Dear colleagues,

Welcome to the School newsletter!

I hope you enjoy reading a little bit about the work of others in our School. We are a diverse bunch with varied research, public engagement and teaching experiences: this newsletter is one way of sharing our practice and getting to know about what we all get up to. One of the best things about being in my role over the last six months has been getting to see more of what people do. This newsletter only captures a very small part of our activities, of course, but I hope you enjoy reading about them.

Thank you everyone who has contributed to this edition: please consider sharing your news with us on the Gecko form detailed at the end of the newsletter. We will aim to produce another one for the start of summer.

Michelle Macleod, Interim Head of School
Frances Wilkins, lecturer in ethnomusicology at the Elphinstone Institute, has recently started a research project, funded by the Carnegie Trust, titled ‘Seinn Coisrigte anns a’ Chaidhealtachd an Iar agus ‘sna h-Eileanan Siar Sacred Singing of the West Highlands and Western Isles’.

By recording and analyzing current sacred singing practices, her aim is to explore the role of singing in worship within the faith communities and in their social, linguistic, cultural and occupational contexts. The pivotal role of sacred music is being researched, along with the meaning of the music to participants, and its role in the formation of personal and group identity. Religious traditions and fishing and crofting heritage will be explored with particular reference to the construction of a distinctive ‘soundscape’, and the musical expression of religious belief through both Gaelic and English language.

The research will primarily involve fieldwork in the region, in particular on the islands of Lewis, Harris, Skye, Raasay, North and South Uist, Benbecula and Barra and in Lochalsh.


Elizabeth Anderson, lecturer in English Studies, received a small grant from the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

Her project is titled ‘Everyday practice and place: ritual, modernism and post-secularism in Naomi Mitchison and Sylvia Townsend Warner’.

The grant will fund travel to work on Mitchison and Warner’s papers in the National Library of Scotland and the Dorset County Museum. Elizabeth will present outcomes of this work at conferences in York and Chester in the spring and summer.
Eleanor Wood

Hello, I’m Eleanor. I’m a Research and Teaching Assistant in the Gaelic department.

I’m from Dundee originally, and I came to the University of Aberdeen as an undergraduate 10 years ago to study Gaelic. Sometimes it feels as though I just never left!

I’ve recently finished an MSc in Translation studies, where my interests mainly lie in translating children’s literature into Gaelic. At the moment, however, I’m teaching on two undergraduate programmes – Translation and Gaelic – and working as part of a research team creating a CEFR assessment for Scottish Gaelic. This project combines a lot of the things I love – working with languages, learning and teaching, and supporting Gaelic – and it’s incredibly valuable to me that I’ve found a place here and have continued to be involved in academia after graduating.

Outside of work, I enjoy handcrafts like knitting and crochet, and I love to bake.

Laura Kessler

Hi, I am Laura. I am working as an honorary teaching assistant at the German Department for this spring term.

Here, I am visiting 4 undergraduate language and literature classes, organize pronunciation and grammar study groups for students of German that are struggling, and I am also the director’s assistant of the German Drama Group that will have their performance Mid-March.

Being a Final Year student of Educational Science and German As A Foreign Language at my home university, Bielefeld University in Germany, and also having taught at the University of Limerick, IRL, the previous term prepared me for my work here through an emphasis of correlations between Second Language Acquisition and Theater Education Work as well as a concentration on Socio-Cultural Theory as a basis for my teaching methods.

Outside of Work I enjoy the events organised by the LGBT-Society and love to explore the landscape around Aberdeen during the weekends.
Bárbara Barreiro León

I’m originally from Spain but I’ve been living in Aberdeen for almost 4 years now. I first came as a Visiting Student for the Centre for Modern Thought and the Film and Visual Culture Department in 2016 in order to produce some research for my soon to be finished PhD in History of Art and Visual Culture.

I’ve been working as a Teaching Assistant in the School of LLMVC for three consecutive years where I have taught different courses such as Introduction to Visual Culture, Introduction to Film and the Cinematic Experience in the Film and Visual Culture Department and Spanish Language Courses in the Spanish and Latin American Studies Department. This last year I also joined the Language Centre as a Language Tutor for the Spanish courses.

Research

I research contemporary arts, architecture, and visual media in early and mid-twentieth century Western Europe and the United States with a special interest in the philosophy of art, contemporary urban aesthetics and architecture, being also the co-author of two edited volumes on Spanish regional architectural heritage and the only author of a number of peer-reviewed articles in international journals.

Véronique Heijnsbroek

Hello, I’m Véronique. I’m a Teaching Assistant in the Gaelic Department.

I’m originally from Luxembourg and moved to Aberdeen in 2009 to study English and Scottish Literature and eventually changed my degree to include Gaelic language and culture. I finished my MLitt in Gaelic Folklore, got married, and went to Germany to study Fine Art in 2016.

At Aberdeen Uni I’m currently teaching a Gaelic Literature class and assisting in a second year Gaelic language class. When I’m not teaching, I am painting or sketching, be it as an illustrator or as an independent artist (visitveronique.com)

My hobbies include Urban Sketching, singing in the Aberdeen Gaelic Choir, reading, gaming, knitting/crochet, sewing, baking, jigsaw puzzles, philosophy, history, hiking, climbing, watching the world go by, archery, and Tae Kwon Do.
KANSKE MÅLA DÖRREN BLÅ

MAYBE PAINT THE DOOR BLUE BY ANNA BOKEDAL

Lecturer in Swedish Anna Bokedal published the book ‘Kanske måla dörren blå’ in which she tells about her life as a Swede in Scotland.

The book is written in Swedish and contains short, reflective and humoristic pieces on life in Scotland, and on coming to Scotland as a family from Sweden. The publisher, LYS Förlag, specializes on migration and cultural encounters, and highlights global experiences.

The publication was featured in The Press and Journal. The book is available on Amazon.

SECULARISM, ISLAM AND PUBLIC INTELLECTUALS IN CONTEMPORARY FRANCE

BY NADIA KIWAN

Nadia Kiwan’s monograph ‘Secularism, Islam and public intellectuals in contemporary France’ has been published by Manchester University Press (2020).

This book focuses on how Muslim intellectuals in contemporary France contribute to our understanding of the relationship between Islam, secularism and French society. Whilst most books about Islam in France tend to examine polemicized issues such as the veil or Islamist violence, this book’s focus on secular Muslim intellectuals challenges polarizing accounts of Islam and Muslims. Secularism, Islam and public intellectuals in contemporary France thus departs from the ‘clash of civilisations’ approach and, more broadly challenges divisive claims that European ‘multiculturalism’ must be abandoned in order to uphold democratic principles and values.
SINGING THE GOSPEL ALONG SCOTLAND’S NORTH-EAST COAST, 1859–2009

BY FRANCES WILKINS

Singing the Gospel along Scotland’s North-East Coast, 1859-2009 (London & New York: Routledge, 2018), the monograph by Frances Wilkins, lecturer in ethnomusicology at The Elphinstone Institute, is now available as a paperback through the Routledge website.

Following three years of ethnomusicological fieldwork on the sacred singing traditions of evangelical Christians in North-East Scotland and Northern Isles coastal communities, Frances Wilkins documents and analyses current singing practices in this book by placing them historically and contemporaneously within their respective faith communities.

LOVE WAS HIS MEANING

BY GEMMA McGREGOR

Department of Music alumna Gemma McGregor’s (PhD Composition, 2016) Love Was His Meaning for SSA Chorus and harp is to be published by Multitude of Voyces in an anthology of sacred music by women in November 2020.

The piece was commissioned by the Multitude of Voyces as one of a set of four choral pieces by women composers that set verses from the Revelations of Divine Love by 14th century mystic, Dame Julian of Norwich. The other three composers are Hilary Campbell, Carol J. Jones and Judith Weir.
Public Engagement

Swedish teacher Anna Bokedal and her students celebrate Lucia with a traditional performance

On November 18, first year SN1003 Swedish students had a cultural tutorial, to which, as a surprise, the second year Swedish SN2003 students came and made a traditional Swedish "Lucia" performance. Dressed in white robes, with tinsel, stars and carrying lights in the dark, they sang songs learnt by heart in Swedish. After the celebration, first year students learnt traditional Swedish dance games and made some Swedish Christmas craft.

This event is annually recurring, but always differently shaped by the second year students. It adds to the language study for both year groups the opportunity to get hands-on cultural experience, and to mix music, actions, language and tradition. Students have fun together and second year students also practise performing under safe circumstances.

Samples from the event can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

This year the event in Aberdeen was featured on the web-page of the governmental agency Swedish Institute.

University of Aberdeen Chamber Choir perform new work by Dr Phillip Cooke at Honorary Degree Ceremony for The Princess Royal

On January 14, the University of Aberdeen Chamber Choir performed a new work by Head of Music, Dr Phillip Cooke at a special honorary degree ceremony which presented an honorary doctorate to Princess Anne, The Princess Royal.

The new piece, 'The Mystery of Light', is set to a short section of 'The Living Mountain' (1977) by University graduate Nan Shephard (1893 – 1981). Cooke was inspired by the text as it showcases a region with close connections to the Royal Family – the Cairngorms – and highlights the relationships between nature, place and people.
New Aberdeen Centre for the Classical Association of Scotland

The Classical Association of Scotland, founded in 1902, exists to promote and sustain classical studies in Scotland. A particular focus is the support of classical studies in Latin in Scottish schools. With the support of Classics for All, they are working to engender interest in Classics at all levels, while also ensuring that there is an adequate number of trained professionals to nurture the next generation of classicists in Scotland.

The Classical Association of Scotland has a new Aberdeen centre, serving the North of Scotland. Their purpose is to promote knowledge of and interest in classical culture, through events including talks by visiting academics and workshops with local schools. They are a registered charity (SCIO no. SC049690). This semester’s events opened with a lecture by Prof. Robert Segal on ‘The Myth of Adonis: Myth-Ritualist, Structuralist, and Psychological Approaches’, on Monday 20th January.

This will be followed by a series of visiting speakers between now and June (on the first and third Mondays of every month, at 5.15 pm in MacRobert 302, with a break for the Easter vacation), and their first school event in March. For a full programme, and for membership enquiries, please contact the Chair, Syrithe Pugh (s.m.pugh@abdn.ac.uk), or see our website.

Do you have a piece of good news to share?

Share it with the School of LLMVC here.

It doesn’t need to be ‘big’ news: we are interested in hearing about conference attendance, innovative teaching practice, grants – the small ones as well as the big ones, publications etc.
Upcoming Events

**Centre for Modern Languages Research - Dr Carolina Valenzuela Matus**

‘Nature and antiquities at the beginning of the Nation. The formation of Natural History Museums in Chile (XIX-XX centuries)’

**TIME:** 16:00 - 17:00  
**LOCATION:** CB009 College Bounds

**Classical Association of Scotland: Guest Lecture**

Andrew Laird, 'Virgil on the Other Side of World'.

**TIME:** 17:15 - 18:30  
**LOCATION:** MacRobert 302

**Thursdays with Amy (on FRIDAY!)**

Informal coffee hour - no agenda, just turn up if you fancy a chat!

**TIME:** 10:00 - 11:00  
**LOCATION:** Taylor C6  
**INTENDED FOR:** All postgrads and staff

**GWW Center Public Talk: Prof Ian Christie (Birkbeck)**

Prof. Ian Christie will speak on 'The mystery of Robert Paul's Aberdeen film and other puzzles about Britain's neglected pioneer'

**TIME:** 16:00 - 17:30  
**LOCATION:** Room 224, Sir Duncan Rice Library

**Research Gym - Presentation Skills**

A session on honing your presentation skills.

**TIME:** 13:00 - 15:00  
**LOCATION:** ZB19, Zoology Building  
**INTENDED FOR:** All LLMVC and DHP postgrads

**Dr Zeynep Bulut - Queen's University Belfast**

Up in the Air: Communal Voice Making

**TIME:** 16:00 - 17:30  
**LOCATION:** MacRobert Building - Room MR055
The German Drama Group presents

17th & 18th of March
7-9 pm
William Guild
Arts Lecture Theatre
AB24 5SU

TESTOSTERON
A German play by Rebekka Kricheldorf
with English supertitles

Tickets available
at doors and at bakesale
Tue, 10th March
12-2pm
MacRoberts

£3 students
£5 non-students

DAAD
Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
German Academic Exchange Service