SHANKAR RAMAN RECEIVES PROMOTION TO FULL PROFESSOR

Literature is pleased to announce the promotion of Shankar Raman to Full Professor beginning July 1, 2012. A graduate of MIT with two Bachelor of Science degrees (Electrical Engineering and Architecture), Raman is an internationally recognized scholar of Early Modern Literature. His work falls into two broad areas of literary and cultural studies: colonial and postcolonial perspectives in the European Renaissance and the ongoing relationship between literature and science, especially mathematics, in post-Renaissance Europe.

Raman’s first book, Framing India: The Colonial Imaginary in Early Modern Culture (Stanford UP, 2002), drew relationships between the way that South Asia was depicted in Renaissance English literature and the way it is depicted in contemporary accounts of European exploration. Raman has also co-edited (with Lowell Gallagher) an anthology of Shakespeare criticism in the Palgrave Shakespeare Studies series, entitled Knowing Shakespeare (Macmillian, 2010). The volume included Raman’s novel reading of Hamlet’s soliloquy, drawing attention to the way in which its account of bodily sensations bears the marks of Renaissance concepts; he also provided an introduction, in which he argued that Shakespeare’s dramatic explorations of sensation pointed toward the theory of sensation offered more than one hundred and fifty years later by philosopher of empiricism David Hume. This notion of foreshadowing is at the heart of Raman’s latest book, Renaissance (Continued on page 4).

STEPHANIE FRAMPTON JOINS THE LITERATURE FACULTY

Stephanie Frampton will join the Literature faculty starting July 2012 as an Assistant Professor of Literature. Frampton received her Ph.D. in 2011 from Harvard University in Comparative Literature and Classical Philology.

Frampton’s dissertation, Towards a Media History of Writing in Ancient Italy, is a wide-ranging examination of the material culture of literacy through-out the ancient Mediterranean world. She will teach Literature’s 21L.001 “Foundations of Western Culture, Homer to Dante” and 21L.455 “Classical Literature” subjects in the Fall. Frampton will also be involved with the interdisciplinary program for Ancient and Medieval Studies, which offers a wide variety of subjects drawn from a number of disciplines and spans the 6,500 years between 5000 B.C. and 1500 A.D. We look forward to her joining the faculty and to her participation in the teaching activities and communities of the Literature Section and of MIT as a whole.

DIANA HENDERSON ELECTED VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE SHAKESPEARE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

Professor Diana Henderson has been elected Vice-President of the Shakespeare Association of America (SAA), the premier American academic organization devoted to the study of the Bard’s oeuvre, the cultural and theatrical milieu of his time, and the global influence of his works ever since. She will be taking over as President of the SAA in 2013. As SAA Vice-President, Henderson’s duties include chairing the committee that awards the J. Leeds Barroll Dissertation Prize for outstanding work on a topic involving Shakespeare studies. In the past, Henderson was a member of the SAA’s Nominations Committee, organized SAA seminars, and served on the Board of Trustees for a three-year term, during which she organized the 2009 SAA Program for the conference in Washington, DC, which drew the largest attendance in the SAA’s history prior to this year’s Boston meeting.

Henderson’s Shakespeare-related publications include Collaborations with the Past: Reshaping Shakespeare (Continued on page 4).
EUGENIE BRINKEMA RECEIVES NEWHOUSE CENTER FELLOWSHIP

Assistant Professor Eugenie Brinkema was awarded a one-year fellowship at the Newhouse Center for the Humanities at Wellesley College. The Center hosts three to six research fellows and visiting scholars each year. Fellows devote themselves to work on a new project, while also programming various intellectual events, such as lectures and performances, to be open to broader Wellesley and Boston communities. Brinkema’s project for 2012-2013 is entitled “If Horror is a Problem of a Line,” part of an attempt to define the horror film as a formal engagement with philosophical theories of finitude. While in residence, she will present work at Wellesley and at the University of Toronto on the controversial film *The Human Centipede* and will begin work on the French horror films *À l’intérieur* and *Martyrs*.

SANDY ALEXANDRE AT OXFORD

Associate Professor Sandy Alexandre, who has been on leave from the Literature faculty this year, was chosen to participate in the exchange program between MIT and Balliol College at Oxford University. While at Oxford, Alexandre will continue work on her second book project, tentatively titled *Up from Chattels: A Purchase on Significance through Material Objects in Black Literature & Culture*.

2012 ANNUAL SENIOR DINNER

Literature Professors Mary Fuller and Stephen Tapscott, along with Literature Undergraduate Academic Administrative Assistant Daria Johnson, celebrated with three members of the Literature 2012 graduating class at Lala Rokh on Beacon Hill. A fourth graduating senior, Ivana Lucero, was not able to attend.

LITERATURE WELCOMES JULIA PANKO

Dr. Julia Panko will join the Literature Section as a Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow in the School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences at MIT beginning July 2012 for a period of two years. Panko was chosen out of a pool of over 800 applicants.

Funded by the Mellon Foundation, the Fellowship allows promising young scholars to work at the intersection of humanities disciplines or between humanities and other disciplines. Panko’s research focuses on 20th/21st-century British and Anglophone literature, with particular attention to media studies and the digital humanities, particularly the history and future of the book. Both lines of inquiry fit perfectly with the mission of the Mellon Fellowship and will make her a valuable presence in the Literature and CMS Communities.

ALISA BRAITHWAITE & GHENWA HAYEK TO LEAVE MIT

Professor Alisa Braithwaite will be leaving MIT this summer and will begin teaching at Milton Academy in the fall. Braithwaite has been a faculty anchor for Literature’s 21L.007 “World Literatures” class, 21L.488 “Contemporary Literature” (in which she frequently taught the topic “Elements of Style”) and 21L.008, the D’Arbeloff-funded course “Black Matters,” taught as a joint course with a number of SHASS faculty. She will be missed by all in the Literature Section, who wish her the best in her future endeavors.

Dr. Ghenwa Hayek, a postdoctoral fellow with Literature since December 2010, has accepted a tenure-track position at Claremont McKenna College in California, where she will be an Assistant Professor of Arabic Language and Literature in the Modern Languages Department. Hayek worked with Professor James Buzard on curriculum development for MIT’s partnership with the Singapore University of Technology and Design. Between December 2010 and June 2011, they established syllabi for two back-to-back humanities courses, similar to MIT’s Literature sequence, 21L.001 and 21L.002, but with an expanded, global outlook. Among her duties at Claremont McKenna, she will be helping to develop a fledgling Arabic program and to enhance the number of subjects in World Literature.
MELVILLE AND MIXIMIZE

Senior Lecturer Wyn Kelley organized two initiatives in Literature in the past year. In October 2011, Literature joined with the Hyperstudio, MIT’s digital humanities lab, to host MEL (the Melville Electronic Library, a digital archive of Melville’s works in multiple editions and media). This three-day symposium brought thirty distinguished scholars of literature and the digital humanities to MIT. On Thursday, October 13, as part of MIT’s Comparative Media Studies (CMS) Colloquium, John Bryant (Hofstra University, Director of MEL) addressed an audience of MEL attendees, CMS graduate students, Literature and CMS faculty, and the MIT public in a talk titled “Revision, Culture, and the Machine: How Digital Makes Us Human.” The Friday meetings featured both plenary and group planning sessions, as well as the formal launch of the MEL website at http://mel.hofstra.edu/. The afternoon plenary meeting was open to the public and included a demonstration of projects in Hyperstudio led by its director Kurt Fendt, and a panel discussion with John Bryant, Amy Earhart (Texas A&M), Laura Mandell (Texas A&M), and Marta Werner (D’Youville College) on new developments and cautionary tales in the digital-archive world. On Saturday, a special culminating event took place at Harvard’s Houghton Library, where Dennis Marnon (Administrative Officer and Melville scholar) produced a special Melville exhibit and organized a program dedicated to new developments in archives and the study of sources and manuscripts.

Kelley’s work with both MEL and the Hyperstudio nourishes her other ongoing project, a digital tool called Miximize, developed in collaboration with the Hyperstudio and with support from the Alumni Class Funds and the SHASS Fund for Teaching and Learning. This tool allows students to mark up literary texts online, share their annotations with the class, and track the course of their thinking and writing over a digital record of initial impressions, research queries, and close readings of passages in literary work. “It is a great pleasure,” Kelley reports, “to have one’s scholarly and teaching pursuits come together in such an integrated and satisfying way.”

SHAKESPEARE COMES TO BOSTON AND CAMBRIDGE

Boston—MIT’s Literature Section and School of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences took a leading role in sponsoring the 40th Annual Meeting and Conference of the Shakespeare Association of America (SAA) held in Boston in April 2012. Literature’s faculty involved in Shakespeare and early modern studies—Peter Donaldson, Mary Fuller, Diana Henderson, Shankar Raman, and William Uricchio—were featured in the conference brochure. In addition, Professors Henderson and Raman participated in a seminar on Foreign Policy in the Age of Shakespeare.

Cambridge—Faculty, staff, and students from MIT came together on January 26, 2012 during IAP for a festive, day-long dramatic reading of “Great Danes: Shakespeare’s Hamlet and Stoppard's Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead.” The event was the latest in an annual Mobile Marathon series, so throughout the day, readers gathered in various locations around campus as they made their way through the two texts. The day ended with pizza and conversation. A great time was had by all who participated.

Science for Sinners

Literature Professor Ruth Perry, the Ann Fetter Friedlaender Professor of Humanities, participated in the Cambridge Science Festival Program “Science for Sinners,” held on April 26, 2012 at the MIT Museum. Nine MIT researchers were on hand to discuss the ways in which aspects of their scholarship related to one of the traditional seven deadly sins. Professor Perry, a scholar of 18th-century Literature, spoke on the sin of pride in connection with Captain Cook’s South Sea voyages. Read more at Boston.com: http://www.boston.com/lifestyle/health/2012/05/22/there-science-behind-the-seven-deadly-sins/SxEiRQjimhqpqgB9LRLUO/story.html?
PETER S. DONALDSON PRIZE IN LITERATURE AWARDED TO MARIYA SAMOYLOVA (‘12)

The annual Peter S. Donaldson Prize for Excellence in Literature was awarded to graduating senior Mariya Samoylova on Monday, May 14, 2012. The prize recognizes a Literature major who has excelled academically and has been an engaged participant in the literary community at MIT.

At the award ceremony, Professors Stephen Tapscott and Shankar Raman praised her for her scholarship in Literature and the grace with which she conducts herself academically, balancing a double-major in Literature and Biology while concentrating in French and competing with the MIT Ballroom Dance Team. Upon graduation, Mariya will attend UCSF medical school.

2012 KELLY-DOUGLAS FUND AWARDS

On May 7, 2012, faculty and staff from across SHASS gathered at a reception to present the Kelly-Douglas Fund awards. The Fund, which recognizes student and faculty work in SHASS-related fields, was established through donations by MIT alumnus I. Austin Kelly III in 1975. This year’s event was held in honor of the 90th birthday of Professor Richard M. Douglas (1922-2005), an historian who, for some considerable time, was also Head of the former Humanities Department. In that capacity, Professor Douglas joined with Austin Kelly to establish the Fund and served as its first director.

This year’s Essay Prize was awarded to Xenia Antipova for her essay "Bonfield’s Disregard for Justice: The Haymarket Riot," which traced a pivotal sequence of events in the history of the American labor movement. Sam Douglas and David Douglas, sons of the late Professor Douglas, were in attendance at the event along with David’s wife and daughter. The brothers presented the Summer Traveling Fellowship awards to Xenia Antipova and Megan Cherry.

The Kelly-Douglas Fund is currently directed by Associate Professor of Literature Noel Jackson. For more information about the Kelly-Douglas Fund, including application forms, visit the SHASS website: http://shass.mit.edu/undergraduate/scholarships/kelly-douglas