white women talking to white women about Native American fantasies. It's a lot of orientalist projection."

She hands us a pile of thrashy looking books for us to browse through.

As Laurel reads one of the taglines of the novels "She was his captive, he was her pas-

Besides animal poetry and romance fiction, you also seem to be very excited about going abroad?

"I am! I think it's a great experience! It's a very intense way of figuring out what you're good at and what you find important, because you're thrown into a wholly new situation. I went on exchange to a small college in the north of England for the semester, and I found that great. After those 4 months, I thought "Well I've done all the hard work, I could've easily stayed a year!". By the time I wanted to do my Ph.D., Diederik Oostdijk recommended that I look abroad and put me in contact with people. Ireland was a really good and interesting place for me, because at Trinity College they had a great well-known department for American literature. So I was guided mostly by the content of the material there, but also by the fact that I had a boyfriend here and there were easy Airlingus flights back and forth. So I got into Trinity college, which was a great place and had a great programme. So I was pleased and the fact that it was easy to go home and for my partner to come across was also a benefit."

Are you still together?

"Yes! We'd only been together for a year when I left, and when he finished his degree in Amsterdam after 2 years apart, he came over and we lived together in Dublin for another 2 years. So I basically just imported my own boyfriend! Then we came back in 2010, and now we have two kids - 4 and 7 - and we're still together." [smiles]

"I basically imported my own boyfriend!"

sion." Johanna blurts out that the characters have sex on the horse. "it's very complicated, this is definitely a do not try this at home situation! [laughs]."

What does he do?

"He worked part time at a hotel, Hotel Ambassade, when he was doing his history degree. It's a really nice place, and he still works there, but now in a management position. The hotel presents itself as Amsterdam's literary hotel, they have contracts with all the publishing houses, so international writers who do book tours here that have translations coming out, go to their hotel. So he gets me autographs from writers like Margaret Atwood."

"Also, the hotel job translated easily to him coming to Ireland, because he could easily get a job there, as the economy was just collapsing then."

It's sweet that he was already adapting to your career!

"He was! Immediately! I liked that too! He took it very seriously from the start, which was very nice [smiles]. It was strange at first, it was like 'Well we've been together for a year and I'll be going abroad for 4 years now, and I'd like you to move with me as soon as you finish up. By the time I'm done I'll be 30, so we should also acknowledge that we will be starting a family then.' [laughs]. They were big decisions, it's a big investment to make in a relationship. But, I knew when I met him and I think he knew as well, and it just worked out well."

We end up talking about her career and Johanna elaborates on the difficulty of combining family life with a career. She tells us that she feels it's her duty to be honest and straightforward about that.

"The system in the Netherlands is - relatively seen - quite okay, but even here there are all sorts of unspoken practices that you become aware of when you're in the middle of it. I came back when I was 30 and we really

wanted to start a family, but my first job was replacing someone's maternity leave and then I had to tell them in my first 10 weeks, that they were going to have to replace me as well. The rest of my career has been either replacing people's maternity leave or going on maternity leave myself, and so it's like musical chairs of women in their 30s, and at some point there are only so many seats left and you hope that when the music stops, you find a chair to sit in."

We talk about the frustration that comes with explaining what exactly you learn when studying English. Johanna tells us that she thinks people overlook the fact that we study so much more than just a language:

"By the time you graduate you won't only have academic reading and writing skills, but you'll know a great deal more of English and American culture and history through the literature and you learn what you learn anyways in humanities: you learn to think critically about what it means to be human. That's crucial, and it's an academic specialisation that's very underrated and not taken seriously enough. What you learn is central to a fundamental understanding of the human species and of the human experience."

"It's difficult to explain that you read differently in university. It's especially difficult to translate this to the people doling out the money, and to the government. This is part of the budget cuts that are happening at the faculty level. It's partly a question of how the money is distributed across the disciplines, and the humanities gets shortchanged in this distribution. Why is it important that we do what we do and what use is it to the world or the society at large? The direct economic value might be more difficult to explain, but studying languages and cultures, for instance, teaches us to look carefully at the ways in which humans create mean-

ing in various cultures, and at how those cultures interact with each other."

You mentioned you were a "lang-studeerder", can you tell us more about what were you like as a student?

"I think I had a bit of a strange route, also because I took so long, I went through various circles of friends. When I moved to Amsterdam, I met my first college boyfriend, and he was in the artificial intelligence section, so in the beta sciences department. So I just fell into that crowd. They were just the sweetest geeks - they played dungeons and dragons - and there were no girls in their group. So I was the only girl, and I was adopted as everyone's little momma and I really relished that role. I felt a bit lost after moving out on my own and into a new city, and this provided me with a comfortable place. I was cooking for people and we moved into this anti-squat place together. It seemed like a really nice bohemian little lifestyle."

Fellow students still perceive you as a mom, they think you are 'such a mom', and that you have at least 4 children.

[bursts out laughing] "Four! Really? I seem maternal... It's interesting. It's something that's a little complicated. Obviously at university I wish to be first and foremost to be taken seriously as a scholar and a teacher. I am reluctant to be seen as 'maternal' by students or colleagues. But at the same time, I think it is important to publicly stress that the one does not exclude the other. You can be both."

I also realised later the maternal role can be a very accessible role to women and one that you might be made familiar with in your upbringing and that you can easily slip into, but it's also a bit of a trap sometimes."

"So while I was playing Wendy to these Lost Boys - who later all landed on their feet -, I wasn't attending to my own intellectual development

and that translated itself well to my grades and my progress reports, which were tragic and terrible. None of them fared much better, and they all dropped out of university. At that point I figured I could also drop out or break up with this boyfriend and get my ass in gear and get back on track, and do what I really wanted to do. I had sort of lost sight of that, so the whole maternal thing is nice and it's certainly part of my personality, but only one part."

"Later I fell into a group of people who were much more ambitious, and that was a lot of fun in a different way. We became



involved with the student society, and we put on a play in the department's theatre group that I directed with my friend. That was a great experience and I just copped on in terms of studying. I discovered that if you put in the work, it's just much more worthwhile. I began getting really good grades and I thought 'bloody hell I am very good at this' and I never realised that I was actually quite smart because I thought I was just really sweet I guess, or maternal, instead of smart. I'd never really used that word to describe myself before."

Do you have any interesting hobbies?

"I used to do classical ballet from age 5 to 17 and I enjoyed it. It's a nice way to stay fit. It's also a good way to get you out of your own head. It was never as awesome as Latin American dancing, which I was very much in love with, but I could not handle the pressure of the competitions. It was team based, so there was also internal competing. I was relatively good and I danced all the competitions - nationally and internationally - but when I moved to Amsterdam I gave it up. I was always very sorry. Then it turned out that they started a veterans team, so every Monday I go to Hoorn together with my brother for a dance practice! So I love dancing. I get very excited about that." [smiles] "I also do Pilates in my living room, to make sure that I'm strong enough to do all the moves that now after 2 kids and 10 years I'm a little too old for. 20 years.. Oh fuck. But yeah, it's easy, you can do it in your living room, there are very nice young ladies on the Youtube who tell you what to do. I'm best friends now with



this Ukrainian Canadian former gymnast, who travels the world with her partner in this beautiful hippie lifestyle and does these Yoga and Pilates sessions. She seems to be perpetually 19 and very bendy and fit. She doesn't know who I am, but I feel like I know her on very personal terms, she's talked me through some very difficult moments on my living room floor."

On that note we end the interview and chat a bit more, while Laurel takes some final pictures. Johanna gives us a short but sweet house tour before we all take off. On her way to pick up her kids from school, Johanna walks us to a little square with different places to eat. We say our goodbyes and finally Laurel and I come to the realisation that this was our last Tea Time. What a great way to end the year! Johanna, thank you for the lovely conversation and the hospitality!

Humans of Albion



Van-Thi (19) from Bergen op Zoom

My musical arsenal comprises four instruments, but my love for music can't be defined by them. Music is hearing a new song for the first time and being completely infatuated by the lyrics, or by an amazing guitar solo. Music is going about your day, plugging in your headphones and suddenly feeling like you're starring in a music video. Music is blasting the speakers and uncontrollably dancing in your room, in your underwear. But most of all, music to me is comfort, happiness and love.

Photography by Laurel Sanders

Bookshelf with Merel Hol

Interview by Nina van de Voort
Photography by Tess Masselink



For this issue Tess and I had the pleasure of travelling the long, long way to IJsselstein to talk about books with our last interviewee of this year: fellow firstie and soon to be second-year student, Merel Hol.

What is your favourite recent read?

Hard question. It's hard to remember. I guess it would have to be *Song of Solomon* (Toni Morrison) because we had to read it for Civil War to Civil Rights and I thought it was great. But I haven't really read that much between the books that we had to read for school. I do think it would have to be *Song of Solomon*. It's so good, I love Toni Morrison! It's not just that it's a good book, because obviously it is, and it's not just that the plot is good, but it's just so significant, culturally. Toni Morrison always does such interesting things, I love it.

What do you think makes a book good?

Difficult question. I think the most important thing for me with a book is that the language has some kind of impact on me. That doesn't mean that it has to be super elaborate or something; it could be super short sentences. Like, I love Kurt Vonnegut as well and he has this style that is not super elaborate; it's blunt and that makes it so cool. It does some-

thing completely different! And it has to have some kind of significance in the world. It has to describe something that is important or part of an important discussion.

Do you have a favourite genre?

Yes, I think so. It's difficult to say because I've been spending a lot of time reading classics, for a few years now, because there are so many. But I've come to love modern/modernist literature, stuff like Murakami, but also Vonnegut. Stuff that goes beyond expectations, that does weird things. You know Murakami is so weird, there's cats talking and there's fish falling from the sky and it doesn't make any sense and yet at the same time it does kind of make sense. I like philosophical literature as well. I've been reading Beckett and Sartre; they don't just write essays, they also write stories that have their philosophy behind it. Also very cool.

What is your go-to book? Like when you're in a slump, what book do you use to get out of it?

That's an interesting technique. I've never tried that, but I should. I don't think there's really a book that I'd read or have read more than once. I guess if I had to choose a book that would get me out of a slump it would be *Fight Club* (Chuck Palahniuk). It's so good! Also because it's my favourite movie.

And the book is almost exactly the same as the movie! And it's not a difficult read either. So it would have to be that one. But I like to read different things.

What is an overused trope?

Well, this is difficult. It's been a while since I've read anything that's not a classic, and the tropes come from the classics. But I guess when I read YA I was always annoyed by the fact that there has to be a romantic relationship. What I liked in *All the Light We Cannot See* (Anthony Doerr), was that there wasn't something like that. I mean, obviously they were going to come together, but then they split up and it was something different. But I don't read YA a lot. The latest YA I read was *Eleanor and Park* (Rainbow Rowell). It was okay, I guess. It wasn't great. It's one of those reads that you read in two days and then you carry on to something that's more important. It doesn't leave an impression. Another trope that I dislike is that main characters always have to be people who stand out. It's annoying! Why do they always have to be special? Because that just makes everybody feel like we have to do something weird to be special. I don't feel like you should do stuff like that, crazy stuff, to stand out. You should do it because you like it. I think it would be very interesting to write about someone who is boring. That's a challenge, to write something about someone who has no

personality. Like in *Slaughterhouse V*: that book has the flattest, most superficial, most stupid main character ever. He gets 'unstuck' in time which basically means he can time travel through his own life without having control over it and he gets taken to a different planet and he meets aliens. And he's such a useless human being, he doesn't care that it's happening. Just the contradiction of everything that happens to him compared to him being a nobody is so great. He goes to war and he almost dies like a million times and he just doesn't care. He has no opinion about anything! He's an optician, the most boring job in the whole world. He has all the characteristics that show he's such a boring human being. The book is great. Please, read it!

"Unpopular opinion: I really like it when books are falling apart."

Do you have a genre that you will never read?

No. I don't think so. I think YA is very low on my list, but I do read it sometimes. But I'm just not interested in it, it bores me. I guess I have a lot of genres that I don't really read, but also wouldn't say no to. If there's a book that I think I would like, then I do buy it. Like stuff that's about creativity and self-help books. I bought a few and now they're in my closet. I don't know why I bought them, I haven't read them and don't really care about them. But maybe one day I'll read them and they'll change my life, like they say on the back.

Have you ever not finished a book?

There's one. It's Dutch, but I think it was originally written in English. It's called *Licht Uit in Wonderland* (DBC Pierre). I just bought it because of the cover really. And I remember thinking that this dude, whoever wrote it, is so impressed with himself that it just kept the whole book from getting somewhere. He's just stroking himself during the whole book [laughs].

If you had to burn a book from

your shelves, which one would you choose?

I think it would.. can it be my own book? I wrote it when I was 12 and nobody ever reviewed it; it was self-published. I would love to burn it. Nobody ever checked it so it's full of mistakes and it's generally a terrible story - I guess I would burn that one. Oh, you know what I would burn.. *Artemis Fowl*. I got this book from my brother and the contents are just as ugly as the cover [laughs]. It's fantasy and it's about a criminal genius and so not what I would ever read.



Do you prefer hardbacks or paperbacks?

Paperbacks, 100%. Actually, unpopular opinion: I really like it when books are falling apart and are in terrible shape. I fold corners; I think a book needs to look like it's been read and I really like it when you have a bookshelf full of those books. It does make all my books impossible to borrow because they're all falling apart.

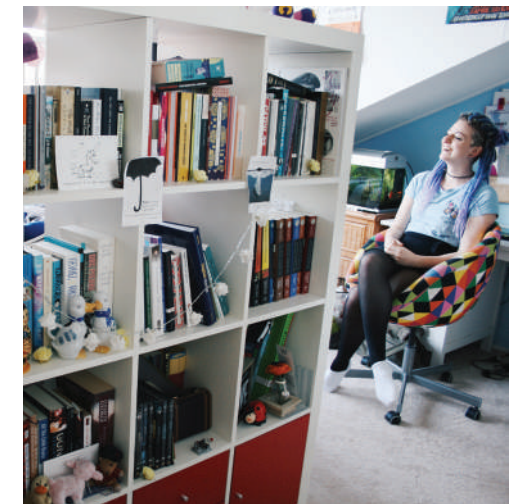
If you were stranded on a deserted island, which book would you have with you and why?

Does the whole Norton Anthology count? As one book? No, I don't think so. But I think anthologies are the best, because you have so many different things in one book. So I think I would choose the Beckett anthology or a Shakespeare anthology. I don't have a Shakespeare anthology but I would buy one and take it with me. I mean, I don't want a Shakespeare anthology, because I like having the books separate, but this way it's like reading a big book. But if I would go to a deserted island I would buy a Shakespeare anthology. And if

I'm not allowed to buy anything, I would take my Beckett anthology because I already have that one.

Do you have a recommendation for your fellow students?

Slaughterhouse V! It's a great book for if you just want to read a book. But if you want to read a book that makes you go "what?" I have a lot of recommendations for books like that. For some reasons I have a lot of those kind of books. Like *Waiting for Godot*. You know, I read this book and I thought that they were obviously waiting for God. And then it says on the back that Beckett did not mean God, and then I read it again and again and I don't understand it! It's so good, read it please!



COMMITTEES 2017-2018

As the academic year is coming to a close, we would like to thank all the Albion committees for their hard work this past year!



Academic Committee

AcCie



FeestCie

Grote ReisCie



IntroCie



KampCie

Kleine ReisCie



SportCie



SUDS

SympoCie



Phoenix ranks: Movie theaters in Utrecht



CineMec Utrecht
Berlijnplein 100

I have a personal vendetta against this movie theater, but I'll try not to let that get in the way of my judgement. They do a thing here where they have a little talk about the movie before it starts. At first, I thought they only did that with big movies, but I went to see Despicable Me 3 on a Tuesday afternoon and they still did it (even though there were three people in the room). If you like information and a little bit of spoilers, you'll enjoy this part. However, if you're like me and don't even watch trailers beforehand, you should cover your ears.

Snacks: Everything they have in a regular Path , but they also have a caf  downstairs where you can get gelato and cake.

Types of movies: All the big block busters.

Seat comfort: LOVE SEATS. Sadly no cup holders, but I guess that's how it is now.

General ambience: The cinema is too big for my liking, but if you're into that it's cool. There's never a line for the bathroom, so that's a plus. You can also do a work out at the same time because there are a million stairs.

Overall score: 6-



Path  Rembrandt Utrecht
Oudegracht 73

This is the movie theater I usually go to because it's closest to my house. I like this movie theater because it's not too big, but they do show all the popular/new movies.

Snacks: Nothing special, they have popcorn, nachos, chips, and M&Ms. They also have a variety of drinks, including those Grolsch beers that pop when you open the cap. There's a Starbucks machine in case you're the type of person who drinks coffee at the movies.

Types of movies: They show the popular movies, and usually show slightly older movies too. I went to see Avengers: Infinity War first, and Black Panther the week after (wrong order, I know, but they still showed it so that's a win). Seat comfort: Used to be better (RIP cup holders). I have dropped and lost multiple bottles of soda in this theater.

General ambience: It's fun! The staff is nice, and dress up when a big movie comes out, so that's cute.

Overall score: 8

Bonus cinema: Springhaver
Springweg 50

This is Louis Hartlooper's little sister. It's the same vibe, different films, and the caf  is just as nice.



Wolff Utrecht City
Voorstraat 89

This movie theater is perfect if you want to go see a movie after class. I even had a lecture in this movie theater once, and it was very comfortable. Personally, I think the times at which the movies start are more convenient than Path 's



Louis Hartlooper Complex
Tolsteegbrug 1

Louis Hartlooper is the best art house cinema in the Netherlands (officially, not just in my opinion). It has a really nice bar/caf  and it's always really busy. They also have special events where someone gives a lecture about famous film moments.

Snacks: Louis Hartlooper is known for not selling popcorn. They do sell other snacks, but I think it's only stuff that doesn't make a mess. The plus side of this is that you don't hear people munching all the time. The downside is no popcorn.

Types of movies: Art house mostly. They show a lot of drama movies, which is my favorite genre. There are no block busters, but they do show all the movies that are nominated for an Academy Award.

Seat comfort: Very comfy.

General ambience: This is the type of movie theater you'll go to just for a drink. They have a fun terrace, the staff is awesome, and the vibe is really good.

Overall score: 9

schedule.

Snacks: They have slushies, enough said. The popcorn is better than the one at Path  in my humble opinion.

Types of movies: It's a mix of big movies and smaller productions. At the time of writing this, they showed both Avengers: Infinity War, and The Post.

Seat comfort: Amazing, and they have cup holders! General ambience: Cute. The staff is cute, the building is small and cute, the rooms are cute.

Overall score: 8,5



't Hoogt
Hoogt 4

This is a very artsy art house cinema. They have a caf  where there are events such as Singer-Songwriter-Sunday, and they have a pub quiz every second Wednesday of the month.

Snacks: They don't sell popcorn, but they have other snacks and drinks.

Types of movies: They show a lot of European movies and documentaries. Most of them are very dramatic and vague, so if that's your thing, I highly recommend it. I looked at the list and personally did not know any of the films they are showing, but I think it would be fun to go see a random movie.

Seat comfort: Why do cinemas that are not part of a big franchise have better seats?

General ambience: It's mysterious and small and cute. The staff is cool and knows a lot about the films.

Overall score: 6,5 (because it's not my style)

Interview with the new KB

This interview was held just before the 'Open Podium' of Albion and Awater. The candidate board members look excited and a little nervous, because they will be performing a High School Musical song in a few minutes. Let's take this opportunity to get to know them a little better.

The candidate board consists of:
Chair: Sandra de Kruijf



Commissioner of Education: Lotte Murrath



Secretary: Ymke Verploegen



Commissioner of Internal Affairs: Hanka Damsma



Treasurer: Caitlin Kroot



Commissioner of External Affairs: Baukje Harmsma



Who of you would survive a zombie apocalypse?

Caitlin



Ymke



"Ymke would probably fall in love with another zombie."

And who would die first?

Baukje



"Probably because I've got very short legs"



"So you can't run for shit."

Who is be most likely to be an alien?

Lotte



"It's because I'm from Belgium right?"



Linguistics or literature?

Linguistics



Literature



Reading or writing?

Reading



Both



Writing



"None. Okay writing."

Who will be the first one to have kids?

Caitlin



"Probably."



Boobs or butts?

Boobs



Butts



David Bowie or John Lennon?

David Bowie



John Lennon



"I really don't care."

Cats or dogs?

Cats



Dogs



"My grandpa's dog."

Both



Neither



"Okay, dogs, but two meters away from me."

Pizza or fries?

Pizza



Fries



By Nanne Veeke

Many Albioneers, including myself, have been abroad recently, thanks to the annual great journey which was organized by our very own TravelCie! On this year's trip we went to Cardiff and Birmingham, enabling us to see both Wales and England. The first half of the week was spent in Cardiff, and after waking up around 2 AM on Saturday to get to Schiphol on time and arriving in England at 8 AM, we already had a busy day ahead: going to Cardiff by bus, dropping off our luggage at the hostel, having a picture hunt where there were prizes to be won, and having dinner together at an Italian restaurant. It was a very long day, but also a good start of the journey! In both Cardiff and Birmingham the TravelCie had organised various mandatory and optional activities. In Cardiff, you could visit a castle where multiple TV shows have been recorded, including Dr. Who. You could also take a walk around Cardiff Bay, which was a lot of fun, though sadly the weather was less fun. In Cardiff we also visited the university and museum. I really loved the photography wing in the museum and would highly recommend paying a visit if you ever find yourself in Cardiff. On Tuesday, we went to Birmingham by bus. Upon arrival, we first checked into our hostel and had a little tour around the city. In Birmingham we also visited the University and a museum. Aside from these activities, we also had a ghost tour, followed by an evening filled with karaoke where even the teacher that joined us on the trip participated and sang a song. After the karaoke, you could choose to



either join a part of the group to a gay bar called "The Nightingale" or stay at the karaoke place and sing your heart out. Sadly, the following day marked the last full day of the trip and we went to see the library, which had 9 levels and a special Shakespeare memorial room – which was very cool – and provided great views over the city from the different balconies. The following day we met in the lobby with our packed suitcases, ready to go home. Looking back on this week, I must say that I've had an amazing time. There was a great mix between organised activities and free time in which you could do whatever you desired, we had amazing weather in Birmingham, and I feel like I have gotten to know my fellow Albioneers a little bit better, as well as making some new friends. So, I would like to say a big thank you to the TravelCie for making this week possible and giving many of us the opportunity to see more of Britain and make new friends along the way.



Hi I'm Tessa van der Heide, second-year student aspiring to be a writer, trying to write my first novel and sometimes trying my hand at poetry. This is a literary imitation of Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird by Wallace Stevens.

Nine Ways of Looking at a Cat

- I
On top of a mountain of pillows,
All you could see
Was a contently sleeping cat.
- II
The cat made a wish
With a swish
In the water were three fish.
- III
The cat tracking in the tallest trees.
A pleased predator preying.
- IV
The sun is out.
The cat must be sleeping.
- V
A worm and a bird
Are one.
A worm and a bird and a cat
Are one.
- VI
Red and fast
With hasty movement.
The shadow of the cat
Going up and down
The red dot
On the wall
Its purpose unknown.
- VII
It was awake sleeping again.
It was dreaming
And it was going to dream again
The cat lying down again
Soft and warm.
- VIII
I know soft sounds
And gentle, purring vibrations;
But I know, too,
The loud voice
Of a hungry cat.
- IX
When the cat ran behind the couch,
And came back running again
One of many zoomies.



Moscow Mule

This is one of the easiest and most delicious cocktails I've ever had (and that says something). The Moscow Mule is a very popular recipe, in movies and tv shows alike. It has made an appearance in shows like Mad Men, Better Call Saul, and Orange is the New Black among others. I used a slightly different recipe, so technically this is a recipe for a Soho Mule, but trust me, it's good.

Ingredients:

- 50 ml vodka
- 20 ml home-made ginger syrup (this sounds intimidating, but it takes less than 5 minutes) for which you'll need a big chunk of ginger, water and caster sugar
- Juice of half a lime

For the ginger syrup, mix one part water together with one part sugar in a small pan on the stove, until it boils. Then add the ginger (cut into small pieces), and let it simmer for a few minutes, until it's been reduced a bit and thickened. Take out the ginger, then mix everything together with an ice cube and top it with soda water or ginger beer if you want to enhance the ginger flavour.

Phoenix serves... Literary cocktails and cake

Butterbeer

Ingredients:

- 2 large egg whites
- 170 ml Bailey's
- 2 tbs simple syrup (dissolve 1 part sugar in 1 part water, let simmer on the stove for a few minutes)
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- 60 ml heavy cream
- 3 cans of cream soda (you can get this at the foreign food section at Albert Heijn)

Combine the egg whites, vanilla, Baileys, simple syrup, and heavy cream in a cocktail shaker and shake for about a minute. Add ice and shake again until the mixture is cold. Fill 4 mugs about three quarters with cream soda, then add the Bailey's mixture and serve. Cheers!

Bruce Bogtrotter's Chocolate Cake

Ingredients:

- 250g dark chocolate
 - 170g butter
 - 125g sugar
 - 30g flour
 - 6 eggs
- For the icing:
- 250g dark chocolate
 - 250g cream

Method:

Preheat the oven to 175°C. Split the eggs and whisk the egg whites until they form stiff peaks. Melt the chocolate for the cake au bain-marie or in the microwave (if you use the microwave, make sure to stir often in order to prevent burning). Mix the butter until it is entirely melted. In a different bowl, lightly beat the egg yolks, and add the sugar, flour and chocolate. Mix thoroughly and gently fold in half of the egg whites first, and then fold in the second half. Transfer the mixture to a cake pan (either greased or lined with wax paper) and bake for 35 minutes. The inside might appear slightly undercooked when you stick a toothpick in it, but this is a moist cake so that's okay! While the cake is cooling down, make the icing by melting the chocolate with the cream in a saucepan on low heat. Transfer the cake to a plate or plateau and spread the icing over the cake – there's plenty so don't use it sparingly.



Minor & Master Market

Research Master Comparative Literature

By Anneloek Scholten

This year, I started the RMA in Comparative Literary Studies. It is a research-oriented programme, and the focus is both on content (what are recent trends in literary scholarship?; what theoretical perspectives and debates are there?) and method (what does it mean to compare literature?; what are we comparing?; how do you write a good research proposal?). In the first year, electives are limited and almost all courses are compulsory, so there isn't much freedom of choice. The final research papers (usually averaging somewhere between 4000-6000 words) however, leave you with plenty of space to explore your own interests and ideas. Of course the relative lack of freedom compared to some other programmes can have its downsides, but it also means that you explore avenues you wouldn't have considered — for me, one of the courses I expected to enjoy least ended up being my favourite.

In the first year, the MA covers topics such as cultural memory, media and intermediality, trans-culturality, and interdiscursivity (the way literature relates to other fields such as law, geology, anthropology, or biology). Students also take masterclasses that allow you explore two of these topics in a small group, which is a great opportunity to work closely with an expert and develop a project with fellow students.

The amount of reading and deadlines can be challenging, especially the first two blocks of the year. The programme is fast-paced (compared to, for instance, UvA's RMA) and it's definitely designed to push you, but this makes it a great preparation for a possible career in research. Next year I plan to be taking some courses at UvA (as they offer a bigger variety of electives), but you can also go abroad for a few months before starting your MA thesis.

I'm really enjoying this RMA programme, and I'm personally very happy with the amount of writing and reading involved. I'd definitely make the same decision again!

Minor Gender Studies

By Anna de Roest

Have you ever looked at all the essays you've written and noticed that they all have something in common? Since my first year, almost all of my essays within the BA have dealt with issues concerning gender, sexuality or race. However, I have always felt that I never knew enough about it. Searching for a Minor, I immediately thought: this way, I can do something that I really enjoy and actually learn stuff about topics that matter.

The courses from the Gender Studies program are not the easiest courses I have ever taken — I have to work with media, discourse, philosophy and form opinions on very difficult and sometimes controversial themes surrounding gender, religion and ethnicity. However, they are the most fun, interesting, stimulating and socially aware courses that I have ever taken. Although the themes and texts might be tough, the class discussions are about recognizable and contemporary case studies.

The people that follow the Minor are so diverse as well: there are a lot of international students and different disciplines - some study media studies, history, philosophy or anthropology, but there are also law students and even students of biology. The seminars are incredibly interactive — there is a lot of discussion and the atmosphere is comfortable enough for everyone to say what they think.

All in all, I think this Minor makes you think critically about everything you have learned and think you know, and makes you reflect on the formation of identity. You also get a lot of freedom when it comes to your essay topics — I, for example, wrote one of my essays on the educational importance of the book "Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls" and one on house-elves and goblins in Harry Potter. Last but not least, these courses make you feel like you are doing something good. Instead of writing a stuffy paper on a piece of literature that was written by some dead white guy two hundred years ago, these courses let you engage with our current society and how we can open up discussions to ensure change. It's amazing.

Your Summer Festival Guide

By Tess Masselink and Vincent
Potman

We all know that feeling – except those few who hate the sun and are basically vampires – of excitement when at last summer is approaching. It means swimming, BBQ parties, drinking more beer than usual, getting sunburns, not being able to sleep at night due to the heat, unexpected water fights, ice cream, six to eight weeks of eternal freedom, vacations – the list goes on and on. One more thing, though. Festivals. Festivals? Festivals!

At this point in the year, we've already had some amazing festivals: Paaspop, bevrijdingsfestivals, Soenda, Pinkpop, Dauwpop and Best Kept Secret are just a few. The good news is, however, that the summer and autumn are long and festival goers are not easily scared off by weather circumstances, so there are many more to come this year.

We're going to help you prepare for the festival season of 2018 by providing you with some tips, a packing list and a list of a few festivals you should definitely check out. Enjoy!

Essential packing list (for at least two days and two nights at a festival)

Clothing:

- Minimum of 3 t-shirts
- Minimum of 3 sets of underwear
- Minimum of 2 pants
- Minimum of 3 pairs of socks
- Pajamas
- Extra shoes
- Rain boots
- Toiletries:
 - Toothpaste
 - Toothbrush
 - Hairbrush (if needed)
- Deodorant
- Plasters
- Towels

Camping gear:

Depending on the festival you're going to, you might or might not be allowed to bring portable camping gas with you. All guidelines of what is and is not allowed on the camping and festival terrain are on the festival's website. This list assumes that you are allowed to bring loads of useful camping gear (even if it might be dangerous).

- Camping gas (to cook noodles, coffee, tea, etc.)
- Tent
- Sleeping bags
- Extra blanket
- Trash bags
- Flashlights

Others:

- Food, fruit, and tea and coffee
- Phone
- Portable charger
- Money
- ID
- Friends, of course

Prep Tips:

Early Birds Get Good Spots

Arriving early is always a good idea, since you will not only have more spots to choose from, but once you're set up you can relax by your tent instead of hurriedly setting up everything so that you can catch that first artist.

Lighten Up That Load

So, keeping the list above in mind, the priority is being comfortable with style coming second. For example: wear the heaviest clothes on your way there. Also, double check to see if there are some things that you only want, but don't really need, and leave them behind. Seriously, your back will thank you for it!

The Main Menu

It's absolutely crucial to have some sort of schedule, specifically to make sure you don't miss your favourites. Add in some breaks as well, so that you can all keep going, but don't let it define the whole experience either – have some fun while wandering around, and discover a new favourite this way!

The Do's and Don'ts

Do Like a Plant Do

When the sun is beating overhead, and you're rocking out to your favourite band with a beer in hand, it might slip your mind to get a glass of water and put on some sunscreen, so do those things beforehand! Put on sunscreen in the morning and bring along a water bottle to keep your body going.

Do Hard Up Some Cash

While cards are useful, having some cash on you is always good in an emergency – say you want to buy that really cool shirt. For food and drinks it

should be noted that more often than not custom coins will be the currency, so keep track and count those pretty pennies!

Do Mingle Even if You're not Single

You guys are not the only people there, and while half of the fun is the music, the other half is the company. New albums and bands aren't the only thing you can find at these festivals, friends can be found too.

Do Break the Bubble, Don't Break the Limit

Festivals are places where you go to let it hang, and going outside your safety bubble is definitely part of it – expanding your horizons and whatnot. Just remember to not go too crazy and keep some limits in mind. Like the Festival rules, for example.

Don't Forget that X Marks the Spot

If you're going with friends, there are bound to be times when you want to go one stage and they another, so find and decide on a meeting spot and time in order to avoid wasting too much time looking for each other in the crowd.

Don't be Mud

It might seem like a fun idea at the time – and to be fair it is fun – but remember that if you do choose to slide through the mud that it will cake you in completely, and since showers are in short supply (if at all) getting it off is a damn hassle and a half.

Don't Not Rock and Toilet Roll

Toilet paper and/or wet wipes are your friends and having them along for the day never hurts.

Upcoming festivals

Jera On Air (28-30 June, Ysselsteyn)

Jera On Air is a hardcore/punk/metal core festival in Ysselsteyn, Limburg. This year's line-up consists of NOFX, Billy Talent, Enter Shikari and Sick Of It All, among others. The festival is known for its great atmosphere and awesome parties with great bands and many (lesser known but) awesome bands from this scene.

DOUR Festival (11-15 July, Dour, Belgium)

Also known as "European Alternative Music Event", DOUR certainly has a reputation of attracting people and artists out of the mainstream.. A few of this year's anticipated artists are: DJ Premier, The Chemical Brothers, Mura Masa, alt-J and Sólstafir.

Zwarte Cross (12-15 July, Lichtenvoorde)

This festival started off as a motor cross for the locals and has over the years grown into what it is: an amazing event with motor and tractor races, loads of great music and even a fair, a theatre field and a playfield for small kids, called "het Blagenparadijs".

Breda Barst (15-16 September, Breda)

One of the festival season's last festivals, and it's free! This festival offers local, talented bands a stage to perform and gain publicity or broaden the renown they already have. Truly a nice festival to end the season with!



Q&Alumni with Kiki Drost

By Lola van Scharrenburg

For this edition of Q&Alumni we interviewed Kiki Drost. Kiki started her BA in 2013 and graduated from the MA Literature Today in August 2017. She is currently living in Dublin, where she works for the Irish Writing Centre.

Can you explain how you ended up working in Dublin so shortly after graduating?

I moved to Dublin because of my boyfriend, who is doing his PhD in Old Irish here. After I graduated, I was quite clueless as to what I wanted to do with my life, like many English students I think, so I figured I might just as well be clueless in Ireland. After I moved, I did an internship at the Irish Writing Centre for two months. After that, I went looking for a job but even though Ireland has a lot of money available for the cultural sector, it's still the cultural sector. After a while I got a message from the Writing Centre, though: someone had left and if I was still looking for a job, because they had one available.

What does your job at the Irish Writing Centre entail?

My job is called project administrator, but although I do administration for projects, I don't think that entirely covers it. Maybe you could say project leader, but project manager is probably most accurate. The Writing Centre is there to support Irish writers. We offer writing courses, but for professional writers we have projects such as writing residencies. This means that we put a writer in residence with a community group somewhere in the country, such as the Irish Wheelchair Association. I mostly focus on these projects, contacting community groups to see if they are interested in such a project, helping with the selections and receiving

ing the applications. The director and the community group have the final say in who gets selected, but I'm definitely there to help in the process, I keep in touch with the writer and make sure all requirements are met. I also do more boring tasks, such as funding applications: we're a charity so we mostly rely on funding. Luckily there's a lot of money available for arts and culture in Ireland. I was actually surprised how big this sector is here, there's a lot of respect for culture.

Do you feel like your minor in Celtic was relevant for what you are doing now?

Not directly, but I do like that I have some more background knowledge about the country and its history. And the language as well, although I don't speak any Celtic myself.

And what about the BA in general?

Well, of course I need to speak English here, but you don't necessarily need to do a BA for that. I think it was relevant in the sense that I have contact with a lot of contemporary writers now, and I meet a lot of them when they are coming in to make photocopies, for instance. At those moments I like having some background knowledge in literature to be able to have conversations with them. Other than that, I think that (besides critical and academic thinking), literature has been useful for me. With literary analyses, you need to both focus on details but also keep track of the bigger picture while reading a book, and I think that sort of trains your brain in a way, so that you can apply that skill in different contexts. Especially when organizing events, this is a skill that I use a lot. I don't think it is as much a direct result, but I do think the BA has helped me get better at this. Furthermore, affinity with literature has of course helped me get in here, although I never expected to have a grown-up job that had to do with literature so shortly after graduating.

Did you have any experience in organizing events before you started this job?

When I was doing my bachelor, I did a lot of charity work and I also helped organizing events back then. I was part of a group of young people who were interested in spirituality, and we sometimes organized small festivals. I left giving the yoga workshops to other people, but I was active in the organization. My MA also has been important. Besides it being a tough year that really taught me what hard work is, I did an internship at the American Comparative Literature Association. They organized a conference in Utrecht for about 2500 people, and together with someone else from the MA, we helped organize that. The internship has helped me get better at setting



up events and keeping track of what is necessary when and where. Since it was such a large and professional event, it was definitely a step up from the festivals I did, which maybe had 100 visitors. It also helped me build my confidence – I'm much more sure of myself now.

Finally, how do you envision your future?

I still don't know, actually. I do know that I want to return to the Netherlands because it's such an organized country; Ireland is very unorganized. I think I will stay here for a while, though. I don't really have any ideas for what I want to do. I would like something organizational, but I'm totally fine with ending up somewhere completely different as well.

PHOENIX YEARBOOK 2017-2018



Lola van Scharrenburg
“Words are, in my not-so-humble opinion, our most inexhaustible source of magic.” - J.K. Rowling



Nurai Mertens
“how was I supposed to know there'd be consequences for my actions?” - Gina Linetti from Brooklyn Nine-Nine



Nanne Veeke
“I think of my pile of old paperbacks, their pages gone wobbly, like they'd once belonged to the sea” - Kazuo Ishiguro



Emma Wasser
“You can imitate a light like mine, but you cannot become it.” - Rupi Kaur



Laurel Sanders
“I pretend 2 look at the wine list rly hard and then just order the second cheapest one. U can apply this technique to anything” - ezra koenig



Tess Masselink
“Wisdom comes from experience. Experience is often a result of lack of wisdom.” - Terry Pratchett



Vincent Potman
“Fantasy is hardly an escape from reality. It's a way of understanding it.” - Lloyd Alexander



Nina van de Voort
“i'm fancy! One time I had coffee flavored ice cream” - Jake Peralta, Brooklyn Nine-Nine

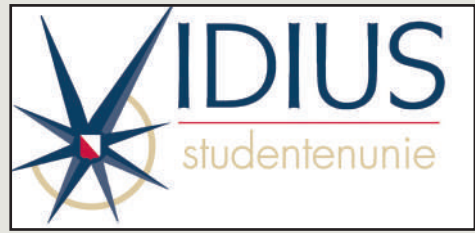


Indie Reijnierse
“Be the change you wish to see in the world.”

Summertime
is
always
the best
of what
might be

- Charles
Bowden

COLOFON



Editor in Chief

Lola van Scharrenburg

Secretary

Nanne Veeke

Editors

Nurai Mertens, Nanne Veeke

Photography

Laurel Sanders, Tess Masselink

Graphic designer

Emma Wasser

Content writers

Vincent Potman, Tess Masselink, Nurai Mertens, Indie Reijnierse, Laurel Sanders, Alessandra Polimeno, Lola van Scharrenburg, Nanne Veeke, Nina van de Voort & Emma Wasser

Special thanks

Kai Bijnen, Hanka Damsma, Kiki Drost, Baukje Harmsma, Tessa van der Heide, Merel Hol, Johanna Hoorenman, Marleen Jorna, Angela Kroes, Caitlin Kroot, Sandra de Kruijff, Freek Metsch, Lotte Murrath, Van-Thi Nguyen, Anneloek Scholten, Leda Serkikoglu, Ymke Verploegen