

AGS President's Successful Book Presentation Congratulations!



Irmgard started her research in summer 2000 in the German Literature Archive in Marbach. She studied the history and theory of youth literature; she was reading Tony Schumacher's works chronologically, including her non-fiction, essays and memoirs. She could only read Tony Schumacher in Germany, since her works were not available in the US at the time. Now, the Cotsen Children's Library at Princeton U has acquired her youth literature books.

Tony Schumacher was vastly ignored and misread. Her evaluation was based on clichés and prejudgments. This was a challenge for the literature scholar. In two articles, published in Germany, she prepared the audience for this paradigm shift.

The next challenge was to find a publisher for a non-academic book. The scholar had to answer the recurring question: How and why does one go from the greatest German poet and thinker (Goethe) to – what's his name? – ah, her name? – a long-forgotten writer of kidstuff? And Irmgard overcame all this in opening a new chapter in the history of how Tony Schumacher's work is received.

The first event was the book premiere on May 18, in the preeminent bookstore of Ludwigsburg (10 miles north of Stuttgart), Tony Schumacher's hometown. That bookstore has been in the Aigner family, owned and run, since 1804, when it began as "Königliche Hofbuchhändler," since the King of Württemberg

resided in Ludwigsburg at the time. Aigner has a superb room for book presentations and they put on a wonderful gathering, with wine-and-buttered-Brezel reception and book signing after the reading.

The second event, on May 23 in Irmgard's hometown Waiblingen, was organized as a sort of homecoming. Several people stopped Irmgard in the street to welcome her back – for good. The hall, called "Treff"(punkt), in the City Library was packed. A prominent Waiblingen citizen had organized the event. He interviewed the "prodigal daughter", the Professor from the US on her life and career. Irmgard read a short selection from the book (15 min) about pre-WW I emigration. Again there were practically no questions, but lots of informal questions afterwards during the wine-and-cheese reception and book signing. A prominent winegrower in the region served the wine, and the cheese by a farmer 2 houses from Irmgard's family home. So this was an evening with three homegrown products: Irmgard, wine, and cheese.

The biggest coup although was a surprise interview on the radio that came up at the last moment. Irmgard was invited to the central Rundfunkhaus of the "Südwestdeutscher Rundfunk", SWR, which covers – exclusively Baden-Württemberg and Rheinland-Pfalz. A 30-minute interview with a journalist from the Landeskulturredaktion Baden-Württemberg yielded a 5-minute spot that was broadcast in the Kulturprogramm on May 27. The interview was completely unscripted for the interviewee. The interviewer, however, had her questions written out in front of her. Irmgard reports that she had no idea what the journalist was going to ask and that she was in shock: would she know what to say? would she be able to talk coherently? Irmgard was afraid. She had never done this before. And, yet a bigger surprise: a 30-minute feature on Tony Schumacher will be broadcast on Saturday, June 24, at 9:05 a.m. our time, SWR 2, "Literatur im Land". <http://www.swr.de/swr2/sendungen/literatur-im-land/index.html>

Before and after the presentations there have been numerous articles about the book and the scholar in the *Ludwigsburger Kreiszeitung*, *Waiblinger Kreiszeitung*, and the *Stuttgarter Zeitung*.



Irmgard Wagner. *Kaiserreich und Republik in Tony Schumachers Jugendbüchern: Eine literarisch-kulturgeschichtliche Zeitreise.* Published by Hackenberg in Ludwigsburg. 246 pp and 11 illustrations.

Price Euro 19.90. It is on the internet.

AGS AWARD

Did you know that at the present time German is taught at only two high schools in Montgomery County?

The American Goethe Society responds to that urgent need with a new outreach program, which aims to counteract in a small way the sad decline of German study in area high schools.

Our new program, the **American Goethe Society Award**, will recognize outstanding high school students of German - and their teachers, of course. The winner in a contest, or winners depending on how much money is available, will be awarded a modest amount of money, and the recognition that goes with winning a contest.

We became encouraged to go forward with this Award when members began to send donations over and above the dues, simply because they believe in our work. To make the (monetary) Award attractive to students and interesting to teachers we need your membership support more than ever. Any funds received over the dues amount - or separate donation checks directed (in the memo space) to the AGS Award - will be placed in a restricted account and are available only for the Award program. Plus, when we have a good year at AGS, we will direct more resources to the Award.

AGS Coming Events

July 19: Dramatic Reading: *Der Gestiefelte Kater*, III
Dolley Madison Library
McLean, VA, 7:00-8:45 pm
- with social hour to follow -

August 26: Lunch and Lyrik
Theme: GOETHE'S BIRTHDAY
Goethe on Himself; bring something from his autobiographical writings, or his letters.
Old Europe, Washington, D.C.

September 28: Book Conversation
Elfriede Jelinek, Nobel Prize winner for literature 2004,
Goethe-Institut, Washington D.C., 6:45 - 8:45 pm,
- Refreshments to follow -

Our first fall event is a Book Conversation, with panelists Professor Esther Elstun (George Mason University), Margareta Ploder (Austrian Embassy), Professor Susanne Rinner (Georgetown University), and Dr. Simone Seym (American University). Our topic is the 2004 winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature, "for her musical flow of voices and counter-voices in novels and plays that with extraordinary linguistic zeal reveal the absurdity of society's clichés and their subjugating power", the Austrian writer Elfriede Jelinek. There has hardly been a more controversial Nobel Prize winner, even in her native country, than Jelinek: hardly a surprise since Jelinek deliberately seeks out controversial themes for her dramas and novels. In our panel discussion, we will consider *Der Tod und das Mädchen I-V* (2004), Berliner Taschenbuch Verlag, paperback/ *The Princess Plays, Snow White, Sleeping Beauty, and Jackie* (Onassis), in THEATER, Volume 36, Number 2, published by the Yale School of Drama and Duke University Press. You can also download (and pay) it at:

Snow White:

<http://theater.dukejournals.org/cgi/reprint/36/2/38>

Sleeping Beauty:

<http://theater.dukejournals.org/cgi/reprint/36/2/46>

Jackie

<http://theater.dukejournals.org/cgi/reprint/36/2/52>

Cultural Events in and around D.C.

FILM

Spotlight on HELMUT KÄUTNER
3 July - 28 August 2006

Goethe-Institut Washington, GoetheForum

Helmut Käutner (1908-1980) was one of the most acclaimed German directors of his time. A director,

actor, and screenwriter, he refused to serve the Nazi regime and produced his best films during precisely that period of time, including *Great Freedom No. 7* (1944) and *Under the Bridges* (1945). "Art is contraband," he once said.



Helmut Käutner, German Film Institute

In the post-war era, Käutner created masterpieces in German film of the late forties and fifties. In 1954 his *The Last Bridge*, a stark, realistic war drama, won the International Jury Prize at the Cannes Film Festival. On the strength of this film, Universal Pictures brought Käutner to Hollywood; *The Restless Years* (1958) and *Stranger in My Arms* (1959) ensued. He then returned to Germany, turning out such intriguing films as *The Rest is Silence* (1960) before moving into television in 1969.

ART

ANSELM KIEFER: HEAVEN AND EARTH

June 22 - September 10, 2006

Hirshhorn Museum

Anselm Kiefer (b. 1945, Germany) is widely recognized as one of the most significant artists of our time. This exhibition is the first American survey of Kiefer's work in almost 20 years. Featuring 40 large paintings, books and sculptures created between 1969 and the present, the selection emphasizes the layers of meaning in the artist's work, specifically his career-long meditation on the relationship between heaven and earth.

Kiefer's images intertwine a complex range of sources, including alchemical treatises; Nordic, Greek, Egyptian and early Christian mythology; and mystical Jewish texts, often relating these subjects to modern history. Kiefer's work includes evocative mixes of materials, such as paint, dried plants, clay, ash and lead. Moving beyond his early examination of German culture, Kiefer paints immense landscapes ranging from lush to barren, creating panoramas of stars as he explores the workings and mysteries of the cosmos.



Anselm Kiefer.

(German, born 1945). *Der Rhein*. 1983. Illustrated book with twenty-one woodcuts, page: 23 1/4 x 16 1/2" (59 x 42 cm) Prints: various dimensions. Publisher: the artist, Hornbach. Printer: the artist. Edition: 10. Purchase. © 2006 Anselm Kiefer

Michael Auping, chief curator of The Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, whose association with Kiefer dates back almost two decades, organized the exhibition. Curator Valerie Fletcher coordinates the presentation at the Hirshhorn.

This exhibition was previously on view at the Musée d'Art Contemporain de Montréal, Feb. 12-May 7, 2006 and will be at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Oct. 12, 2006-Jan 14, 2007.

KLEE AND AMERICA

June 17-September 10, 2006

The Phillips Collection

Swiss artist Paul Klee's (1879-1940) remarkable work has long struck a responsive chord in America, with both collectors and artists. He was greatly admired by the abstract expressionists for his inventiveness and genius for composition. Earlier, he had a profound influence on Germany's Bauhaus, and his work was a victim of Nazi art purges. Approximately 80 works of extraordinary quality will be on view, among them works collected by Ernest Hemingway, Clifford Odets, and Mies van der Rohe. The Phillips Collection's 13 works by Klee, one of the cornerstones of the collection, has served as inspiration for American artists including Richard Diebenkorn, Gene Davis, and Kenneth Noland.



When We Were Young: New Perspectives on the Art of the Child June 17 – September 10, 2006

Klee had a deep interest in children's art, which he considered a rich resource for his own creativity and inspiration. This accompanying exhibition to KLEE AND AMERICA features 30 contemporary children's drawings alongside childhood drawings by Klee and Picasso juxtaposed with their mature work. By bringing these works together, WHEN WE WERE YOUNG seeks to re-examine conventional notions of what it means to be artistically gifted and shed new light on the relationship of drawing to creative thinking in children.

BELLINI, GIORGIONE, TITIAN, AND THE RENAISSANCE OF VENETIAN PAINTING

June 18–September 17, 2006
West Building, Main Floor



Giorgione Venetian, 1477/1478–1510
Three Philosophers, c. 1506 (ex)
Kunsthistorisches Museum, Gemäldegalerie, Vienna

Sixteenth-century Venetian art, from a period regarded as a Golden Age, has been the subject of several international loan exhibitions, most recently in London, Paris, Rome, and Venice itself. This new exhibition will differ in important ways from the previous surveys, exploring the relationships between the artists and focusing on paintings from the first three decades of the

century, which correspond roughly to the High Renaissance in Rome and Florence. The time span covered by the exhibition represents, visually and intellectually, the most exciting phase of the Renaissance in Venice, when the old Giovanni Bellini (d. 1516), Giorgione (d. 1510), and the young Titian, among others, were all working side by side.

The exhibition will present approximately 60 paintings that best exemplify the new ideas and ideals: music, the pastoral landscape, the female nude, and the romantic portrait. It will include Bellini and Titian's *Feast of the Gods* (1514 and 1529), Giorgione's *Adoration of the Shepherds* (c. 1500), *Laura* (1506), and *Three Philosophers* (c. 1506). **Noted experts in Venetian Renaissance art will contribute to the fully illustrated catalogue, to be published in both English and German.**

Organized by the National Gallery of Art, Washington, and the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.

It is supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Art and the Humanities.
This exhibition will be at the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, October 17, 2006 – January 7, 2007.

We wish you all a wonderful summer. Stay cool!!

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