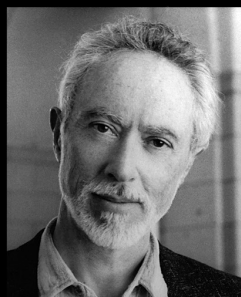
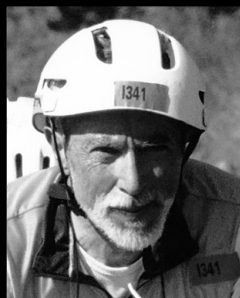
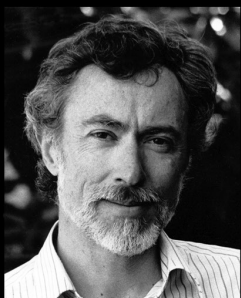
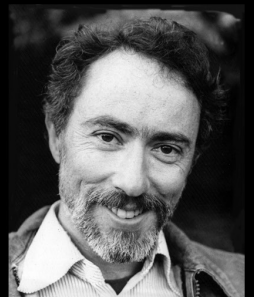
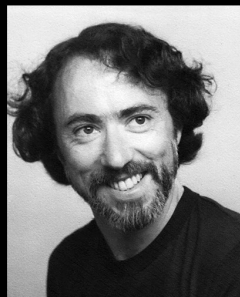


# Traverses: J.M. Coetzee in the World

11 – 13 November 2014  
Adelaide, South Australia



# PROGRAM

## Day 1 – TUESDAY 11 NOVEMBER 2014

TIME	ACTIVITY	ROOM/CHAIR
8:30 – 9:15	<b>REGISTRATION</b> Bradley Forum University of South Australia Level 5, Hawke Building City West Campus University of South Australia	
9:15 – 9:30	<b>WELCOME ADDRESS</b> Brian Castro <i>University of Adelaide</i> Jennifer Rutherford <i>University of South Australia</i>	
9:30 – 10:30	<b>PLENARY PANEL DISCUSSION</b> <b>PHILOSOPHY</b> Raimond Gaita Paul Patton Carrol Clarkson	Moira Gatens <i>University of Sydney</i>
10:30 – 11:00	<b>Q&amp;A FROM THE AUDIENCE</b>	
11:00 – 11:30	<b>MORNING TEA</b>	
11:30 – 1:00	<b>SESSION 1</b>	
	<b>GROUP 1</b> <b>MODERNISMS</b> Emmett Stinson Shannon Burns Chris Conti	<b>H6-10</b> Paul Sheehan <i>Macquarie University</i>
	<b>GROUP 2</b> <b>FOE AND COSTELLO</b> Britta Hartmann Robert Phiddian & Gillian Dooley Farzad Shahinfard	<b>H6-09</b> Sue Kossew Monash University
	<b>GROUP 3</b> <b>COETZEE AND PHILOSOPHY</b> Nikolas Kompridis Elizabeth MacFarlane Yoshiki Tajiri	<b>H6-11</b> Carrol Clarkson <i>University of Cape Town</i>

# PROGRAM

TIME	ACTIVITY	ROOM/CHAIR
1:00 – 2:00	<b>LUNCH BREAK</b>	
2:00 – 3:00	<b>SESSION 2</b>	
	<b>GROUP 1</b>	<b>H6-09</b>
	<b>AUTOBIOGRAPHY</b>	Brian Castro
	James Gourley	<i>University of Adelaide</i>
	Karen Ferreira-Meyers	
	<b>GROUP 2</b>	<b>H6-10</b>
	<b>IDENTITY AND FORM</b>	Jean Michel Rabaté
	Paul Sheehan	<i>University of Pennsylvania</i>
	Elleke Boehmer	
	<b>GROUP 3</b>	<b>H6-11</b>
	<b>STYLE AND FORM</b>	Hermann Wittenberg
	Jason Childs	<i>University of Western Cape</i>
	Muzna Rahman	
3:00 – 3:30	<b>AFTERNOON TEA BREAK</b>	
3:30 – 5:00	<b>PLENARY PANEL DISCUSSION</b>	
	<b>THE CHILDHOOD OF JESUS</b>	Michael Heyward
	Jean-Michel Rabaté	<i>Text Publishing</i>
	Jennifer Rutherford	
	Sue Kossew	
5:45 – 6:30	<b>PARTICIPANTS RECEPTION</b>	
	Wills Courtyard	
	University of Adelaide	
	<i>Show your lanyard on arrival to gain entry to VIP function</i>	
6:30 – 8:00	<b>OFFICIAL EVENT OPENING</b>	
	<b>TRAVERSES: J.M. COETZEE IN THE WORLD</b>	
	Opening address by Professor Warren Bebbington, Vice Chancellor, University of Adelaide.	
	Keynote lecture by Professor Jonathan Lear: "Waiting for the Barbarians."	
	Performances by pianist and author, Anna Goldsworthy, the Zephyr Quartet and mezzo-soprano, Elizabeth Campbell.	
	Reading by J.M. Coetzee.	
	Elder Hall	
	University of Adelaide	

# PROGRAM

## Day 2 – WEDNESDAY 12 NOVEMBER 2014

TIME	ACTIVITY	ROOM/CHAIR
9:00 – 9:10	<b>WELCOME AND KEYNOTE INTRODUCTION</b> Derek Attridge <i>University of York</i>	
9:10 – 10:00	<b>KEYNOTE ADDRESS</b> <b>'What Does J.M. Coetzee's Novel, <i>The Childhood of Jesus</i> Have To Do With the Childhood of Jesus?'</b> Robert Pippin <i>University of Chicago</i> Moderator/Respondent: Derek Attridge	
10:00 – 10:30	<b>Q&amp; A FROM THE AUDIENCE</b>	
10:30 – 11:00	<b>MORNING TEA</b>	
11:00 – 12:30	<b>SESSION 1</b>	
	<b>GROUP 1</b> <b>LANGUAGE AND TRANSLATION</b> Gillian Dooley Kezia Whiting Heidi Thomson	<b>H6-10</b> Bruno Clément <i>University of Paris 8</i>
	<b>GROUP 2</b> <b>ETHICS AND POST-HUMANISM</b> Tim Mehigan Janhavi Mittal John Bolin	<b>H6-09</b> Nikolas Kompridis <i>Australian Catholic University</i>
	<b>GROUP 3</b> <b>MUSIC, MATHS, AND FORM</b> Michael Halliwell Baylee Brits Neville Hoad	<b>H6-11</b> Derek Attridge <i>University of York</i>
12:30 – 1:30	<b>LUNCH BREAK</b>	
1:30 – 3.00	<b>SESSION 2</b>	
	<b>GROUP 1</b> <b>SOCIO-POLITICAL THEORY</b> Deepa Jani Timothy Johns Brian Macaskill	<b>H6-10</b> Jennifer Rutherford <i>University of South Australia</i>

# PROGRAM

TIME	ACTIVITY	ROOM/CHAIR
	<b>GROUP 2</b> <b>FORGIVENESS &amp; RECONCILIATION</b> Daniel Conway Benjamin Kunkler Katherine Hallemeier	<b>H6-09</b> Raimond Gaita <i>Australian Catholic University</i>
	<b>GROUP 3</b> <b>FICTION AND THE REAL</b> Isaías Peña Gutiérrez Kerry Kilner Michelle Kelly	<b>H6-11</b> Lynda Ng <i>University of Western Cape</i>
3:00 – 3:30	<b>AFTERNOON TEA BREAK</b>	
3:30 – 4.40	<b>PLENARY PANEL DISCUSSION</b> <b>THE COETZEE ARCHIVES</b> David Attwell Kai Easton Hermann Wittenberg Sharon Zwi	Elleke Boehmer <i>University of Oxford</i>
4:40 – 5:00	<b>Q&amp;A FROM THE AUDIENCE</b>	
6:00 – 7:30	<b>EXHIBITION OPENING: J.M. COETZEE IN THE WORLD</b> Opening address by Professor Richard Head, Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research, UniSA and hosted by Associate Professor Jennifer Rutherford, Deputy Director, Hawke Research Institute, UniSA.  Readings by national and international writers, including; Brian Castro, Lloyd Jones, Carrie Tiffany and Jill Jones.  Text Publisher, Michael Heyward will launch J.M. Coetzee's latest publication <i>Three Stories</i> . The book will be available for signing at the event.  The evening also includes a silent auction of the first editions of J.M Coetzee's works with all proceeds going to <i>Voicelless: The animal protection institute</i> .  Kerry Packer Civic Gallery Level 3, Hawke Building City West Campus University of South Australia	

# PROGRAM

## Day 3 – THURSDAY 13 NOVEMBER 2014

TIME	ACTIVITY	ROOM/CHAIR
9:00 – 9:10	<b>WELCOME AND COMMENTS</b> Nicholas Jose <i>University of Adelaide</i>	
9:10 – 10:00	<b>PLENARY PANEL DISCUSSION</b> <b>COETZEE AND THE FRENCH</b> Bruno Clément Sadamba Tcha-Koura Jean-Michel Rabaté	Odile Cazenave <i>Boston University</i>
10:00 – 10:30	<b>Q&amp;A FROM THE AUDIENCE</b>	
10:30 – 11:00	<b>MORNING TEA</b>	
11:00 – 12:30	<b>SESSION 1</b>	
	<b>GROUP 1</b> <b>“DISGRACE(D)”</b> Lindsay Diehl Jacqueline Baloh Erin Scudder	<b>H6-10</b> David Attwell <i>University of York</i>
	<b>GROUP 2</b> <b>THE LIVES OF ANIMALS</b> Richard Barney Claudia Egerer Alys Moody	<b>H6-09</b> Anthony Uhlmann <i>University of Western Sydney</i>
	<b>GROUP 3</b> <b>COETZEE IN ASIA</b> Lynda Ng Lu Jiande Tina Liu	<b>H6-11</b> Nicholas Jose <i>University of Adelaide</i>
12:30 – 1:30	<b>LUNCH BREAK</b>	
1:30 – 3:30	<b>PLENARY PANEL</b> <b>INTERTEXTS</b> Bruno Clément Anthony Uhlmann Nicholas Jose Derek Attridge	<b>Bradley Forum</b> Paul Patton <i>University of NSW</i>

# PROGRAM

TIME	ACTIVITY	ROOM/CHAIR
3:30 – 3:45	<b>CLOSING ADDRESS</b> Anthony Uhlmann <i>University of Western Sydney</i>	
6:00 – 8:30	<b>SCREENING OF <i>DISGRACE</i></b> Opening address by Brian Sherman  <i>Attendance at this event is optional</i>  Media Wall Jeffrey Smart Building City West Campus University of South Australia	

# ABSTRACTS

## Day 1 – Tuesday 11 November 2014

### 9:30AM – PLENARY PANEL DISCUSSION – PHILOSOPHY

#### **“A Humbled Species?”**

*Prof. Raimond GAITA, University of Melbourne and King's College London*

Freud counted himself as one of three scientists who deflated the arrogance of human beings: Copernicus because he showed that our planet is not the centre of the universe; Darwin because he showed we are animals, probably descended from monkeys, and himself for exposing as an illusion the edifying conception of ourselves as primarily rational beings. Many people believe that the natural sciences and psychology, insofar as it is informed by them, will teach us what human beings essentially are and what our place in nature is. Like Freud, they believe that their lessons are likely to be ever more humbling. Yet, in my judgment, John Coetzee has done at least as much as recent evolutionary theory, for example, to deepen our understanding of what it means to be creatures amongst other creatures. I want to reflect on what he has given us to think about and, more generally, on the relations of philosophy, literature and science.

#### **“Coetzee and the philosophers”**

*Prof. Paul PATTON, University of New South Wales*

J.M. Coetzee's work is a focus of interest for contemporary philosophers of all stripes. Some of us find elements in his novels that resonate with the concepts and sensibility of a variety of “postmodern” thinkers, from Nietzsche to Derrida and, in my own case, Deleuze. My remarks will elaborate on some of these points of resonance and, in addition, raise some questions about what it is that makes his work, especially the recent novels, so appealing to philosophers.

#### **“Inner Worlds”**

*Prof. Carrol CLARKSON, University of Cape Town*

With Wittgenstein's private language argument in mind, this paper traverses criss-crossing paths of thought and language in the fields of Coetzee's writing. Coetzee's sustained formal experiment with literary genre affects the valencies of authorial, narrating, and narrated consciousnesses, provoking further reflection on the different forces of subjective accountability activated in language. By way of formal literary experiment, Coetzee thus makes a distinctive contribution to debates more readily associated with moral philosophy, and at the same time extends the range of philosophical modes of inquiry.

### 11:30AM SESSION 1

#### Group 1 – Modernisms

#### **“J.M. Coetzee's Youth as anti-Künstlerroman: Late Modernism and the Problem of Authorship”**

*Dr. Emmett STINSON, University of Newcastle*

J.M. Coetzee's *Youth* (2002) repeatedly alludes to modernist authors (T.S. Eliot, Joseph Conrad, Ezra Pound) and even reproduces the famous passage from Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916), in which Stephen Dedalus wants “to forge in the smithy of my soul the uncreated conscience of my race.” But *Youth* invokes Joyce and the modernist Künstlerroman only to mark its own distance from this genre: the suffering of *Youth*'s protagonist neither enriches his art nor portends his future success. Here, the novel undermines high modernism's naïve view that artists' lives are charged with a special meaning or significance. I will argue that *Youth*'s critique of the modernist Künstlerroman recalls an anxiety about authorship already prevalent in late modernism, which attacks modernist accounts of authorship on two fronts. First, late modernists — such as Maurice Blanchot, William Gaddis and Thomas Bernhard — suggest that the adulation of authors threatens to obscure the work of art itself. Secondly, other late modernists — such as Jorge Luis Borges and Gerald Murnane — imply that the exaltation of the figure of the author conceals the flesh-and-blood person genuinely responsible for the production of the work. My contention is that *Youth*'s critique is deeply indebted to this binary, which further suggests that the novel's attack on high modernism is also an extension of modernism by other means.

#### **“Coetzee in Adelaide: Foreign writing in the underworld”**

*Dr. Shannon BURNS*

In this paper I will survey and attempt to chart the direction and impulses underlying J.M. Coetzee's published work since migrating to Adelaide. I will focus on idiosyncrasies of form and content while locating Coetzee's work within a loose collection of “foreign” Australian literatures, with a particular emphasis on a (tainted) tradition of Europeanism. Coetzee's previous characterisation of his own literary sensibilities as fundamentally European and therefore foreign to Africa has long been documented, and this sense of foreignness surely extends to his shift to Adelaide; but I argue that there is more going



# ABSTRACTS

on than mere extension. Instead, in his Australian writing, Coetzee sets out on an Orphic journey into the underworld (an oft-repeated motif in his work), approaching without embracing formal and linguistic disintegration, before emerging, finally, as a modestly (and ironically) resurrected Messiah.

## **“The Trial of David Lurie: Coetzee’s misprision of Kafka’s Trial”**

*Dr. Chris CONTI, University of Western Sydney*

The embedding of Kafka’s fictions in Coetzee’s is now well documented. Coetzee’s critical writings on Kafka have suggested productive lines of inquiry in this instance and stylistic models for the study of literary influence more generally. At the risk of overstating an interpretive influence, however, this paper focuses on the misprision of Kafka’s Trial in Coetzee’s *Disgrace*. Beyond the obvious points of comparison — the protagonists’ crass attitude to women; the ethical quality of the quasi-legal proceedings against them; and the reference to an enduring shame in the final sentences of both novels — stands the intransigent figures of Josef K. and John Lurie. Kafka and Coetzee withdraw from commentary on their heroes by restricting the narrative focus to the protagonist’s view of events, leaving readers to judge the extent of K.’s or Lurie’s culpability for the moral world around them. Whether either character learns anything about himself or his true situation remains unclear, though subtle clues threaded into both narratives — in Kafka’s dense symbols and Coetzee’s intertextuality — suggest an adverse judgement. The notion of repression at work in both novels is, I conclude, more ethical than sexual.

## **Group 2 – Foe and Costello**

### **“Challenging Stereotypes: Islands and Castaways in Coetzee’s Foe”**

*Dr. Britta HARTMANN, University of Vechta (Germany) and University of Tasmania (Australia)*

The castaway tale is steeped in narratological expectations and stereotypes. These expectations are a product of the genre’s longevity and popularity. From Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) onwards, castaway tales have contributed to a steadily growing and self-reflexive master story. Collectively, Defoe’s novel and its successors have created a firm set of traditions, boundaries, and expectations for readers and writers alike. There is a strong societal understanding of what such a story *should* look like. Some texts do attempt to rewrite and reimagine Defoe’s narrative so as to question and destabilise the imperial urtext, but they are rarely successful in their goal. This paper argues that Coetzee’s *Foe* (1986) is one of the few texts that are able to successfully undermine the ingrained imperialistic Crusoe island story. Coetzee achieves this result by, paradoxically, highlighting the near impossibility of the task.

*Foe* features a Crusoe figure — known as Cruso — and his mute servant Friday, both of whom live on an isolated island. Their day-to-day existence is interrupted by the arrival of a new castaway: Susan Barton. Susan finds her castaway situation unexpectedly disappointing, as neither Cruso nor the island live up to her expectations. The novel ends in a hallucinatory dream sequence. I contend that this sequence represents the essence of the novel’s ambition. Friday’s voice is able to rise from the depths of the Middle Passage so as to travel over the island and into the world beyond. Cruso, however, has disappeared from the narrative: there is no Crusoe figure in this tableau. *Foe* offers hope in the face of seemingly indestructible stereotypes. The reader can, through the absence of Cruso(e), imagine a future in which Friday is able to live his own life on the island. The dream-like nature of the ending, however, emphasises that this scene is a hoped for, but not certain, outcome. *Foe* is a castaway story, a treatise on the genre as a whole and, ultimately, a call for a break away from stereotypical representations and storylines.

### **“A Face without Personality: Coetzee’s Swiftian Narrators”**

*Asoc. Prof. Robert PHIDDIAN and Dr. Gillian DOOLEY Flinders University*

Much has been written about the complicated intertextual relationships of J.M. Coetzee’s novels to previous works by writers such as Kafka, Dostoevsky, Beckett and, especially, Defoe. Relatively little has been written, by comparison, about any relationship with Defoe’s great contemporary, Swift. We claim no extensive structural relationship between Coetzee’s novels and Swift’s works — nothing like the formal interlace between *Robinson Crusoe* and *Foe*, for example. What we do claim, however, is a strong and explicitly signalled likeness of narratorial stance, specifically in the ironic distance marked between author and protagonist in *Gulliver’s Travels* and *Elizabeth Costello*. We rehearse the quite extensive evidence of Coetzee’s attention to Swift (both in novels and criticism), and suggest that there is a Swiftian dimension to Coetzee’s oeuvre in several books.

# ABSTRACTS

## **“Coetzee’s Foe: a Place for Freedom”**

*Mr. Farzad SHAHINFARD, York University*

Although there have been attempts to interpret J.M. Coetzee’s *Foe* in Hegelian terms, few have tried to approach this text from a Marxist perspective. Reading Coetzee’s *Foe* within a Hegelian framework, however, has had its shortcomings. The tradition of reading *Foe* within the conceptual world of Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit* has been mainly postmodern and poststructuralist in spirit. In this tradition, the silence of Friday is ultimately read to underwrite the impossibility of understanding the other. This position leaves us with a relative logic of constant relapse within the inauthentic and the incomprehensible. My aim in this paper is to provide a critical alternative for postmodern/poststructuralist readings of *Foe*. I believe that Coetzee’s language and politics in *Foe* incorporate a dialectical critique of capitalism, its cultural logic and aesthetics, especially as developed in Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe*. *Foe* debunks the economic, moral, political, and psychological myths of capitalist accumulation and expansion, concretizes the problem of freedom, confirms the reality of freedom, and defines it as a collective revolutionary project. To do so, Coetzee deploys, among other things, two main textual strategies: a) in contradistinction with Defoe’s text, Coetzee excludes or rather subtracts from the story of the island the law of commodity fetishism, the capitalist law of labor and its exchange, and the myth of primitive accumulation b) Coetzee adopts Hegel’s movement of “Unhappy Consciousness” in *Phenomenology* and dramatizes its tensions, but he does so through a Marxist inversion of this consciousness. In *Foe*, this consciousness is incorporated within the “corporeal, living, real, sensuous, objective being” (Marx) of its female narrator Susan Barton. I will conclude on the note that in Coetzee’s narrative Friday functions as the figure of sameness and identity rather than difference.

## **Group 3 – Coetzee and Philosophy**

### **“Exposed to Intelligibility: Elizabeth Costello and Philosophy”**

*Dr. Nikolas KOMPRIDIS, Institute for Social Justice Australian Catholic University*

How are we supposed to reply to something or to someone when it is not clear just what it is we are dealing with and what it is that is being asked of us? Can we speak meaningfully about responding rightly or wrongly in cases like this — as readers, as intimates, as citizens, as human beings? What can guide us, normatively speaking? How do we tell what form of response we owe an *other* when that other appears inscrutable to us, and, as in the case of Elizabeth Costello, when the other appears as inscrutable to herself as she appears to us? Where do we begin? What might get in the way of a reply that is just, in every sense of just, not callous, insensitive, indifferent? The question of how we should respond and reply, how we should answer and be answerable to others, the question of human responsiveness or lack of it in the face of suffering, may well be the organizing principle of all Coetzee’s writing. In this paper I will look closely at how this question is posed and answered in *Elizabeth Costello*, focusing on the “lessons” contained in *The Lives of Animals* and “At the Gate.”

### **“The Ethics of Embodiment: Philosophy and Literature in Coetzee’s Elizabeth Costello novels”**

*Dr. Elizabeth MACFARLANE, The University of Melbourne*

“The Ethics of Embodiment” argues that questions of ethics, and the responsibility of the writer, are necessarily entangled with questions of metaphor and embodiment. Alongside the work of philosophers such as Peter Singer, Thomas Nagel and Mary Midgley, it analyses Coetzee’s most controversial novels, *Disgrace*, *Waiting for the Barbarians* and *The Master of Petersburg*. This paper also delves into questions of the self-consciousness of animals, and Coetzee’s widely-cited argument comparing animal slaughter to the genocide of the Holocaust. It concludes that the immersion and emergence from embodiment is a cycle that demonstrates that both fiction and life are simultaneously real and imagined.

My paper’s presentation of critical and creative writing alongside one another speaks to a number of broad concerns of contemporary consciousness studies, including the relationship between ideas and emotions, the necessary shift between embodiment and exclusion (the impression of a “unified” or “split” self), and the writer’s distinct willingness to accept, even establish, anxiety and contradictions as part of their work.

This paper is a reworked extract from my 2013 book *Reading Coetzee* (Rodopi). It includes both analysis and third-person autobiography.

### **“The Quest for ‘Other Modes of Being’: J.M. Coetzee’s Ontological Inquiries”**

*Asoc. Prof. Yoshiki TAJIRI, University of Tokyo, Japan*

J.M. Coetzee’s work is characterised by profound meditations on the question of being, though this aspect tends to be obscured by his postcolonialism and postmodernism. The characters of his novels are often faced with the fundamental question of why we (have to) exist in the way we do. Typically, Elizabeth Costello wonders, “Are there other modes of being besides what we call the human into which we can enter; and if there are not, what does that say about us and our limitations?” This sense of the contingency of being human — the feeling that one could have been nonhuman — evidently underlies Elizabeth Costello’s (and Coetzee’s) deep concern with the lives of animals.

# ABSTRACTS

This paper aims to illuminate such an ontological strand in Coetzee's work from its early manifestation in Magda's fantasy in *In the Heart of the Country* to the more recent exploration of it in *Elizabeth Costello*, the 2006 lecture "Eight Ways of Looking at Samuel Beckett" and *The Childhood of Jesus*. In all these works, the human mode of being is questioned in relation to animals and relativised as something accidental. I will try to shed a new light on Coetzee's commitment to animals by presenting him as a philosophical author concerned with the questions of being, contingency and even absurdity. Such an attempt will also involve resituating his work in the broader context of philosophy and its treatment of animals in twentieth-century Europe.

## 2:00PM SESSION 2

### Group 1 – Autobiography

#### **"Traversing Autobiographical Time in Coetzee and Nabokov"**

*Dr. James GOURLEY, University of Western Sydney*

J.M. Coetzee has repeatedly aired his suspicion about Vladimir Nabokov's writing. From disinterest ("[Nabokov] balked at facing the nature of his loss in its historical fullness") to disdain ("*Pale Fire* is after all only another version of the same Romantic myth") and to disavowal ("If I had to be brief, I would say I have no relation with Nabokov left") Coetzee has chosen to distance himself and his work from another writer with whom, at least to this reader, he shares real similarities.

In this paper I consider Coetzee's three-part fictionalised autobiography or "autobiography" in relation to Nabokov's *Invitation of a Beheading*, *Invitation of a Beheading*. Both authors' works under consideration here have a number of common features: manipulation of the autobiographical form, ambiguous narrators and points of view, along with a construction of the past which involves the conflation of time and space and an emphasis of the spatiality of memory. I trace in *Boyhood* and *Youth* a submerged sympathy with Nabokov's autobiography which is rescinded by the time *Summertime* is published in 2009.

My main aim in this paper is to illustrate the temporal complexities Coetzee and Nabokov both pursue in their "autobiographical" works. Although neither writers' strategies are exactly the same, they retain sufficient elements of similarity to benefit from being considered in conversation.

#### **"Autofictional and Autotextual Strategies in J.M. Coetzee's writing"**

*Dr. Karen FERREIRA-MEYERS, University of Swaziland*

In this paper, the author seeks to analyse the interplay between Coetzee's fiction and his critical writing based on, among others, Clarkson's research entitled *J.M. Coetzee: Countervoices* (2009, paperback version 2013). In particular her views will be compared and contrasted to theoretical and practical research on the contemporary literary genre of autofiction in a bid to reveal overlaps between Coetzee's approach to writing and autofictional authorship. Recently, many researchers have approached Coetzee from an autofictional angle (e.g. David Attwell, "Coetzee as Author and Other in his Autofiction" and "Self as Other: *Autrebiographie* into Autobiographical Fiction in J.M. Coetzee"; Hicham Adioui, "*L'autofiction* chez J.M. Coetzee"; Robert Kusek, "Writing Oneself, Writing the Other: J.M. Coetzee's Fictional Autobiography in *Boyhood*, *Youth* and *Summertime*", Ayala Amir who interrogates the interaction between photography and text in "What Used to Lie outside the Frame': Boundaries of Photography, Subjectivity and Fiction in Three Novels by J.M. Coetzee", Jan Tlustý, "On Unreliability of Memories: J.M. Coetzee's Autofictional Trilogy" etc.) but none seem to have focused on the importance of autotextuality in autofictional writing.

In order to analyse Coetzee's approach to writing, critical works from Doubrovsky, Genette, Lejeune and others regarding autofiction will form the theoretical basis for the comparison. The concepts of intertextuality and autotextuality will be also used in my analysis.

### Group 2 – Identity and Form

#### **"Coetzee and Counter-Fiction: Subjectivity after Life Writing"**

*Dr. Paul SHEEHAN, Macquarie University*

J.M. Coetzee has always had an uneasy relationship with the demands of history. His fictional reworkings of the lives of Defoe, Dostoevsky and Beckett are not bound to historical verity — yet neither do these works "betray" it, exactly. At the same time, Coetzee's accounts of his own history, in the *Scenes from Provincial Life*, take great liberties with the biographical record. Both sets of writings might thus be termed *counter-fictions*. Like the historiographical device of the counter-factual, Coetzee's counter-fictions seek to inject scepticism and contingency into brute factuality; to open, in essence, a window onto doubt and uncertainty. In this paper, I follow the trail of orthonymic aliases that leads from *Dusklands* to *Summertime* — "Coetzee", "John", "JC", "John Coetzee" — in order to examine just what, exactly, is being done to and with

# ABSTRACTS

biographical subjectivity. I suggest that these bio-fictive forays create spaces for Coetzee (the author) to investigate literary form and genre, and to question the proprieties of novelistic coherence and narration. More than this, Coetzee turns life-writing away from questions concerning memory and authenticity, and how to translate experience into linguistic construal, in order to confront the political nature of textual self-(re)presentation. I argue that Coetzee gives rise to a new literary genre, one that defies, with equal determination, the formal pressures and protocols exerted by history, biography, memoir and the novel as a narrative medium.

## **"The Lives of Coetzee"**

*Prof. Elleke BOEHMER, University of Oxford*

The paper will consider J.M. Coetzee's self-reflexive, and yet deeply felt, memoir work through the framework of his own trilogy *Scenes from Provincial Life* (2011), and the biographical work that has since been published, most notably by John Kannemeyer. Coetzee has remarked that all autobiography is story-telling and also that all writing is a kind of autobiography. Exploring this link between (auto)biography, and fiction as 'writing', the paper will explore in particular certain parallel instances from the life of 'John', hero of the trilogy, and from John Kannemeyer's *J.M. Coetzee, A Life in Writing*.

## **Group 3 – Style and Form**

### **"Coetzee as Post-Fictional Essayist"**

*Mr. Jason CHILDS, University of Technology, Sydney*

While numerous writers have sought to show that, in a variety of ways, Coetzee's books demonstrate an awareness of philosophical discourses, fewer have tried to explain why his engagement with the issues such discourses raise is a literary one. Even where critical accounts do take notice of the literary form in which Coetzee presents his philosophical concerns, they seldom pay sufficient attention to the idea of the literary as a specific mode of thought, or to the question of why, in our own epistemic moment, this mode might be more appropriate to the pursuit of philosophical aims than a more traditional logico-discursive one. In addressing these themes, this paper will argue, drawing on the work of reader response theorist Wolfgang Iser and his precursor Roman Ingarden, that the kind of fictionalising acts we perform when reading literature should be considered central to, even constitutive of, our ability to think—rather than, as the classical view has it, opposed to or parasitical upon it. Utilising the concept of a "post-fictional" space, and borrowing elements from Mark M. Freed's explication of Robert Musil's concept of "Essayismus" my talk will then attempt to discuss the philosophical experiments undertaken in some of Coetzee's most recent work.

### **"The Text, the Body and the *Life and Times of Michael K*"**

*Dr. Muzna RAHMAN, University of Lincoln*

This paper focuses on J.M. Coetzee's novel *Life and Times of Michael K*, and explores the relationship between material and representational categories as they are articulated through the novel's plot and the protagonist's relationship with food and hunger. Drawing on my research on hunger strikes, the paper examines Michael K's dual rejection of food and words. Michael K's "hunger strike" is an attempt to remove him from the material landscape of the plot and also from the narrative process itself. In this paper, I illustrate how the constitutive tensions that determine both material and narrative presence prove this an ultimately futile protest.

I demonstrate how the novel produces a commentary on the nature and depiction of material realities despite its removal from any particular, real-life historical context. This paper is concerned not only with the themes and images of food and hunger within the novel's plot, but also examines how these instances comment upon the extra-textual process of reading the novel itself and how they can be utilized to comment on the act of writing and narrativization as they relate to material reality.

## **3:30PM PLENARY PANEL DISCUSSION - CHILDHOOD OF JESUS**

### **"*Childhood of Jesus*: Revelation as Linguistic Transgression"**

**(The Monolingualism of the Other vs. Bilingual Divided Subjects)**

*Dr. Jean-Michel RABATÉ, University of Pennsylvania*

I will take my point of departure from a baffling passage in *Childhood of Jesus*. The plot is deceptively simple: Simon, a middle-aged man accompanied by a young child, David, has arrived to a new country where only Spanish is spoken. They look like refugees in quest of a better life, after some catastrophe that has taken place elsewhere and a shipwreck. Arriving in a pseudo-paradise, Simon looks for a suitable mother for David, and soon finds one. At some point, David wants to prove that he can sing; he intones a song that he says is in English:

# ABSTRACTS

*Wer reitet so spat durch Dampf und Wind?  
Er ist der Vater mit seinem Kind;  
Er halt den Knaben in dem Arm,  
Er füttert ihn Zucker, er küsst ihm warm.<sup>1</sup>*

Readers who know German will have recognized the most famous poem in the language, Goethe's "Erlkönig." Yet the text is not accurate. The text goes like this:

Wer reitet so spät durch Nacht und Wind?	Who rides so late through the night and wind?
Es ist der Vater mit seinem Kind;	It's the father with his child;
Er hat den Knaben wohl in dem Arm,	He has the boy safe in his arm,
Er faßt ihn sicher, er hält ihn warm.	He holds him secure, he holds him warm.

Here, "Dampf" (mist) has replaced "night," the third line is grammatically incorrect ("halt" should have an Umlaut) and the third line is a grotesque distortion, meaning "He feeds him sugar, he kisses him warm." Why is this called an English poem? Obviously, since Simon does not know "English," he cannot distinguish between German and English either. But what language did they speak before they learned Spanish? How can Simon be that ignorant, or else is he indulging David and knows better? These basic epistemic questions would be irrelevant to any other novel, but here, since we keep wondering whether David is a bright child perhaps endowed with prophetic powers, or a difficult, opinionated, if not quasi-psychotic child, who is indulged too much by his adoptive parents, it is important. The title gives away that David might be a new Christ in a world where apparently that kind of Christian legend based on the gospels has been deliberately repressed or simply forgotten. In fact, the gospels implied here look more like the gospels of pseudo-Thomas or pseudo-Matthew, in which we discover a terrifying Jesus who can kill with one glance at the most minor provocation. At the end of the superb novel, we recognize the old paradigm of the older father, the Virgin mother and the preternaturally gifted child leaving the colony to start "a new life." It is the same, but totally different. The old paradigm is still there, but completely transformed by the Uncanny. I would like to link this with Coetzee's remarks on Jacques Derrida's *Monolingualism of the Other* in the May 11, 2009 letter to Paul Auster (*Here and Now*, p. 65), to argue that language is always an Other's language in Coetzee's work. I will focus specifically on *Childhood of Jesus*<sup>1</sup> as a compendium of Coetzee's work to problematize the issue of revelation facing linguistic de-doubling.

<sup>1</sup> J.M. Coetzee, *The Childhood of Jesus*, London, Harvill Secker, 2013, p. 67.

## **"Traversing Poo in *The Childhood of Jesus* and other works"**

**Asoc. Prof. Jennifer RUTHERFORD, University of South Australia**

The day after I finish working in the J.M. Coetzee archive I go to 6th Street to see the weirdness of Austin. Austin is weird. Through doorways, I see cavernous bars dimmed to a Vermeer shadow, pick out details of tats snaking around eyes, blue studded fingers clutching beer glasses, sunny-cowgirls hooting on the bar. The rollicking lurch of a cowhide makes a dirty fist as I walk on by. I end up at the Driskill, a famous old hotel of ice-cream splendour where, after a meal of "hippy-hollow eggs," jet lag finally catches up with me and I make a mess in the toilet.

Staring in dismay at the matter in the toilet bowl, I think of Simon with Inés' shit all over his hands. "Toilets are not receptive to ideas" he tells David, who wants a hand in cleaning up the shit. "Toilets are not part of the realm of ideas, they are just brute things, and working with them is nothing but brute work" (2013:155). The opposition between brute work and the realm of ideas is never far from J.M. Coetzee's thinking so I suspect Simon's philosophizing on the toilet is a false opposition and that my role as reader is, in part, to understand the relationship between poo and the toilet. Thinking about this offers some respite and my mind quickly drifts to the raw and the cooked, the 'I' and the abject... but there is nothing academic about the matter at hand. Poo! I flush the toilet but instead of it disappearing with a clean whoosh the toilet flushes backwards and water comes rushing forth disgorging all the sodden paper and poo-water of Austin Texas's evidently faulty bowels. It's not an academic moment. Indeed it's not a moment to ponder, let alone pontificate about. I want to slink out of the toilet, out of the Driskill, and out of Austin Texas but there are ethical implications. I did it but am I responsible for it now that it's merged with the poo of Austin?

"There are certain things that are not just themselves, not all the time. Poo is one of them."...

"It's my poo," he says. "I want to stay!"

"It was your poo. But you evacuated it. You got rid of it. It's not yours any more. You no longer have a right to it... Once it gets into the sewer pipes it is no one's poo," he goes on.

# ABSTRACTS

In *The Childhood of Jesus* this opposition between poo and the toilet, brute work and the realm of ideas traverses the matter of being human. In this paper I ponder the pooness of poo, following the trail of poo from a duck that quacks and shits, to a sausage made of poo-meat, and beyond the text to a poo machine that makes an elaborate joke on the modern quest to make humans but ends in making shit.

## **“J.M. Coetzee and the Parental Punctum”**

*Prof. Sue KOSSEW, Monash University*

The issue of parents and children and tropes of maternity and paternity haunt Coetzee’s literary texts. This aspect of his work has most often been addressed through Coetzee’s own literary paternity, that is, the intertextual influences on his writing. Miguel de Cervantes’ *Don Quixote* is, of course, an important intertext for *The Childhood of Jesus* and, as Maria J. López has recently pointed out (López 2013), the concerns of that text, particularly its examination of the conflict between imagination and the real, are threaded throughout Coetzee’s literary oeuvre. There are also, of course, elements of Coetzee’s texts that relate to their own ‘begetting,’ most obviously in *Foe*, but almost always in the laying-bare of the processes of their own writerly conditions, their own authorship.

Yet *The Childhood of Jesus* makes more apparent a theme that underlies a number of other texts — that is, parent/child relations. It is this theme and its textualization that I wish to explore in this paper, tracing some of its trajectories through earlier texts and focusing more specifically on the quest for the mother, and perhaps for the father, in *The Childhood of Jesus*.

It is no coincidence that *The Childhood of Jesus* encompasses not just the quest for the mother but also for a motherland and a mother tongue. This paper will address these triangulated quests as both thematic and textual.

## OFFICIAL OPENING EVENT - PUBLIC LECTURE

### **“Waiting for the Barbarians”**

*Prof. Jonathan LEAR, University of Chicago*

In conditions of injustice, to what extent is thought itself crippled? The issue is not merely psychological damage to individuals but damage to the possibilities for thought and imagination. To what extent is literature the medium in which this problem needs to be investigated? And to what extent can a novel make an ethical difference? This paper will look carefully at John Coetzee’s *Waiting for the Barbarians*, and investigate the kind of efficacy such a work literature can have.

## Day 2 – Wednesday 12 November 2014

### KEYNOTE ADDRESS

#### **“What Does J.M. Coetzee’s Novel, *The Childhood of Jesus* Have To Do with the Childhood of Jesus?”**

*Prof. Robert PIPPIN, University of Chicago*

The events depicted in J.M. Coetzee’s latest novel do not appear to have anything to do with the issue announced in its title. There are no depictions of the biblical Jesus and no similarities with the canonical Gospels are evident. Despite this, I argue in this paper, there is a point in giving this narrative about an unfamiliar, perhaps post-apocalyptic world that particular title. This point is also relevant to the numerous literary and philosophical references made in the novel.

### 11:00AM SESSION 1

#### Group 1 – Language and Translation

##### **“‘Hades this place, and I a fugitive shade’: Classical cultures and languages in J.M. Coetzee’s *Age of Iron*”**

*Dr. Gillian DOOLEY, Flinders University*

Elizabeth Curren, in Coetzee’s *Age of Iron*, is a retired Classics lecturer. Greek and Roman mythology, and Latin and Ancient Greek, are part of her consciousness. Several critics have discussed Mrs Curren’s humanistic, enlightenment sensibility, shaped by a liberal education which has come to be seen by many as irrelevant in the South Africa of the novel, and which therefore functions as a symbol of the marginalisation of Western liberal culture in Africa. Other critics have pointed out the importance of Christian and biblical discourse in the novel. Latin, in the form of phrases taken from the Vulgate and the Catholic liturgy as well as from classical texts, is woven through the texture of Mrs Curren’s consciousness: her mode of thought and expression tends to the etymological and the allusive. In this presentation I will consider the part these two discourses, classical and biblical, seemingly incompatible in some ways and overlapping in others, play in shaping the character of Mrs Curren. I will consider how the Latin language in her internal monologue and speech mediates her interactions with other characters and her reactions to particular events in the novel.

# ABSTRACTS

## **“Disgrace and the Ethics of Provisionality”**

*Ms. Kezia WHITING, University of Queensland, University of Buffalo*

This paper explores the way the provisionality of the language in *Disgrace* produces some of the novel's most important political and ethical effects. The idea that language should question its premises, that it should be able to change or to express uncertainty, is most prominent in the repetitions, reworkings, and stutterings that punctuate both the narration of *Disgrace* and the speech of its protagonist. The novel's narrative style in fact extends and elaborates the more prominent ethical issues the novel covers, such as race, sexuality, rape, the treatment of animals, and death. This provisionality disassembles characters and narrators, extending these humanistic concepts so that they begin to incorporate their outsides. If a text situates the human as something other than an autonomous or privileged subject, then it generates the problem of how to read without relying on practices founded on that autonomy or privilege.

## **“‘Smashed / Itself to Pieces on the Ground’: Reading Hans Faverey in Order to Read J.M. Coetzee”**

*Asoc. Prof. Heidi THOMSON, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand*

In *Landscape with Rowers: Poetry from the Netherlands* (Princeton UP, 2003) Coetzee selected and translated a small collection of poetry by six Dutch and Belgian poets. The title of the collection was taken from the poetry of Hans Faverey (1933-1990) with whose work Coetzee's translation displays a particular affinity. This paper elaborates on the idea of sparagmos in Faverey's poetry, a harnessed notion of violent dispersal which one may also detect in Coetzee's artistic vision, as testified by his recent collaboration with Berlinde de Bruyckere for the 2013 Venice Art Biennale. In both Faverey and de Bruyckere contortion and vulnerability are harnessed in the beauty of art. My purpose is to shed some light on Coetzee's affinity with these artists from the Low Countries through a reading of Hans Faverey's death-related poetry. This paper is based on an essay which I originally wrote (in Dutch) for a special issue of the *Belgian arts and literature journal DWB* in 2012 ([www.dwb.be](http://www.dwb.be)).

## **Group 2 – Ethics and Post-Humanism**

### **“J.M. Coetzee and the Moral Image of the World”**

*Prof. Tim MEHIGAN, University of Queensland*

The question of belief in another life — a context of ethical coherence in light of which the present might be rendered meaningful — is prominent in Coetzee's fiction. Yet locating the source of this other life in Coetzee's works is far from easy. The questing behavior that Coetzee's most engaging protagonists exhibit is not underwritten by any obvious supernaturalism or any straightforward morality. And yet the quests of these characters would be nonsensical if this other life could not somehow be located or rendered apparent. Since Coetzee's fictions are shot through with suffering and a sense of valuelessness, it might even be said that the moral dimension in Coetzee's works consists precisely in the question of whether ethical belief as such can be sustained in the world.

In approaching this question I investigate what ethical belief, on some authoritative accounts, would appear to presuppose: a moral image of the world. Coetzee's narratives, I contend, seek to bring alive such a moral image, even as they describe the conditions that would otherwise appear unfavourable to it. My paper, which takes several of Coetzee's narratives (*Life & Times of Michael K*, *Disgrace*, *The Childhood of Jesus*) as points of departure, investigates how the problem of the moral image of the world arises philosophically and, on the basis of philosophical assumptions reaching back to Kant, sets out an intellectual context in which Coetzee can be seen to offer responses to this problem.

### **“J.M. Coetzee and the classroom without Condition”**

*Ms. Janhavi MITTAL, King's College London*

In his foreword to John Higgins's book *Academic Freedom in a Democratic South Africa*, J.M. Coetzee laments the demise of the institutional possibility of a good humanities education under the global assault of neoliberalism. However, for Coetzee this doesn't necessitate a sacrifice of the fundamental idea of a humanist education, premised on the principles of free thought. In this paper, I will use three of Coetzee's novels — *Disgrace*, *Lives of Animals* and *The Childhood of Jesus* as discursive sites for examining this tension between the university as an idea, a faculty of the mind in the German Romantic philosophical tradition, and the university as fact, an institution and possibly a disciplinary site for the production of knowledge.

Despite this perceived failure of an institutionalised humanities education repeatedly fictionalised in these three texts, this paper will examine how Coetzee's fiction invites critical thinking in readers across disciplines, by deliberately lending itself to an ethos of reading intrinsic to a global post-human turn in thought. Here, I will draw on the concept of post-humanism predominant in the oeuvre of Cary Wolfe and Donna Haraway, that insists on interrogating humanism's anthropological universals, being post — to the extent of realising what Haraway calls “patterns of relationality” that have no space within

# ABSTRACTS

a humanist discourse. Thus, a significant part of my paper will focus on the aesthetic strategies Coetzee uses to allow for interdisciplinary readings of his work that repeatedly contribute to the challenging of an ontologically privileged normative subjectivity.

The paper will also adapt Wolfe's second aspect of the post-human project that examines how thinking confronts the decentering of the category of the human in relation to its bio-political co-ordinates, and what thought becomes in the face of these challenges, to the epistemological concerns of Coetzee's work. Through a tripartite approach of comparing and contrasting Coetzee's own strategies of reading documented in his fictional and non-fictional response to literature particularly in these three texts, the fictionalised academics and academic spaces within which reading unfolds, and the multidisciplinary readings of Coetzee's work, I will underscore how this preoccupation with ethical reading practices facilitates what Wolfe calls "viral thinking" the cornerstone of post-humanist thought.

Even as Coetzee self-deprecatingly underplays his own approach as "quixotic" this paper argues that Coetzee's fiction although varying from Higgin's "strategic defense of the humanities", presents an equally engaged defense of the ethical potential and burgeoning necessity of an aesthetic education in a globalised world.

## **"Idiocy, Heroism, and the Work of Culture"**

*Dr. John BOLIN, University of Exeter*

More than any other of Coetzee's fictions, *Life & Times of Michael K* (1983) revealed stark divisions in his readership at the time of its publication, divisions that bespoke the rift, now largely a thing of the past, between Coetzee's prosecutors and defenders in a debate about responsibility. But if this struggle has effectively been won by Coetzee's champions — if, as the great majority of Coetzee's readers agree, he is now figure of significant "ethical rigour" — this (at least partial) consensus has nevertheless been preserved at a cost: that of at times domesticating Coetzee's more complex and unsettling fictions. Not least among these are *LTMK* and the figure at its centre, a "hero" with whom even Coetzee's defenders have confessed their unease. This paper argues that, despite the common assumptions shared by many of Coetzee's defenders and critics, K is not in fact any type of hero, but an attempt to work through the question of "idiocy" as a generic, philosophical, and ethical issue. Relating *LTMK* to the South African *plaasroman* (specifically the novels of C.M. van den Heever), Dostoevsky's *The Idiot*, and Kafka's *The Man Who Disappeared*, this paper suggests that idiocy is a challenge to the notion of usefulness that governs most contemporary cultural discussion — and a challenge to the discourse of literary criticism itself.

## **Group 3 – Music, Maths, and Form**

### **"Giving Voice to *Waiting for the Barbarians*: Adapting J.M. Coetzee into Opera"**

*Dr. Michael HALLIWELL, University of Sydney Conservatorium of Music*

It is surprising that there have been so few adaptations into other media of the fiction of J M Coetzee: the only major adaptation of his work into film is of *Disgrace*. When adapting fiction into opera, the musical web in which the operatic characters exist suggests an analogue of the interiority that characterizes most fiction. This is achieved in opera through analyzable complex harmonic, melodic and rhythmic structures in combination with the words characters sing as well as through the staging and *mise-en-scène*. The operas of Philip Glass offer a challenge to this perception both in terms of dramaturgy as well as musical idiom. This paper explores Glass' recent (2005) adaptation of J M Coetzee's 1980 novel, *Waiting for the Barbarians*. The novel is told from the first-person perspective of the central character of the magistrate and has at its thematic core issues of alterity, physical violence and moral accountability where the body itself literally becomes a site of exploration of the darker recesses of the human soul. A pervasive duality present in much of Glass' music gives a sense of abstraction to what is occurring on stage; while at the same time suggesting empathy for the characters, there is often a tension between voice as both linguistic signifier as well as material presence. His work often combines a distancing, quasi-allegorical element seemingly in conflict with the immediacy of vocal dramatic representation. The possibility of linguistic signification as well as its 'silencing' is central to both novel and its operatic embodiment.

### **"The Essence of Continuity": J.M. Coetzee and the Name of the Number"**

*Ms. Baylee BRITS, University of New South Wales*

In his review of the volume *Strange Attractors: Poems of Love and Mathematics* (edited by Sarah Glaz and JoAnne Growney) J.M. Coetzee claims that, like the poetic process of association in symbolism or tropology, "[s]cientific discoveries often start with a hunch that there is some connection between apparently unrelated phenomena. So there are a priori grounds for thinking of poetry and mathematics together, as two rarefied forms of symbolic activity based on the power of the human mind to detect hidden analogies" ("*Strange Attractors*" n.pag). Coetzee's point here indicates that these "hidden analogies" between literature and mathematics are formal, occurring at a point in which aesthetics meets epistemology. In this paper I will look at the formal intersection between the literary symbol and number in Coetzee's own fiction, considering this firstly



# ABSTRACTS

in terms of Coetzee's preoccupation with the quantification of "style", pursued analytically in his doctoral work and later realized aesthetically in *In the Heart of the Country* and *Waiting for the Barbarians*, and secondly in terms of the appearance of novelty that preoccupies his later texts, most importantly in *The Childhood of Jesus*.

## **"Colonel Joll's Sunglasses: Cosmopolitanism, Consumerism and the Grounding of Political Allegory in *Waiting for the Barbarians*"**

**Prof. Neville HOAD, The University of Texas at Austin**

While J.M. Coetzee's 1980 novel, *Waiting for the Barbarians*, is sometimes read as a novel about apartheid-era South Africa in the aftermath of the Soweto riots of 1976, and the murder of Black Consciousness Movement leader, Steve Biko, in 1977, anticipating the states of emergency of the mid 1980s, it is as often read as a novel more generally concerned with the moral problems of torture and illegitimate political sovereignty. While the early drafts of the novel are set in a recognizable Cape Town, with the subsequent careful vagueness of the designations — the magistrate, the Empire, the girl, the barbarians — a grounded historical specificity is evaded. The novel plays with the already multiply displaced, palimpsestic space-time of the Alexandria of Cavafy's poem, from which it takes its title. In this imagined nowhere, anywhere of the novel's outpost location, and the now, never, always time of its action, the name of Colonel Joll jolts in its South African specificity with the force of a joke. "Joll" or in its more common spelling "jorl" or "jawl" was/is a very difficult slang term to parse or translate for a youthful good time usually involving drinking, music, carousing and used interchangeably as a verb and a noun with both disparaging and celebratory connotations. This paper will explore the stakes and consequences of the attachment of this slang term to the character in the novel who most strenuously embodies the casual but structural sadism of the Empire: what this sly invocation of the vernacular may do to readings of the novel as political allegory, and the novel's movement into and out of South Africa.

## **1:30PM SESSION 2**

### **Group 1 – Socio-Political Theory**

#### **"Essaying against Empire: J.M. Coetzee's *Diary of a Bad Year*"**

**Adj. Prof. Deepa JANI, University of Pittsburgh**

Since the tragic events of 11 September 2001 the specter of torturing democracy haunts the globe. J.M. Coetzee's character-author J. C. confronts this specter in the pages of his latest postmodern novel *Diary of a Bad Year*, which constitutes fifty-five essays on politics, terrorism, mathematics, literature, arts, and writing. With the onset of the so-called "war on terror," the globe has witnessed the anomie of torture that has undermined the constituent and constituted power of a democracy. Through the character J. C.'s essays, Coetzee's novel *Diary* meditates on the supra-political Machiavellian "law of necessity" of self-preservation that justifies the practice of torture within a democracy today. This paper contends that Coetzee employs the ironic, ambulatory, and the marginal form of the essay, which has traditionally been considered *parergon* to the arts, to interrupt the Machiavellian "law of necessity." His novel grants prominent place to the essay form and its primary function of criticism. *Diary* recuperates the essayistic spirit to disrupt the emerging *doxa* that has normalized torture, as evidenced in the widespread public support of this practice in several liberal democracies. In doing so, the paper concludes that Coetzee shows us what the ethical function of criticism is in our times: the form of the essay holds *in potentia* the power to democratize democracy itself.

#### **"J.M. Coetzee, the Modern Prince"**

**Asoc. Prof. Timothy JOHNS, Murray State University, Kentucky**

This paper examines J.M. Coetzee's *Diary of a Bad Year* and *Life & Times of Michael K* in relation to Niccolò Machiavelli's "The Prince." It argues that these novels rewrite elements of the "The Prince," yet through a parodic, polyphonic lens — a focus made possible by the capacious designs of the modern novel. This rewriting of Machiavelli, I suggest, involves a rethinking of audience. While Machiavelli's intended audience is a prince or sovereign of the state, Coetzee orients his political imperatives towards the state's reluctant subjects. Such subjects, portrayed as self-contained loners, recoil from mere inclusion in the state and the social contract. While Michael K, according to one observer, aims to live "beyond the reach of calendar and clock in a blessedly neglected corner," Senor C, in *Diary of a Bad Year*, bemoans: "We are born subject." According to "Strong Opinions," Senor C's polemic, even "democracy is totalitarian." Thus this inversion of intended audience, along with this newfound aversion to the state's totality in the horizon of everyday life, reshapes and repackages something of the Machiavellian project for the modern age. Drawing on political theory and theories of the novel, the paper seeks to account for models of individual liberation offered in these two important works from Coetzee's oeuvre, while also exploring the anti-communitarian limitations of their outlook.

# ABSTRACTS

## **"I am not Me, the Horse is not Mine: William Kentridge and J.M. Coetzee; or: Machines, Death, and Creative Performance as Prelude to a reading of *Slow Man*"**

*Asoc. Prof. Brian MACASKILL, John Carroll University, Cleveland*

*The author has requested the abstract be set out in the following manner.*

I am not Me, the Horse is not Mine: William Kentridge and J.M. Coetzee; or:  
Machines, Death, and Creative Performance as Prelude to a Reading of *Slow Man*

Abstract:

The twentieth century, writes Alain Badiou in an attempt to come to some sort of terms with it and to find some sort of terms for it, can be thought of as "the site of apocalyptic events — events so ghastly the only category capable of reckoning with the century's unity is that of the crime: the crimes of Stalinist communism and the crimes of Nazism." J.M. Coetzee in various contexts keeps pointing to these and to other terrifyingly related crimes: the Shoah, of course, but also genocide against the Herero and Nama of German Southwest Africa, the Chicago Stockyards, apartheid, Guantanamo Bay, factory farming, the extinction and threatened extinction of so many beings, and so on. I list these in no sort of special order, though Badiou identifies with a capital "C" the "Crime which provides the paragon for all the others" as: "the destruction of the European Jews."

\*\*\*

Crimes like this and these haunt J.M. Coetzee's Elizabeth Costello from *Lives of Animals* and *Elizabeth Costello*, haunt JC from *Diary of a Bad Year*, and haunt the John Coetzee of *Summertime*;  
Crimes like these, crimes against humanimality, haunt J.M. Coetzee himself,  
though of course not in quite the same way.

\*\*\*

In some recent and imbricated essays on Coetzee and music, I have struggled to follow, among other threads and as fugally as possible, Elizabeth Costello struggling with the central Crime, which she provocatively links to the treatment of animals unjustly bred for death. These struggles, Costello's and my own, have produced neither solutions nor conclusions in the awkward name of "animal rights" or in any other less reductive name (justice, for example), inconclusively dissolving instead into the aging murmur of some kind of musico-mathematical thought, mouldering into musings that perhaps confirm Coetzee as an artist practicing a political art that is not political; de- and re-composing murmurings that might affirm Coetzee as an artist practicing the kind of art in which William Kentridge self-expresses and accomplishes an interest. Kentridge calls such art political art, "that is to say an art of ambiguity, contradiction, uncompleted gestures and uncertain endings." On this note, Kentridge also admits to "understanding contradiction as central to life and art rather than as an anomaly."

Thinking of animals (often horses this time) and of endangered animals (rhinoceri most crucially) and of variously old, obsolete, or obsolescent machines (bicycle, mirror, typewriter) — animals and technologies that at some point all attract the attention of both Kentridge and Coetzee — and winding, sometimes graphically, around a yet to be constituted and so still only-just-verbal memorial to one of the crimes — genocide against the Herero and Nama in Southwest Africa at the turn of the century, a crime about which Coetzee has had less to say (in person, in fiction) than about some of the others — my contribution slowly follows a lapidary snail-trace engraving that seeks creatively to link Kentridge ideagraphics to Coetzee-textualities under the inevitable and irrevocable complicity between death and creation, creation and death.

One of the destinations of such murmuring, destination about which the presentation will have little to say (though it might in its slowness have some-things to suggest), is Coetzee's *Slow Man*.

My remarks will graphically be accompanied by projected images.

# ABSTRACTS

## Group 2 – Forgiveness and Reconciliation

### **“Keeping Secrets”**

*Prof. Daniel CONWAY, Texas A&M University*

This paper explores the major points of convergence and divergence in the treatments of reconciliation offered, respectively, by the late Jacques Derrida and the Nobel Laureate J.M. Coetzee. In particular, I make use of Derrida’s influential essay on “Forgiveness” to illuminate related themes in Coetzee’s 1999 novel *Disgrace*.

In his essay, Derrida famously pursues, and subsequently recommends, a distinction between *forgiveness* and *reconciliation*. Commenting expressly on the situation of the “new” South Africa and its signature institution, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Derrida observes that the political project of reconciliation is burdened by the moral language of forgiveness. Derrida focuses his hopes for the future on the possibility of a polity in which forgiveness is considered *impossible*, in which an individual’s reluctance or refusal to forgive might be honored, rather than derided, as a *secret*. It is the keeping of such secrets, including those secrets that remain unknown to their keepers, that best exemplifies for him the sphere of freedom that the envisioned polity of the future will regard as inviolate.

Derrida’s analysis of forgiveness and reconciliation helps us to appreciate the extent to which the secrets kept by Coetzee’s protagonists *also* keep them. This is especially true in the case of Lucy, who is not only the victim of a violent, brutal rape, but also the focus of her father’s displaced anger and guilt. Unwilling to confront the “disgrace” that recently has come to define him, David Lurie focuses instead on her “disgrace,” which compels him, or so he wishes to believe, to protect and avenge her. As strenuously as her father implores her to divulge her secret — without, of course, volunteering to reciprocate in kind — Lucy just as steadfastly refuses to do so. Instead, she prepares herself for a future that is predicated on the permanence of this secret, a future in which she has only her secret to keep her. She receives her father’s moral outrage on her behalf as irrelevant to the stark reality of her situation. She simply cannot afford the luxury of protracted moral outrage, even though, as she allows, it is fully warranted by the terms of her victimization. Though for very different reasons, she too refuses to challenge the “disgrace” that now defines her.

As in Derrida’s essay, Coetzee envisions the project of political reconciliation as predicated on the impossibility of forgiveness. Lucy does not forgive her attackers, but not because her desire for justice and/or vengeance remains unsatisfied. She realizes, as her father does not, that her need for reconciliation with her attackers has transported her well beyond the sphere of conventional morality. In the context of her new relationship to her attackers, the traditional practice of forgiveness holds no meaning, no promise, whatsoever. If the practice of forgiveness is to gain new meaning for her, moreover, it will do so only as an outgrowth of the reconciliation that she yet hopes to broker. In closing, I wish to suggest that Lucy in fact may embody what Derrida has in mind by his evocation of “a forgiveness without power: *unconditional but without sovereignty*.”

### **“Confession and Parrhesia: Two Modes of Truth-Telling in J.M. Coetzee’s *Scenes from Provincial Life*”**

*Mr. Benjamin KUNKLER, University of Melbourne*

J M Coetzee’s *Scenes from Provincial Life* puts to test the *truth* in the writing of the self. This test Coetzee himself has named “The fiction of the truth”. Coetzee’s take on writing the self has generated much critical interest, not the least because of the questions it elicits of the life writing genres’ fundamental presuppositions.

This paper will examine the truth of Coetzee’s writing, though decidedly not from a “fact or fiction” perspective. It will do so by reading Coetzee’s *Scenes* by way of the late-career research of Michel Foucault (recently published in English) — research into an antiquated Greco-Roman mode of truth telling known as *parrhesia*. Briefly, *parrhesia* is a modality of truth-telling in which: 1. one frankly and plainly tells the truth of someone (not necessarily of things, of techniques, or of prophecy) and tells it to that someone; 2. one has a bond or relationship with the one to whom one tells the truth; 3. that truth incurs a risk for the one who risks telling it, (which may be anything from the addressee’s being offended or vexed, to a risking of the bond or relation, to the very threat of death), since the truth told is precisely *not* amenable to the one to whom it is told. The ancients contrasted *parrhesia* to flattery. *Parrhesia* requires “courage of the truth” and, to come off, a relational pact: to speak the truth with *parrhesia* requires *megalopsychia* (greatness of soul) and to hear and accept this truth requires *megalopsychia*. The figure of “*parrhesia*” was varied: it could be anyone from a politician to a lover. Indeed, Foucault’s genealogy points to *Parrhesia* as a precursor both of the Christian practice of confession, (as a means of instructing the soul through spiritual guidance), and of modern notions of the democratic right to freedom of speech, (as the freedom of saying truly what one thinks, even despite that truth’s offensive import).

My paper will argue that, if Coetzee puts to test the rigour of narrative truth in *Scenes*, it is by way of a confrontation with the tradition of confessional writing, in which modern modes of (auto-)biography find their antecedent. *Scenes* shows a writer working to wrest from the deeply entrenched tradition of confessional writing the act of writing the self, and attempting to write it anew. This paper argues that Coetzee, by the time of the penning of the final installment in the *Scenes*

# ABSTRACTS

trilogy, *Summertime*, is attempting to narrate the self *without confessing*. It does so by reading into the *Scenes'* narration of self-modes of truth-telling that could properly be called *parrhesiastic*, or be read even as the comic failure of a "small soul", and by contrasting it to confessional modes. In *Summertime*, Coetzee's self-narrating enterprise becomes no longer only an exercise in telling the truthful story about oneself, but a way of relating the self to the self-*anew*, in a relation that Foucault called "care of the self". This paper will argue that Coetzee shifts his self-writing from a confessional truth-mode, in which the writing self takes the written self as a scrutinized object, to a parrhesiastic, in which the written self is *mediated by others* — not subject on object but subject to subject. In doing so, Coetzee releases his self from the cycle of guilt and self-loathing typical of the confessional mode and attempts to build up the *ethos* of the subject.

## **"J.M. Coetzee's Literature of Hospice"**

*Asoc. Prof. Katherine HALLEMEIER, Oklahoma State University*

In an oft-cited quotation, J.M. Coetzee has claimed "I am not a herald of community" (*Doubling the Point*, 1992). Indeed, Coetzee's fictions repeatedly look forward, not to possible new formations of the commons, but to certain death. The inevitability of death, however, does not preclude acts of care: Michael K carries his mother; Bev Shaw soothes the dogs she is about to kill; and Elizabeth Costello poses for Mr. Philips. These moments resonate with Eric Cazdyn and Imre Szeman's claim in *After Globalization* (2011) that "the most radical field within medicine is palliative care, precisely because it has revalued the temporal field" by offering an alternative understanding of "presentness" that does not attempt to defer the future or hope for a different one. This paper considers how Coetzee's texts suggest the urgency of thinking the present according to a palliative model: "what if we understood the planet, the species, and history as needing a different type of care, a different way of relating to the present and to the future that was not shaped by instrumentality or the miraculous? How to care for something, for someone, knowing that it or they will soon end?" (*After*, 2011). The radical promise of a literature of hospice, Coetzee's fiction suggests, perhaps lies in its limited promises.

## **Group 3 – Fiction and the Real**

### **"Literary Relatives or Unknown, Forgotten, Michael K"**

*Prof. Isaías Peña GUTIÉRREZ, Universidad Central, Bogotá, D.C., Colombia*

From J.M. Coetzee to Goncharov, to authors as diverse as Melville, Dickens and Beckett, among others, have emerged literary characters whose main vocation seems to be to oppose the biblical myth of work as punishment and only goal of the human being. With different profiles in their characterizations, they often oppose the output of a redundant answer for capital or schedule a mandatory break arbitrariness that might involve life. That hereditary and almost invisible line, which stems from a historical or a social reality in the minds of the narrators that I discuss in this paper, is provocative and is of much literary and social interest.

### **"Coetzee and the Bibliographical Challenge - Is it Australian Literature?"**

*Ms. Kerry KILNER, AustLit, The University of Queensland*

The call for papers for this conference remarks: "His work has been widely translated, archived and adapted, including for opera and film." As a writer with an exceptionally high international profile J.M. Coetzee's immigration to Australia enriched the country's literary culture. He became Australia's second Nobel Prize for Literature winner following Patrick White. Coetzee's involvement in the cultural life of the nation expands our engagement with global intellectual movements and ideas. As a writer with a long list of novels and other works written in both South Africa and Australia, and in some cases works that are informed by the other country, Coetzee's literary output (bibliographically speaking) can be claimed by two countries.

Enumerating and describing the literary culture of Australia is a task that the AustLit Resource ([www.austlit.edu.au](http://www.austlit.edu.au)) takes responsibility for, creating comprehensive records relating to the lives, careers, and works of all Australian, and Australia-affiliated, writers. The bibliographical record for Coetzee has presented somewhat of a challenge for a resource whose mission is "to be the definitive virtual research environment and information resource for Australian literary, print, and narrative culture." We collect and organise information about the transmission of "Australian" literary texts across the world. It is not often that a writer of such standing and with such a prolific output becomes an Australian citizen. Placed in the context of what the AustLit database shows us about the global movement of Australian writers and their works, this paper will explore the bibliographical history of Coetzee's world of literature, revealing the many trajectories of his numerous novels, from initial publication through translation, adaptation, extraction and award-winning recognition, showing how AustLit can represent his remarkable literary career and asking whether it proper to claim this oeuvre as Australian.

At the speech he gave at the special citizenship ceremony at the Adelaide Writers Festival in 2006, Coetzee said, "I didn't so much leave South Africa — a country with which I retain strong emotional ties — as come to Australia." By coming to Australia and becoming Australian, Coetzee gave AustLit the challenge of working out how to best represent the life and career of this (now) Australian, but always worldly, writer.

# ABSTRACTS

## **“His Whole Being is Gripped by What Happens in the Theatre’: Animals, Performance, and the Real in Coetzee’s Later Fiction”**

*Dr. Michelle KELLY, University of Oxford*

Accounts of Coetzee’s oeuvre frequently point to *Disgrace* as a turning point of sorts: not only the last of his novels (to date) to engage with contemporary South Africa, but a final fling with realist fiction which has precipitated a period of radical experimentation with the novel form in *Elizabeth Costello*, *Slow Man*, *Diary of a Bad Year* and *Childhood of Jesus*. In *Disgrace*, of course, the ostensibly realist narrative comes under pressure in a range of ways, not least in the novel’s intense preoccupation with animals and in David Lurie’s immersion in the elaboration of an opera devoted to Byron. These two strands have been treated as separate indices of Lurie’s ethical transformation.

In this paper I will argue that there is a convergence in these two strands of *Disgrace* that is directly related to the experimentation of the later fiction. I will show that animals in *Disgrace* are consistently positioned as *actors* within theatrical spaces and particularly, given the novel’s attention to animal death, within a tragic framework that explicitly invokes the relationship between classical drama and animal sacrifice. This, I suggest, presents a direct challenge to the notion of performance and spectacle as merely fake, an idea propagated in the novel by David Lurie. In becoming the space not just of animal life but of animal death, the theatre in *Disgrace* is the space of the *real*.

The implications of this for the novel form become clearer in the more explicitly experimental *Elizabeth Costello* and *Slow Man*, where the animal actors are now *human* and questions of performance and theatricality frequently mediate the tensions in these novels between the *realist* and the *real*. Attention to the theatrical dimensions of these novels illuminates their preoccupation with performance, spectacle and the fake, but in tracing these ideas back to the animal actors of *Disgrace* it also becomes clear that Coetzee’s experiments with the novel form in his later fiction are inherently bound up with his concern for animal life.

## **3:30PM PLENARY PANEL DISCUSSION - THE COETZEE ARCHIVES**

### **“The Writing Event: Reading the Coetzee Papers”**

*Prof. David ATTWELL, University of York*

In *Doubling the Point*, J.M. Coetzee describes writing as a matter of awakening of the countervoices in oneself. His manuscript archive provides innumerable demonstrations of what this means. The papers reveal a writer in earnest dialogue with himself, protecting the integrity of the creative process while feeding and cajoling the work as it becomes what it will be. The “writing event” (a phrase adapted from Derek Attridge’s account of reading Coetzee) is one way of describing the transformative moments when the work takes a quantum leap in the direction of becoming the text as we know it. The presentation will describe a number of such moments in Coetzee’s early fiction, and reflect more generally on what we learn about Coetzee’s authorship from reading his papers. Key aspects of Coetzee’s stylistic signature — impersonality, indirection or counter-intuition, metafiction and inter-textuality — take on unexpected meanings when considered in the light of the creative processes that produced the novels.

### **“Maps & Notebooks: J.M. Coetzee & the Texas Archives”**

*Dr. Kai EASTON, SOAS, University of London*

A folded map on pink cardstock is found in Container 99.2 at the Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin. It is an irregular square size, larger perhaps than A3. In blue biro the Cape Colony is drawn and labelled to scale; in particular the boundaries of the Colony are noted as of 1806 and the travels of the British naturalist William Burchell are marked. The mapmaker is J.M. Coetzee, but the work is undated.

This map, together with many other manuscripts and materials, has now come to Texas, where Coetzee in fact arrived in 1965 to begin his doctoral coursework and a thesis on Beckett, whose own manuscripts he read through in Austin, searching for signs of a muse. This map was not included in the interim instalment of Coetzee’s archives at Harvard’s Houghton Library. It is an extraordinary addition, graphically highlighting as it does a formative interest in Burchell and Cape geography which leads him (if indeed the map precedes the text) to the writing of “The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee”, the first page of which was drafted in Buffalo on New Year’s Day, 1970. This interest in Burchell (and particularly Burchell on his travels in the Karoo) is also clear from other papers in his research file for later essays in *White Writing* (1988) and from the drafts of the second volume of his fictionalised memoir, *Youth* (2002). His interest is not in replicating Burchell, of course, but in thinking — from a position far away — of how to write his own version of the familiar territory that Burchell tries to describe. This is the genesis of what would eventually be published as Coetzee’s first novel *Dusklands* in 1974.

# ABSTRACTS

This visual essay takes the form of an archival travelogue. Featuring footage of sites related to his trilogy, *Scenes from Provincial Life*, it also includes close-ups from family photo albums and other documents: for example, Coetzee's early itinerant years in the Great Karoo (e.g., Victoria West and with visits to the family farm Voëlfontein near Leeuw Gamka), but also further afield (e.g., Johannesburg). The archives at Texas also include unexpected notebooks for his novels, but also further back are notebooks from his school days in Rosebank (Cape Town) and Worcester. These items, belatedly rejoining the original materials lodged in Cape Town and then at Harvard, provide further illustrations for the auto/biographical record that is now in circulation. Here, in the volumes headed 'English' and 'Geography', we see his youthful forays into writing and cartography, with farm stories and maps of South Africa and even Australia, which pre-date the illuminating map of Burchell's *Travels* by some 20 years.

## **"Between Text and Screen: The Cinematic Imagination of J.M. Coetzee"**

*Hermann WITTENBERG, University of the Western Cape*

J.M. Coetzee's interest in photography and film is visible in many of his fictions, and not limited to the composition of the screenplay versions of *In the Heart of the Country* and *Waiting for the Barbarians*, published recently as *Two Screenplays*, by UCT Press. This paper will look more closely at Coetzee's engagement with photography and cinema, showing how these interests in visuality and image-making thread themselves throughout his literary career, with impact on several other novels such as *Life & Times of Michael K* and *Disgrace*. The paper will also show how Coetzee's cinematic ambitions were thwarted in respect of a big-screen adaptation of *Waiting for the Barbarians*, but how this paradoxically opened the way to ultimate authorial validation in the form of the Nobel Prize.

## **"Life Portrait of J.M. Coetzee"**

*Ms. Sharon ZWI*

The "Life Portrait of J.M. Coetzee" is a visual biography, a portrait over his lifetime. This portrait was part of an exhibition I had in May 2013 called "Time Exposures: 62 Life Portraits". It was one of the earlier portraits I made, in which all of the 25 photos in the grid were head and shoulders photographs. As the work evolved some whole body photographs were included. I was given access to the J.M. Coetzee's photos from his collection of albums, loose photos, and digital photos. I selected from those and scanned them. Luckily he checked the scanned images, as he found that I had scanned some photos of his brother from some of the childhood photos. I resized and adjusted the individual photos to fit into the grid format, a reference to a contact sheet. The rough draft was then sent to be checked for chronological mistakes and to make the final selection of photos. It was then printed at the College of Fine Art, UNSW.

## **Day 3 – Thursday 13 November 2014**

### **11:00AM SESSION 1**

#### **Group 1 – 'Disgrace(d)'**

## **"La Pratique Sauvage: Geography and Human-Animal Relationships in J.M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*"**

*Ms. Lindsay DIEHL, University of British Columbia*

This paper uses the interplay between geography and human-animal relationships as a lens through which to view and challenge critical readings of J.M. Coetzee's *Disgrace* that suggest that the protagonist, David Lurie, transforms into a more sympathetic character by the end of the novel. It argues that such readings can overlook or diminish some forms of discriminatory violence, which Lurie perpetuates towards racialized characters, such as his daughter's African neighbour Petrus, and animals, such as his favorite dog Driepoot at the animal shelter. This paper thus engages with three such readings—by Derek Attridge, Michael Marais, and Lucy Graham, respectively — in order to encourage a rethinking of Lurie's treatment toward "othered" people and animals. More specifically, it draws upon Glen Elder, Jennifer Wolch, and Jody Emel's theory of "La Pratique Sauvage" in order to show how Lurie is able to construct and maintain racialized distance from Petrus, in part by designating Petrus as "savage" or "uncivilized" on the basis of his interactions with animals. Indeed, Lurie's comments about Petrus' rural practice of bringing home animals to slaughter imply that the racialized character should learn to treat animals "better" — an incongruous prescription coming from Lurie, who is aware of the numerous animals being routinely killed at the animal shelter, and who later authorizes the premature killing of his favorite dog Driepoot. Through a close analysis of Lurie's racialization of "othered" people and his behavior towards animals, then, this paper aims to examine what Elder, Wolch, and Emel identify as the "dual challenge" in creating a more inclusive — non-racist, and non-speciesist — ethic of responsibility and care (87). As they explain, this "dual challenge" necessitates the destabilization of oppressive links between animals and racialization, as well as the promotion of compassionate links between animals and humans (87). Therefore, this paper reads against interpretations of Lurie's transformative character, in order to explicate the links between race, place, and animal practices. In so doing, it aims to gesture to the possibility of a radically inclusive politics, one that would more adequately begin to address the wide array of interests and positionalities currently defining the lives of peoples and animals in the postcolonial world.

# ABSTRACTS

## **“Does J.M. Coetzee have it in Him to be the Woman?”**

*Ms. Jacqueline BALOH, University of Technology, Sydney*

*Disgrace* is a contentious novel for its parallel episodes of rape and their intersection with race. In an attempt to imaginatively empathise with his raped daughter Lucy, the protagonist David Lurie asks of himself “does he have it in him to be the woman?” This paper proposes to shift the target of that question from its original object, the character David Lurie, to its author J.M. Coetzee. As an author, does J.M. Coetzee have it in him to be, to write, the raped woman? Recourse to Coetzee’s oeuvre is necessary to address this as it relies upon an understanding of how the author has it in him to write anyone? This paper will explore the relationship between Coetzee and his protagonists and investigate why the author has chosen to present *Disgrace* through the character of David Lurie.

## **“Incommensurate Meanings: Rape in the Heart of the Country”**

*Ms. Erin SCUDDER, University of Melbourne*

In this paper I will discuss J.M. Coetzee’s depiction of rape in his novel *In the Heart of the Country* (1977). I argue that Coetzee’s novel supports Catharine A. MacKinnon’s call for a rethinking of rape-related “legal process as one involving a choice between incommensurate meanings rather than one of uncovering a (temporarily hidden) fact, the Truth” (Rooney, 90). I will explore and discuss how the narration of Coetzee’s novel discourages readers from accepting the objectifiability of the rape which it relates; how the narrator’s statements deviate from the conventions of testimony, expressing instead the “incommensurate meanings” that rape holds for the victim herself; and how the descriptions of violence, abuse, and victim response in the novel present the chance for readers to interpret the aftermath of rape in a manner other than that which “conveys the idea that the victim is responsible for her own destruction” (Bal 100).

## **Group 2 – The Lives of Animals**

### **“Coetzee’s Animals, Biopolitics and the Impersonal Imperative”**

*Prof. Richard A. BARNEY, University at Albany, State University of New York*

Elizabeth Costello’s impassioned argument about the brutal treatment of animals in J.M. Coetzee’s *The Lives of Animals* — including her bracing comparison of the meat industry to the Nazi Holocaust — tracks a logic similar to that employed by contemporary activists that the better treatment of animals depends on conferring on them the benefit of rights as they have already been framed for human beings. As compelling as that argument is, however, Costello’s intellectual inconsistencies and personal foibles, as well as the larger context of Coetzee’s other work, especially *Waiting for the Barbarians* and *Disgrace*, indicate that for Coetzee, reformulating the relationship between the human and animal worlds may rely less on the analogic transfer of rights from one domain to the other than on the generation of an intermediary space in which both domains are fundamentally reimagined. Drawing on the recent work of biopolitical analysts, including Giorgio Agamben, Cary Wolfe, and Roberto Esposito, my paper will explore how their critique of the conceptual foundations of rights provides a useful framework for assessing how Coetzee complicates rights-based perspectives on human-animal relations. In rejecting the philosophical dualism of self/other or person/nonperson on which rights-based thinking has traditionally been conceived, Esposito’s work proves particularly valuable by arguing for the “impersonal” as a third category that erodes—perhaps even dissolves — the conventional boundaries of human personality, thereby formulating new versions of community that resist denigrating the nonpersonal. The example of both the Magistrate in *Barbarians* and David Lurie in *Disgrace*, who reevaluate their conception of animals by reimagining the ontological implications of their own personal crises, provides both a literary analogue and distinct investigation of the potential of a “third way” for renegotiating human-animal relations.

### **“Tracing a Poetics of Animacy”**

*Asoc. Prof. Claudia EGERER, Stockholm University*

In this talk I’m interested to follow a certain trajectory in Coetzee’s oeuvre that appears to run counter to a writing typically marked by its linguistic precision and economy. This trajectory explores intimations of another kind, alluding to an affective realm that does not lend itself easily to expression in words, indeed, appears to be beyond the confines of language entirely. In *Foe*, one of the endings takes the reader to “the home of Friday... where bodies are their own signs” (157). Discussing Ted Hughes’ “The Jaguar” Elizabeth Costello notes that we do not so much *think* our way into making sense of the jaguar as *feel* “the body... as it moves... [we] inhabit that body” (51). In *Waiting for the Barbarians*, the Magistrate is caught off guard by his difficulty in shooting a waterbuck and despite his attempts to “shrug off this irritating and uncanny feeling” (40) he remains oddly sensitive to the ways humans “crush insects beneath [their] feet, miracles of creation too, beetles, worms, cockroaches, ants” (107).

These moments of intuition are marked by an intense sensation of shared embodiedness and ensouledness, of a creaturely fullness of being, an existence beyond language where animality constitutes an experiential realm in need of a tongue that knows how to touch without defining and circumscribing. I will trace instances in Coetzee’s texts where what I would like

# ABSTRACTS

to call a poetics of animacy accentuates instances of muteness, of intensities, of the ability to move and being moved. This poetics of animacy creates a productive tension between what is said and what cannot be said yet finds expression in the intuition of an intense perception of what it means to be a living soul.

## **“Something to Feed On’: Curatorial Care in the Collaborations of J.M. Coetzee and Berlinde De Bruyckere”**

*Dr. Alys MOODY, University of Waikato, New Zealand*

In 2012, J.M. Coetzee was invited to act as curator for Cripplewood, Berlinde De Bruyckere’s installation for the Belgian Pavilion at the 2013 Venice Biennale. Coetzee’s curatorship, mostly conducted through correspondence, offered both a sounding board for De Bruyckere as her project developed, and a series of texts, including his previously unpublished short story, “The Old Woman and the Cats,” which stand in a sometimes enigmatic relationship to De Bruyckere’s work, a monumental wax sculpture of a fallen tree. At the same time, the author and the artist collaborated on an art book, *We Are All Flesh*, consisting of excerpts from Coetzee’s published works, interleaved with photographs of De Bruyckere’s sculptures.

This paper reads both these processes of collaboration and the works, literary and artistic, that result from them as participating in Coetzee’s on-going investigation into the ethics of care for the other, including the non-human and even non-animal other, and its relationship to literary and artistic processes. It argues that Coetzee’s collaboration with De Bruyckere consists of a series of experiments in curation, each of which strives to respect the particularity of the curated works while acknowledging and sometimes even exploiting the inescapably transformative effects of the curatorial ascription of context, meaning and frameworks. Reading these curatorial experiments alongside Coetzee’s explicit but ambivalent discussion of a Levinasian ethics of recognition in “The Old Woman and the Cats,” it argues that the curatorial relationship that De Bruyckere and Coetzee develop offers a model for understanding ethical relation, not as a pure encounter with alterity, but as an ungainly balance between the imposition of narrative and meaning, and a respect for the integrity of the other. This in turn illuminates both De Bruyckere’s artistic production and reproduction of animals and trees to comment on human suffering, as well as the complex ethical positions that emerge from Coetzee’s recent meditations on authorship and animals.

## **Group 3 – Coetzee in Asia**

### **“Shadow Partner of the West: Vietnam in *Dusklands*”**

*Dr. Lynda NG, University of Oxford*

Throughout his career, J.M. Coetzee has sought to resist national confines, preferring instead to emphasise the transnational aspects of culture and history. In accordance with the transnational qualities that inhere in Coetzee’s writing, this paper seeks to look beyond the well-documented European and South African influences that manifest themselves so clearly. Instead, it will examine the little explored role and influence of Asia in Coetzee’s work, specifically the role of the Vietnam War in his debut novel, *Dusklands*. The impact of the war on Coetzee’s life is widely acknowledged: his participation in demonstrations at the height of the conflict in 1970, and his subsequent arrest, meant that he was denied permanent residency in the United States and forced to return to South Africa. Echoes of this personal setback can be found in *Dusklands*, which juxtaposes the narrative of American mythographer Eugene Dawn, and his descent into madness in “The Vietnam Project”, with the murderous colonial in “The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee”. Scholarship has tended to focus on what this second (and longer) section of the novel suggests about colonialism and apartheid in South Africa. In this paper I will focus instead on the way in which Eugene Dawn gives voice to an Althusserian concept of ideology, transposed to American propaganda for the Vietnam War. I shall suggest that the pivotal role played by Vietnam in this novel follows in the Western tradition of using Asia as an unacknowledged shadow partner, necessary to bring the West’s repeated truths into relief.

### **“J.M. Coetzee in China: The Politics of Reading”**

*Dr. Tina LIU, The Australian National University*

Winning the 2003 Nobel Prize in Literature has made the name and fiction of J.M. Coetzee known to Chinese literary readers, thanks to China’s “Novel Complex”. While academics continue to publish on Coetzee both local translators of his novels and writers who are interested in his works seem to agree that his novels would not stir similar popularity as Magical Realism did in the 1980s. In this paper, I set to find out what attracts the academic interest in Coetzee and why there is little expectation of his wide reception in China. My purpose is to understand the impact of Coetzee on Chinese intellectuals and the cultural politics of reading/reception of Coetzee’s works in the country. To a large extent, China’s selective reading and interpreting of Coetzee exemplifies a changing cultural politics in the 1980s and the 2000s in the country.



# ABSTRACTS

## 1:30PM PLENARY PANEL DISCUSSION - INTERTEXTS

### **"Seven Ways of Looking at John Maxwell Coetzee"**

*Prof. Bruno CLÉMENT, University of Vincennes-Saint-Denis (Paris 8)*

I will discuss why a great number of novels by Coetzee could be read as if they were essays (*Elisabeth Costello* and *Slow Man* especially), and essays as if they were really novels (especially the essays on Beckett's work). My admiration for Coetzee's work is multifaceted, but one of the reasons is that he blurs all borders — if you think of generic ones — or that he is, as all great writers are, not only a marvellous story teller but a clever and even sharper theoretician.

### **"Method and Style in *Waiting for the Barbarians*"**

*Prof. Anthony UHLMANN, University of Western Sydney*

In *Doubling the Point* Coetzee underlines the importance of the writing process to finding the truth, stating that "Writing reveals to you what you wanted to say in the first place." Coetzee's 1969 Dissertation on Samuel Beckett is called "The English Fiction of Samuel Beckett: An Essay on Style" and the importance of an understanding of style to his own work has begun to draw sustained attention from critics of Coetzee's work (such as Zimble and Clarkson). Focusing in particular on *Waiting for the Barbarians* this paper will consider the interrelation of method, process and style in the early of novels of J.M. Coetzee. I will compare the understandings of process, style and method developed by Gilles Deleuze to the concepts of style, structure, form and content that Coetzee develops in his early critical writings in an effort to map the manner in which meaning can be generated by what, in his 1969 dissertation, Coetzee calls a "writing without style" which he defines as being able "to write with full control of expression."

**Abstract not available at time of printing.**

*Prof. Nicholas Jose, University of Adelaide*

**Abstract not available at time of printing.**

*Prof. Derek Attridge, University of York*

# PRESENTERS

**Prof. Derek Attridge** is Professor of English and Related Literature at the University of York and a Fellow of the British Academy. His publications include, as author, *J.M. Coetzee and the Ethics of Reading: Literature in the Event* (Chicago, 2004) and *The Singularity of Literature* (Routledge, 2004) and, as co-editor, *Writing South Africa: Literature, Apartheid, and Democracy, 1970 to 1995* (Cambridge, 1998) and *The Cambridge History of South African Literature* (Cambridge, 2012).

**Prof. David Attwell** is Head of the Department of English and Related Literature at the University of York in the United Kingdom. He is the author of *J.M. Coetzee: South Africa and the Politics of Writing* (1993) and editor of *Coetzee's Doubling the Point: Essays and Interviews* (1992). His critical biography based on the papers held at the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas at Austin will be published in 2015 under the title *J.M. Coetzee and the Life of Writing Face to Face with Time*.

**Ms. Jacqueline Baloh** graduated with first class honours in Bachelor of Arts — Archaeology from the University of Sydney. Consultant historical archaeologist by day and student by night, Baloh is currently studying the Graduate Diploma in Creative Writing with the University of Technology, Sydney. Her research focuses on why the novel *Disgrace* is presented through the character of David Lurie.

**Prof. Richard A. Barney** is Associate Professor of English at the University at Albany, SUNY, and specializes in 18<sup>th</sup>-century British studies, aesthetics, and philosophy and literature. He is the author of *Plots of Enlightenment: Education and the Novel in 18<sup>th</sup>-Century England* (Stanford UP, 1999), as well as several publications on biopolitics, critical theory, film, and the work of J.M. Coetzee. He has published an article titled "The Splenic Sublime" (2010) and co-edited a special journal issue called *Rhetorics of Plague, Early and Late* (2011), which examines the material and symbolic refurbishing of biomedical catastrophe from the Middle Ages to the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Most recently, he has published an essay titled "Burke, Biomedicine, and Biobelligerence," which forms a part of a book in progress currently titled *Sublimations: Medicine, Politics, and Transformative Aesthetics in 18<sup>th</sup>-Century Britain*.

**Prof. Elleke Boehmer** is Professor of World Literature in English at the University of Oxford, and Professorial Governing Body Fellow at Wolfson College. She has published *Colonial and Postcolonial Literature* (1995, 2005), *Empire, the National and the Postcolonial, 1890-1920* (2002), *Stories of Women* (2005), and *Nelson Mandela* (2008). She is the author of four acclaimed novels, including *Screens against the Sky* (short-listed David Hyam Prize, 1990), *Bloodlines* (shortlisted SANLAM prize), and *Nile Baby* (2008), and the short-story collection *Sharmilla and Other Portraits* (2010). She edited Robert Baden-Powell's *Scouting for Boys* (2004), and the anthology *Empire Writing* (1998), and co-edited *J.M. Coetzee in Writing and Theory* (2009), *Terror and the Postcolonial* (2009), *The Indian Postcolonial* (2010), and *The Postcolonial Low Countries* (2012). She is the General Editor of the Oxford Studies in Postcolonial Literatures Series, and deputy director of the Oxford Centre for Life Writing. A book on 'Empire's Networks' and a new novel, *The Shouting in the Dark*, are forthcoming.

**Dr. John Bolin** completed his postgraduate training at Oxford, where he was Stipendiary Lecturer in English at Lincoln College and the Bamborough Junior Research Fellow at Linacre College. He was Lecturer in English at the University of Wollongong from 2011-13 before taking his current post at the University of Exeter in 2013.

**Ms. Baylee Brits** holds a Research Masters in Cultural Analysis (cum laude) from the Universiteit van Amsterdam. She is about to complete her doctorate in English Literature at the University of New South Wales, where she also teaches. Her doctorate is entitled "Mathematics and Modernism: Jorge Luis Borges, Samuel Beckett and J.M. Coetzee."

**Dr. Shannon Burns** completed a Ph.D at the University of Adelaide and has worked, intermittently, as a tutor and Associate Lecturer in its English and European Studies Disciplines. He has published scholarly articles, creative writing, interviews and reviews. His current research interest revolves around "idiosyncratic" writing.

**Prof. Brian Castro** is the author of ten novels and a volume of essays on writing and culture. His novels have won a number of state and national prizes including the Australian/Vogel Literary Award, The Age Fiction Prize, the National Book Council Prize for Fiction, several Victorian Premier's awards, two NSW Premier's awards and the Queensland Premier's Award for Fiction. He is currently Director of the J.M. Coetzee Centre for Creative Practice and Chair of Creative Writing at the University of Adelaide.

**Prof. Odile Cazenave** is Professor of French Studies, part of African Studies, Middle Eastern and North African Studies, Media and Film Studies, at Boston University. Her publications include *Femmes rebelles: naissance d'un nouveau roman africain au féminin* (1996), *Afrique sur Seine. Une nouvelle génération de romanciers africains à Paris* (2003) — both have been translated (*Rebellious Women* (1999; 2000), and *Afrique sur Seine*. (2005)) — and *Contemporary Francophone African Writers* and the *Burden of Commitment* (2011; Cazenave and Célérier). She has written on a wide range of topics related to gender and sexuality, history and memory, the local and the global, representations of postcolonial violence, the diaspora, as well as issues of displacement, migration, and citizenship in a global world.

**Mr. Jason Childs** is a writer and researcher based in Sydney, Australia. He is currently completing a doctoral dissertation exploring the relationship between philosophy and literature, and the role of fictionality in thought, at the University of Technology, Sydney. He also teaches in the Communication program at UTS, with a focus on discourse theory and phenomenology, and is a co-organiser of the colloquium series "Poetics, Writing, Thought".

# PRESENTERS

**Prof. Carrol Clarkson** is Professor of English at the University of Cape Town. In January 2015 she will be taking up a chair in English Literature at the University of Amsterdam. Her interests are in the interstitial zones of literature, philosophy and the visual arts; her publications include *Drawing the Line: Toward an Aesthetics of Transitional Justice* (Fordham University Press, 2014), and *J.M. Coetzee: Countervoices* (Palgrave, 2009; second edition 2013). In 2009 she was the recipient of UCT's Distinguished Teacher's Award.

**Prof. Bruno Clément** is full Professor at the University of Vincennes-Saint-Denis (Paris 8), and a Senior Member of the *Institut Universitaire de France*. From 2004 to 2007 he was the President of the *Collège International de Philosophie*, created by Jacques Derrida. His field is the intersection of literature (he has written books on Beckett, Hugo, Sartre...) and philosophy or theoretical writing (books on Derrida, Augustin, about method, about rhetorical figures). His latest publications include *La Voix Verticale* (Paris, Belin 2013), and *Aux confins du récit* (PUV, 2014, with Clemens Härle).

**Dr. Chris Conti** is an Associate Lecturer in Literary Studies and member of the Writing & Society Research Centre at the University of Western Sydney. His primary research interests and teaching experience are in the field of modernist and contemporary literature and philosophy and literature. He has written articles on Theodor Adorno, John Barth, Samuel Beckett, Franz Kafka, and Patrick White. He is currently working on a monograph that explores the relevance of Hans Blumenberg's metaphorology to modernist and contemporary literature. He is also the author of *Proofs: 104 Short Stories* (Puncher & Wattmann, 2012).

**Prof. Daniel Conway** is Professor of Philosophy and Humanities and Affiliate Professor of Religious Studies at Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas (USA). His research and teaching interests include 19th-Century European Philosophy, Social and Political Theory, Philosophy of Religion, and Philosophy and Literature.

**Ms. Lindsay Diehl** is pursuing a PhD in Interdisciplinary Studies at the University of British Columbia, Okanagan campus, with a focus on postcolonial theory and literature. Her poems and short stories have been published in various literary journals, such as *Ricepaper*, *The Capilano Review*, *Fireweed*, and *Geist*. She is supported by a SSHRC Joseph-Armand Bombardier Canada Graduate Scholarship.

**Dr. Gillian Dooley** is an Honorary Senior Research Fellow at Flinders University, where she is also the Special Collections Librarian. She writes and presents on various authors including J.M. Coetzee, and has published a number of monographs and scholarly editions. Her latest monograph is *J.M. Coetzee and the Power of Narrative* (Cambria Press, 2010). She is the editor of the electronic journals *Transnational Literature* and *Writers in Conversation*.

**Dr. Kai Easton** is Senior Lecturer in English at SOAS, University of London, where she teaches travel writing and fiction from the Cape to Cairo, and a new course, "Southern Spaces", on South Africa, Sri Lanka and Australia. She holds a 2014-15 Harry Ransom Center Research Fellowship, and her current work revisits Coetzee's archives, following their migration from Harvard and their acquisition by Texas, who now hold substantially more boxes. Together with Derek Attridge, she is editing a collection of essays, *Zoë Wicomb & the Translocal: Writing Scotland and South Africa*, and a further archival project on Michael Richey, the legendary single-handed transatlantic sailor of Jester, and founding director of the Royal Institute of Navigation, who will mark his centenary in 2017.

**Asoc. Prof. Claudia Egerer** teaches at the Department of English, Stockholm University. Interested in issues of border-crossings, her teaching and writing explore questions of otherness, marginality, silence, and language, beginning with her dissertation *Fictions of (In)Betweenness* (1997) to her two work-in-progress studies *Wolf Matters* and *Compassionate Bodies: Animals, Ethics, and Literature*. Academia equals mobility for her, so in keeping with her family motto 'boots not roots' she is engaged in establishing exchanges with universities worldwide to encourage and facilitate this intellectual and literal mobility for academics and students. A closet poet herself, she has a special love of poetry, with John Donne, John Keats and Rainer Maria Rilke as all-time favorites. In her spare time, she runs, sails, and struggles with the challenge of training bird dogs.

**Dr. Karen Ferreira-Meyers** is a Senior Lecturer and Coordinator Linguistics and Modern Languages at the Institute of Distance Education of the University of Swaziland. Holder of a PhD in francophone contemporary autofiction, she also holds 4 MA degrees (Romance Philology, English Linguistics, Law and Instructional Design and Technology). A keen translator and interpreter, Dr. Ferreira-Meyers also participates in international conferences on a variety of subjects, such as autofiction, language learning, distance and e-learning, contemporary literature, crime fiction, etc. She has published over 30 articles, a monograph on the autofictions of Amélie Nothomb, Calixthe Beyala and Nina Bouraoui, and several chapters in books.

**Prof. Raimond Gaita** is Professorial Fellow in the Melbourne Law School and the Faculty of Arts, University of Melbourne and Emeritus Professor of Moral Philosophy at King's College London. He is a Fellow of the Australian Academy. Gaita's books, which have been widely translated, include: *Good and Evil: An Absolute Conception*; *Romulus, My Father*, which was made into a feature film of the same name; *A Common Humanity: Thinking About Love & Truth & Justice*; *The Philosopher's Dog* and *After Romulus*.

**Prof. Moira Gatens** is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Sydney and a fellow of the Academy of the Humanities and the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia. In 2007-08 she was a Fellow at the Wissenschaftskolleg Berlin. In 2010 she held the Spinoza Chair at the University of Amsterdam. In 2011 she was President of the Australasian Association of

# PRESENTERS

Philosophy. In 2012 she was appointed the Challis Professor of Philosophy at the University of Sydney. She has research interests in the following areas: social and political philosophy, feminist philosophy, early modern philosophy, and philosophy and literature. Much of her most recent research focuses on Spinoza and George Eliot.

**Dr. James Gourley** is a lecturer in the School of Humanities and Communication Arts and member of the Writing and Society Research Centre at the University of Western Sydney. He is the author of *Terrorism and Temporality in the Works of Thomas Pynchon and Don DeLillo* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2013).

**Prof. Isaías Peña Gutiérrez** is the director of the Department of Humanities and Languages at Universidad Central, Bogotá, Colombia. He studied Law, Political and Social Sciences at the University of Externado de Colombia (1964-1968), American literature at the Instituto Caro y Cuervo (1974-1975) and Spanish and Literature at the Pedagogical University of Columbia (1977-1978). He is the author of numerous publications including *The Narrative of the National Front: Genesis and Setbacks* (Bogotá, Central University, 1982), *Write Breathing: Latin America — Essays and Interviews* (Bogotá, Opus Magna, 1998), *Tests and Passwords of Colombian Literature (1967-1997)* (Bogotá, Central University, 2002) and *Door and History: Texts* (Ibague, Pijao Publishers, 2004).

**Asoc. Prof. Katherine Hallemeier**, assistant professor of English at Oklahoma State University, is the author of *J.M. Coetzee and the Limits of Cosmopolitanism* (Palgrave, 2013). Her essays on Coetzee's writing have also appeared in *Postcolonial Audiences* (Routledge, 2012) and the journals *Culture, Theory and Critique*; *scrutiny2*; and *Proteus*.

**Dr. Michael Halliwell** studied music and literature at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, and at the London Opera Centre with Otakar Kraus, as well as with Tito Gobbi in Florence. He has sung in Europe, North America, South Africa and Australia and was principal baritone for many years with the Netherlands Opera, the Nürnberg Municipal Opera, and the Hamburg State Opera. He has sung over fifty major operatic roles, including Don Giovanni, Papageno, Count Almaviva, Guglielmo, Posa, Germont, Gianni Schicci, Ford, and Escamillo, and has participated in several world premieres and had frequent appearances at major European festivals in opera, oratorio and song recitals. He has published widely in the field of music and literature and is Vice President and Editorial Board Member of The International Association for Word and Music Studies (WMA), regularly giving lectures and seminars on the operatic adaptation of literature into opera. His book, *Opera and the Novel*, was published by Rodopi Press (Amsterdam/New York) in 2005. He is working on a new book: *Myths of National Identity in Contemporary Australian Opera* (Ashgate, 2015). Currently on the staff at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, he has served as Chair of Vocal Studies and Opera, Pro-Dean and Head of School, and Associate Dean (Research). Recent CDs include a double CD of settings of Kipling ballads and Boer War songs, *When the Empire Calls* (ABC Classics, 2005); *O for a Muse of Fire: Australian Shakespeare Settings* (Vox Australis, 2013); and *Amy Woodforde-Finden: The Oriental Song-Cycles* (Toccata Classics, 2014). He has recently premiered Lawrence Kramer's song cycles, *Five Songs and an Epilogue from The Wings of the Dove* (Edinburgh), *Nine Songs to Ezra Pound* (Vienna), *Crossing the Water* (Santa Fe), and *Sounds and Silences* (London).

**Dr. Britta Hartmann** submitted her English literary studies PhD for examination through the University of Tasmania (Australia) and is due to graduate in December 2014. Her thesis examines Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and its textual aftermath to the present day, and pays particular attention to issues of spatiality and islandness. She is currently teaching and researching in the English department of the University of Vechta (Germany) and is a member of an international Island Poetics research group. Britta is pursuing avenues for the publication of her thesis, and is also working on other projects relating to the cultural representations of islands, oceans, and pirates. She is interested in the relationship between humans and their environment, and her research areas include literary studies, screen studies, island studies, ecocriticism, and cultural geography.

**Prof. Neville Hoad** is Associate Professor of English at The University of Texas at Austin. He is the author of *African Intimacies: Race, Homosexuality and Globalization* (2007) and co-editor (with Karen Martin and Graeme Reid) of *Sex & Politics in South Africa: Equality/Gay & Lesbian Movement/the anti-Apartheid Struggle* (2005). He is currently working on a book project about the literary and cultural representations of the HIV/AIDS pandemic in sub-Saharan Africa.

**Adj. Prof. Deepa Jani** received her PhD in English at the University of Pittsburgh, where she specialized in postcolonial and postmodern literatures, Anglophone African literatures, and critical theory. Deepa's research also focuses on modernism and modernity, humanism and human rights discourse, and globalization studies. She is currently Adjunct Professor of English at Pitt and is completing her book manuscript on the works of J.M. Coetzee, titled "J.M. Coetzee: Ethics, Subalternity, and the Critique of Humanism." The book examines the question of humanism in postcoloniality, and particularly addresses Coetzee's struggle with the legacy in his own writing. Deepa's articles have appeared in two edited collections, one of which is on globalization studies and the other on critical theory. Additionally, her essay "Essaying against Empire: J.M. Coetzee's *Diary of a Bad Year*" is forthcoming in the journal *Forum for Modern Language Studies* in their special edition on Literature and Terror published by Oxford University Press.

**Asoc. Prof. Timothy Johns** is Associate Professor of English at Murray State University in Kentucky, where he also directs the Cinema International program. His work has recently appeared in the *Journal of the African Literature Association*, *Victorian Studies*, *Journal of Narrative Theory*, and in two edited books on contemporary African literature. He is currently working on a book-length project provisionally titled "Labor and Literature in Victorian South Africa."

# PRESENTERS

**Prof. Nicholas Jose** has published seven novels, three collections of short stories, including *Bapo* (2014), a memoir, and essays, mostly on Australian and Asian culture. He was president of International PEN Sydney Centre (2002-05), general editor of the *Macquarie PEN Anthology of Australian Literature* (2009), and Visiting Chair of Australian Studies at Harvard University, 2009-10. He is Adjunct Professor in the Writing and Society Research Centre, University of Western Sydney, Professor of Creative Writing at Bath Spa University, UK, and Professor of English and Creative Writing at The University of Adelaide, where he is a member of the J M Coetzee Centre for Creative Practice.

**Dr. Michelle Kelly** is a Departmental Lecturer in World Literature in the Faculty of English, University of Oxford. Her research interests are in contemporary postcolonial and world literature, focusing particularly on South African literature, on the intersection between literature and debates about law, the human and human rights, and on the category of world literature. She has written about Coetzee and the law, and is currently at work on a monograph on Coetzee entitled *The Confessing Animal*.

**Ms. Kerry Kilner** is the Director of AustLit and Research Fellow at the School of English, Media Studies and Art History, The University of Queensland. ([www.austlit.edu.au](http://www.austlit.edu.au))

**Dr. Nikolas Kompridis** is Research Professor in Philosophy and Political Thought and Foundation Director of the newly established Institute for Social Justice at the Australian Catholic University. He is the author of *The Aesthetic Turn in Political Thought* (Bloomsbury, 2014), *Critique and Disclosure: Critical Theory between Past and Future* (MIT, 2006) and *Philosophical Romanticism* (Routledge, 2006), and over 50 articles on a broad spectrum of topics in philosophy and political theory. He is currently completing two new books, one on a normative theory of receptivity, the other on romantic critical theory. Among his current projects is an ambitious rethinking of what it means to be human in the age of the Anthropocene.

**Prof. Sue Kossew** holds degrees from the Universities of Cape Town, East Anglia and New South Wales. Her publications include *Pen and Power: A Post-colonial Reading of J.M. Coetzee and André Brink* (1996), *Critical Essays on J.M. Coetzee* (1998), *Re-Imagining Africa: New Critical Perspectives* ed. with Dianne Schwerdt (2001), *Writing Woman, Writing Place: Contemporary Australian and South African Fiction* (2004), *Lighting Dark Places: Essays on Kate Grenville* (2010) and *Strong Opinions: J.M. Coetzee and the Authority of Contemporary Fiction* (2011) co-edited with Chris Danta and Julian Murphet. She has published numerous articles and chapters on Coetzee's work and has recently completed a commissioned annotated bibliographical article on J.M. Coetzee for Oxford University Press's online bibliographies. She is Chair of English/Literary Studies at Monash University and is on the editorial board of *Journal of Commonwealth Literature* and *The Literary Encyclopedia*.

**Mr. Ben Kunkler** is a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Melbourne, in the school of creative writing and gender studies. His thesis is tentatively titled "The Government of Familiars."

**Prof. Jonathan Lear** is the John U. Nef Distinguished Service Professor at the Committee on Social Thought and in the Department of Philosophy at the University of Chicago. He works on moral psychology, the philosophical significance of psychoanalysis and the legacy of ancient Greek philosophy for ethics. He is also a trained psychoanalyst and sees patients in private practice. After the publication of his book, *Radical Hope: Ethics in the Face of Cultural Devastation*, Lear was adopted into a Crow Indian family and he goes to the reservation regularly to discuss issues of cultural trauma and repair with his Crow brothers. During the years John Coetzee visited the University of Chicago, Lear and he taught together.

**Dr. Tina Liu** is Research Fellow of Drama Studies Centre, the Shaanxi Institute of Music and Culture Studies, China. She has a PhD in Asian Studies from the Australian National University. Her recent publications include: "Chinese Masculinity in Global Contexts: Men of the West and the East in Women-Oriented *danmei* Literature," International Conference on Chinese Masculinities on the Move: Time, Space and Cultures, The University of Hong Kong, 28-30 November 2013; *Theorising Chinese Masculinity: Society and Gender in China* (trans), Nanjing: Jiangsu People's Press, 2012. Her research interests are in literature, theatre, youth culture, new media and gender issues in contemporary China.

**Prof. Lu Jiande** graduated from Fudan University, Shanghai, and received his doctoral degree at Cambridge, UK. After working for about twenty years at Institute of Foreign Literature, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), he is now Director of Institute of Literature, CASS. His books include "*Dr. Zhivago*" and *other Essays*, (1996), *Fragments of Broken Systems: Essays in Anglo-American Literature and History of Ideas* (2001) and *Canvas over the Horizon: Essays without Theoretical Claims* (2011). He is also the editor of *T. S. Eliot: Poems, Plays and Critical Essays* (Chinese, in 5 volumes, 2012). In recent years he has written extensively on the genesis of modern Chinese literature and its active interaction with world literature.

**Asoc. Prof. Brian Macaskill** is Associate Professor of English at John Carroll University in Ohio, USA, where he offers seminars in literary theory and contemporary Anglophone literatures. Imbricated companion-essays to his "Traverses" offering have since 2013 appeared in *Narrative, Matatu, Reconstruction, Postmedieval*, and *Word and Text* (which has just begun a serialized sequence of Macaskill essay-performances on Coetzee and Joyce); other companion essays are forthcoming this year from *Media Tropes* (special Coetzee edition) and from *Studies in Visual Arts and Communications*.

# PRESENTERS

**Dr. Elizabeth MacFarlane** is a writer and lecturer in Creative Writing at the University of Melbourne. Her fictocritical book *Reading Coetzee* was published by Rodopi in 2013. Currently she is researching contemporary Australian autobiographical graphic novels, and the use of graphic narratives in the medical humanities. Her stories and essays have been published in various journals including *TEXT*, *New Scholar*, *New Antigone*, and *Space*.

**Prof. Tim Mehigan** has written extensively on (especially German) literature and thought. Among recent publications is his monograph *Heinrich von Kleist: Writing after Kant* (2011), an edited compilation *Raumlektüren: Der Spatial Turn und die Literatur der Moderne* (2013), and an annotated translation of K.L. Reinhold's *Essay on a New Theory of the Human Capacity for Representation* (2011). His edited volume *A Companion to the Works of J.M. Coetzee* appeared with Camden House in 2011. Tim is Professor of German and Head of the School of Languages and Comparative Cultural Studies at the University of Queensland. In 2013 he was awarded the Humboldt Foundation's Research Prize.

**Ms. Janhavi Mittal** is a PhD candidate at the Department of English and Comparative Literature, King's College London. Her work centres around using J.M. Coetzee's writing as a discursive site for exploring overlapping possibilities of epistemology and posthuman ethics.

**Dr. Alys Moody** is a Lecturer in the English Programme at the University of Waikato, New Zealand, where she teaches modernism and contemporary literature. She completed a DPhil at the University of Oxford in 2013 entitled "Starving for their Art: Hunger, Modernism, and Aesthetics in Samuel Beckett, Paul Auster, and J.M. Coetzee," which she is currently revising for publication as a book. She has published on Beckett, modernism, transnationalism and aesthetics in *Theatre Journal*, *sympløke* and *Samuel Beckett Today/Aujourd'hui*. Alys also writes occasionally on contemporary art, especially as it intersects with literature and literary theory, and in 2013 she guest edited a special issue of *Australian art magazine Das Superpaper* entitled "Irrational Agents: Gender, Economics and Affect."

**Dr. Lynda Ng** is the Marie Curie Postdoctoral Fellow in English Literature at the University of Oxford. Her postdoctoral project is titled "Home as Elsewhere: Global Networks, Expatriates, and the Chinese Diasporic Experience in Europe." She has published essays on nationalism, postcolonialism and Australian literature, and is currently editing a collection of essays that examines the novel, *Carpentaria*, by Indigenous Australian author Alexis Wright within the comparative frame of a range of different national perspectives.

**Prof. Paul Patton** is Scientia Professor of Philosophy at The University of New South Wales in Sydney. He is the author of *Deleuze and the Political* (Routledge, 2000) and *Deleuzian Concepts: Philosophy, Colonization, Politics* (Stanford, 2010). He has published widely on Continental philosophy, especially French poststructuralism and political philosophy.

**Asoc. Prof. Robert Phiddian** is Associate Professor in English at Flinders University. He is the author of *Swift's Parody* (Cambridge University Press, 1995) and of many articles on eighteenth-century literature and political satire.

**Prof. Robert B. Pippin** is the Evelyn Stefansson Nef Distinguished Service Professor and Chair of the John U. Nef Committee on Social Thought, and a member of the Department of Philosophy and the College at the University of Chicago. His latest book is *After the Beautiful: Hegel and the Philosophy of Pictorial Modernism* (University of Chicago Press).

**Dr. Jean-Michel Rabaté**, Professor of English and Comparative Literature at the University of Pennsylvania since 1992, is a curator of Slought Foundation, an editor of the *Journal of Modern Literature* and a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He has authored or edited more than thirty books on modernism, psychoanalysis and philosophy. Forthcoming books include *An Introduction to Literature and Psychoanalysis*, *A Companion to 1922*, and *Crimes of the Future*.

**Dr. Muzna Rahman** is a lecturer in English and American Studies at The University of Lincoln (UK). She received her PhD from the University of Manchester in 2012. Her doctoral thesis focused on issues of food abnegation and identity in contemporary postcolonial fiction and non-fiction. Her current research interests include food, the body and identity.

**Asoc. Prof. Jennifer Rutherford** is Associate Professor in Sociology and Literature, Director of the Hawke EU Centre for Mobilities, Migrations and Cultural Transformations and Deputy Director of the Hawke Research Institute at the University of South Australia. Her published works include *Zombies* (Routledge 2013); *Halfway House: The Poetics of Australian Space* co-edited with Barbara Holloway (UWA Press 2010); *The Gauche Intruder: Freud, Lacan and the White Australian Imaginary* (MUP 2001) and the acclaimed television documentary *Ordinary People* (Film Australia; 2001). Trained in psychoanalysis at the École de la Cause freudienne, she writes and teaches in the fields of psychoanalytic and social theory, literary cultures, and race relations. She has held research and teaching positions in English, Cultural Studies, Sociology and Australian Studies at the Universities of Sydney, Melbourne, and Macquarie and at the Australian National University. Her forthcoming book *Melancholy Migrations; The Other Australia* is co-authored with novelist Brian Castro.

**Ms. Erin Scudder** earned a MA in English Literature (with distinction) from Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand, in 2010. Her thesis compared portrayals of rape in J.M. Coetzee's 1977 novel *In the Heart of the Country* to classical rape narratives from Greek and Roman antiquity. Beginning in 2015 she will be a PhD candidate at the University of Melbourne. While at Victoria she guest-lectured and tutored in American Literature of the 20th Century as well as Colonial and Postcolonial Literature. She has presented conference papers exploring the portrayal of rape in J.M. Coetzee's novels

# PRESENTERS

(including *In the Heart of the Country* (1977) and *Disgrace* (1999)) as well as examining the conventions of classical rape narratives. She is a published art writer and author whose poems have appeared in literary journals across New Zealand and in the 2011 anthology *AUP New Poets 4*. Since 2013 she has been working for the Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences and the Melbourne School of Government at the University of Melbourne, Australia.

**Mr. Farzad Shahinfard** is a PhD candidate in the program of Social and Political Thought at York University. Farzad is mainly interested in critical aesthetic theory and theories of subjectivity. He is currently the managing editor at *Theoria and Praxis: International Journal of Interdisciplinary Thought*.

**Dr. Paul Sheehan** is Senior Lecturer in the Department of English at Macquarie University, Sydney. He is the author of *Modernism, Narrative and Humanism* (2002) and *Modernism and the Aesthetics of Violence* (2013). He has published essays on J.M. Coetzee, W. G. Sebald, Cormac McCarthy and Ralph Ellison, as well as several pieces on Samuel Beckett. His current project is a study of poetic form through a genealogy of mainly French theorists, entitled "Continental Theory and the Rapture of Poetry."

**Dr. Emmett Stinson** is a Lecturer in English Literature at the University of Newcastle. He holds a PhD from the University of Melbourne, an MA from the University of Adelaide, and a BA/Hons from Georgetown University. He has received the Age Short Story Award, the ArtsSA Prize for Creative Writing, and a Lannan Poetry Fellowship. His book of short stories, *Known Unknowns* (Affirm Press 2010) was shortlisted for the Steele Rudd Award in the Queensland Literary Awards. With Richard Pennell and Pam Pryde, he co-authored *Banning Islamic Books in Australia* (2011).

**Asoc. Prof. Yoshiki Tajiri** is Associate Professor of English at the University of Tokyo, Japan. He has written extensively on Samuel Beckett and twentieth-century English literature. He is the author of *Samuel Beckett and the Prosthetic Body: The Organs and Senses in Modernism* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007) and co-editor of *Samuel Beckett and Pain* (Rodopi, 2012). He has also edited *The World of J.M. Coetzee* (in Japanese, 2006). His article on *The Childhood of Jesus* is forthcoming in *Journal of Modern Literature*. He is currently translating Coetzee's critical essays into Japanese.

**Dr. Sami Tchak**, the pseudonym of Sadamba Tcha-Koura, was born in Togo in 1960 and has lived in France since 1986. He is a sociologist and novelist. To date he has published eight novels and five essays. His latest book, *La couleur de l'écrivain*, was published in 2014 by La Cheminante. His novels include *Place des Fêtes* and *Hermine*, published by Gallimard.

**Asoc. Prof. Heidi Thomson** is Associate Professor of English at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand, where she has been teaching English Romantic Poetry since 1990. A native speaker of Dutch, Heidi Thomson was born and grew up in Belgium where she completed degrees in Germanic Philology and Eastern European Studies at the University of Ghent. Afterwards she completed a PhD about the Romantic ode at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign on a Fulbright Scholarship. She is the editor of several novels by Maria Edgeworth for Pickering and Chatto and Penguin Classics, a contributor to *The Cambridge History of English Poetry* and The Thomas Gray Archive, and the author of numerous book chapters, articles and reviews about Thomas Gray, William Collins, Maria Edgeworth, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Keats. Recent publications include a special issue of the *Belgian arts and literature journal DWB* about De Verwondering, co-edited with Jan Lauwereyns, and an essay about the nature of consciousness in Wordsworth's *Adventures on Salisbury Plain*.

**Prof. Anthony Uhlmann** is Director of the Writing and Society Research Centre at the University of Western Sydney. He is currently working on an ARC funded research project on J M Coetzee's fiction.

**Ms. Kezia Whiting** is a PhD student at the University of Buffalo. Her MPhil, completed at the University of Queensland, considered questions of style and subjectivity in Coetzee. She is interested in exploring some of these ideas further in modernist writers such as Ford and Beckett.

**Hermann Wittenberg** teaches in the Department of English at the University of the Western Cape. He has worked extensively on theories of spatiality, the sublime and landscape in colonial and postcolonial travel writing (the subject of his doctoral thesis) and was joint editor of the interdisciplinary collection of essays, *Rwenzori: Histories and Cultures of an African Mountain* (Kampala: Fountain Press 2007). His current research focuses on South African literary studies within a broadly book-historical framework and he has published several archival studies of the writings of J.M. Coetzee and Alan Paton, and edited books such as Paton's *Lost City of the Kalahari* travelogue (UKZN Press, 2005), and the J.M. Coetzee's *Two Screenplays* (UCT Press, 2014). He also has strong interests in eco-critical writing, convened the 2011 "Literature and Ecology" colloquium in Kleinmond, and edited a special issue of *Alternation* focusing on oceanic and coastal themes in South African literature.

**Ms. Sharon Zwi** was born in South Africa and studied Art at Reading and London Universities, UK. She moved to Sydney in 1982 and did Photography at TAFE, while working as a Photographer in the Electron Microscope Unit, University of Sydney. She has exhibited as both a Photographer and Printmaker and has been a member of Sydney Printmakers since 1994. Her most recent solo exhibition "Time Exposures: 62 Life Portraits" was part of the "Head On Festival of Photography" in Sydney in 2013. Her Life Portrait of David Stratton was a finalist in the National Portrait Gallery's Photographic Portrait Prize in 2013.

## Organising partners



## Sponsors

