“When Are You Going to Get Another Opportunity to Do This?”

–By Markishala Coleman

Editor’s note: Markishala (Marcy) Coleman spent a semester in Jena, Germany, as part of MU’s exchange program with the Friedrich-Schiller-Universität.

Interview with Guanghui Zhao, Visiting professor from China

–By Lynn Pifer

Editor’s note: We are honored to have Dr. Guanghui Zhao, Vice-Dean of the English Language Department of China Pharmaceutical University, Nanjing, visit us during the Fall 2014 semester, as she works on her scholarship on literature and literary theory.

What part of China are you from?

Guanghui Zhao – I’m from Nanjing, in the southeast part of China. Nanjing used to be the capital of six dynasties in China since 211 A.D. It is the second largest city in southeast China and the third largest center of science and education in China. Population: 7.5 million.

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Please, send news, announcements, and contributions to:
lpifer@mansfield.edu
Interview with Ghaunghui

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What is your role at your university?

–I’m the Vice Dean of the English Department and am in charge of the teaching English to more than 10,000 non-English majors, 400 English majors, and thousands of graduate students.

What projects are you working on while you are here? And, how does the visiting scholarship help you with your research?

–I applied to the China Scholarship Council for the opportunity to study abroad and was awarded the scholarship through a rigorous evaluation process. I’m working on academic articles in the fields of literature and literary theory. Thanks to this scholarship, I have access to the latest books published by American writers, which helps me a lot when I write articles about thought-provoking novels. Also, I consider this opportunity a type of sabbatical. We do not have sabbaticals in China. Now, I can focus on my academic research without the distraction of teaching, administrative tasks, and family life. Presently, I’m working on Terry Eagleton’s literary and cultural theory.

You’ve been a visiting scholar at Mansfield before. How did you choose Mansfield University? And, why have you decided to return?

–I visited Mansfield University four years ago, because the two universities have established the cooperative relationship (1+2+1 program). I was very impressed by the hardworking and friendly professors and staff. I want to learn from them and urge my colleagues to learn from them, because they are devoted and care a lot about their students. I also love the students at Mansfield University; they are polite, active and hardworking in class activities. What’s more, I love the beautiful trees in Mansfield, especially in the fall. I’m very happy to be here again. I have benefited a lot from taking Dr. Ulrich’s Monster Literature course and talking with Dr. Pifer about African-American literature this semester. Old friends and old wine are the best. I missed my friends, so I chose to come back to MU, although I could have gone to another university in USA or in another country. Mansfield University is my home in the USA.

Are there opportunities for faculty and students interested in visiting your university?

–All the professors, staff and students are warmly welcome to visit China Pharmaceutical University. Professors and staff can work as oral English teachers for a year or two, as we need three foreign experts to teach English every year. They can choose to give lectures during a short-term visit, also. Students can visit different departments at the university, if they like. Chinese students and teachers are friendly to American people. All are welcome to take part in our Sino-USA Cultural Exchange Week, which is held every May when everyone is on break here. If you are interested in visiting Nanjing Normal University, I can also help to establish a relationship with that university.

Many thanks go to General Hendricks, Dr. Ulrich, and all the professors and the staff of the English and Modern Languages Department. They always make me feel at home in Mansfield. Many thanks also go to the warm-hearted staff, Jeff and Tina, who work in the technology center, Sheila in the library, and my good friend, Janet Yoder.
Fire Ferrets Soar in Second Season

—By English major, Riley Thomas

[Editor’s note: Last year a handful of dedicated students, including English major, Taylor Donahue, founded the Mansfield University quidditch team. Here, Riley Thomas gives us an overview of the campus’s fastest growing team.]

The Mansfield University Fire Ferrets quidditch team is off to a great start in their 2014-2015 competition year. The Fire Ferrets started off their season with an event for newcomers to try quidditch in August. Future players were instructed on the basics of the game: how to throw, catch, and run while having a broom between their legs. Following tryouts, the team had doubled in size going from nine players to around twenty, including two international students, Solène Boutillier from France and Sandra Pong from China. Having a team this size opened up a lot of doors and opportunities for our team.

First and foremost the team is now a United States Quidditch (USQ) and International Quidditch Association (IQA) Official team. This status allows us to compete in official events, have USQ standings, and attend the regional championship, where we have an opportunity to earn a bid for the World Cup. Top teams in the seven regions of the U.S compete in the World Cup to find out who is the best. Being an official team makes other schools want to compete against us, because we all have the same goal: to attend World Cup. We are involved in conference play as well.

The Fire Ferrets are involved in both the Snow Belt Conference (SBC) and the Keystone Conference (KEQC). The Snow Belt Conference is a group of official teams all hoping to make it to World Cup. The Fire Ferrets are currently ranked 9th out of the 17 teams in the SBC. Our team is also one of the founding schools of the Keystone Conference. This conference is made up of teams on the New York/Pennsylvania border who want to compete against each other. The schools involved include Alfred University, Edinboro University, Nazareth College, and SUNY Cortland. At the opener of this conference the Fire Ferrets dominated the competition. The scores were as follows: MU vs. Cortland 140*-30, MU vs. Nazareth 190*- 10, MU vs. Alfred 90*- 40. The * indicates which team had the snitch grab at the end of the game. The

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What’s New in English: The Professional Writing Track

–By Brad Lint

Beginning in Fall 2015, the English B.A. will include a new job-focused Professional Writing Track for students who want to prepare for careers while earning their BA in English.

You may hear different terms for professional writing. For example, professional writing is often known as “business writing”, but is usually considered distinct from “technical writing” in the sciences. Professional writing, moreover, is a subset of professional or technical communications. Perhaps the easiest way to understand the difference is that, whereas all writing is communication, not all communication is writing. Communication also includes verbal interaction, such as presentations, negotiations, and small group meetings.

What is professional writing? In short, it means writing on the job, but that’s not all there is to it. On the one hand, there are “professionals who write.” This would include just about everyone who writes while working in a professional capacity: doctors writing medical reports, lawyers writing legal briefs, engineers writing technical specifications, and teachers writing lesson plans. On the other hand, there are “professional writers,” whose job primarily involves writing. This includes copyeditors, journalists, freelance writers, technical writers, grant writers, translation coordinators, website developers, magazine and newspaper editors, and corporate communications specialists. There are also a great many professional positions somewhere in between, however, that require a substantial amount of writing, including careers in publishing, broadcasting, public relations, business administration, policy analysis, media, and advertising. Even if a company employs professional writers, odds are everyone in the company will participate in some sort of professional writing sooner or later. Professional writing may suit any number of purposes, such as persuading clients to take a particular action, instructing users in particular procedures, or informing busy upper-level managers so they can make the best possible decisions.

Fire Ferrets Soar

(Continued from page 3)

Fire Ferrets are now in first place in this conference.

These standings and victories do not come without hard work. The team practices roughly ten hours a week. In addition to full team practices, there are intramural quidditch team practices for one hour, two days a week. This past fall the team demonstrated incredible improvement from players both old and new. Intramural (IM) teams have a lot to do with this. During internurals, the Fire Ferrets are divided into smaller groups and each player can work in a smaller group setting. IM teams allow for individualized instruction, which is important for players just learning the game. These teams also make quidditch accessible to anyone who just wants to have fun playing quidditch. The sport of quidditch is about having fun, working hard, and creating community, which is exactly what IM teams promote on our campus.

However, there is one struggle that the Fire Ferrets and most other quidditch teams face: the fight for credibility. People have a hard time realizing that a co-ed and full contact sport first imagined by J.K. Rowling can be just that, a sport. To most people, the idea of quidditch is absurd, because it is different. While it may be different, it definitely requires athleticism, strength, dedication, and strategy. Team captain, Taylor Donahue, describes it as “a combination of rugby, soccer, dodgeball, and fetch.” All of this happens while having the added difficulty of having a broom between your legs. A mash up of several sports, quidditch seems to be the ultimate sport. If the description of it doesn’t convince someone it’s a sport, then the list of injuries on the team should. So far there are countless bruises, three concussions, a broken tailbone, new knee injuries, and a bruised kidney. The team is very familiar with Soldiers and Sailors Hospital in Wellsboro. The sport’s fight for credibility was just recently featured on CNN. Legitimacy is a problem wherever the sport exists, because people do not separate the sport of quidditch from the idea of the magical game played in the Harry Potter series.

Credibility is an issue faced by almost every team at some point. But, the lack of credibility does not deter any of the members of the Fire Ferrets. We play the sport because we love it. The team has a strong bond that is visible. Whether you’re seeing us play in a match or find us eating dinner together as a team in Upper Manser, it is abundantly clear that this team is a unit. We are proving that we have what it takes to compete at the World Cup, the current team goal. On the rise in the quidditch community and doing everything in their power to become as actively involved on campus as possible, it is obvious that the Fire Ferrets are doing great things both on and off the pitch.

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Better World Book Drive

Mansfield University's Mu Xi chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, the international English Honors Fraternity, is continuing another year of collecting books for its BetterWorldBooks Book Drive. Sigma Tau Delta has participated in the book drive for many years, and uses the book drive as a main source of fund-raising to send its members to national Sigma Tau Delta conferences and other smaller conferences.

Last year, several hundred books were donated by Mansfield students, professors, and staff to BetterWorldBooks through Sigma Tau Delta. After collection, the books are sent to a sorting facility where the unusable books are recycled or sold on the BetterWorldBooks website. When a book is sold through BetterWorldBooks, a book-for-book donation sends another book to a person in need. Additionally, BetterWorldBooks uses its profit to help fund high-impact literacy programs throughout the United States and the developing world. Some books are better than others, in the eyes of BetterWorld.

This semester, in Dr. Lint's ENG 3307: World Literature in English class, we read literature from around the English-speaking world, starting in Canada and continuing into the Caribbean, South Africa, India, Australia, Ireland, and New Zealand. During our week of New Zealand literature, we studied Māori poetry, short stories from New Zealand author Katherine Mansfield, and the New Zealand film Whale Rider. During these days in class, I experienced a convergence of both my study abroad experience at Michigan State and my study of English Literature at Mansfield and I watched my classmates develop a greater appreciation for Māori culture and people.

One important connection I made between our readings in class and my experiences in New Zealand was recognizing New Zealand as a bi-cultural nation. In New Zealand, the colonial kiwi population and Māori people have had vastly different experiences in the same country. This has resulted in the development of two strongly independent cultural communities that are both very important in New Zealand. Their cultural difference is prominent in New Zealand literature. In class, by studying both Māori poetry and the short stories of Katherine Mansfield, the class saw the immense difference in perspective between colonial kiwis and the Māori.

Another connection between my study abroad class and ENG 3307 was seeing how the literary portrayal of the Māori people lacked much of the negative media bias surrounding them. Outside of their appearances in historical documentaries, the Māori people are often portrayed as violent thugs, alcoholics, and criminals. This sensationalized portrayal of the entire culture is unfair and largely inaccurate. The film Whale Rider, however, which we watched in class, is one of the few recent portrayals of the Māori people that illustrates the importance of “the old ways” in day-to-day life in a modern village. It also discusses the negative aspects of life on the Marae, like the influence of traditional gender roles, for instance. This movie is very well-regarded by a lot of critics and the Māori people that I had met in New Zealand. When my study abroad class lived in Ohinemutu (Continued on page 7)
English Majors Attend COPLAC Conference

–By Lilace Guignard

On Nov. 8, 2014, English majors Kelly Raleigh and Joel Miller became two of the first twelve students to represent Mansfield University at COPLAC’s Fifth Annual Northeast Regional Undergraduate research, Scholarly, and Creative Activity Conference. Not only was this the first time Mansfield participated, but also Joel and Kelly read poetry as part of the first ever panel showcasing creative writing.

When I saw the call for faculty to suggest students, I knew from their work in my Advanced Poetry Writing course last spring that Joel and Kelly’s writing and performance skills were top notch. I am happy they agreed to travel to Keene State College in New Hampshire to share their talent.

Joel read first in the panel, from his chapbook titled: *Memento Mori: Echoes of the Road Yet to Come*, which examines his story alongside the Faust legend. They also examine the main themes of Faust, including magic, regret, faith, demons, duality, and death. Each poem builds on the last, and ultimately contemplates the question: If death is inevitable, what’s really important in life? The poems he read were “Let Me Tell You What I Want,” “Not Much Has Changed,” and “Castle Mephisto.” Joel is a sophomore from Wellsboro, PA.

Kelly read from her chapbook, *This Book of Poems is Entitled*, which evokes the themes of the crisis her generation faces with identity, addiction, and sexuality. In particular, these poems indicate the feelings of mistrust that one generation can feel for another, while still attempting to attain and maintain their individuality. The poems she read were “Children of Dionysus” and “Leiber’s Four Stages.” Kelly, from Hanover, PA, is a junior with minors in Creative Writing and Women’s Studies.

COPLAC, the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges, promotes awareness of the value of high-quality, public liberal arts education in a student-centered, residential environment. Its membership currently consists of 28 colleges and universities in 26 states and one Canadian province.

Mansfield University is under consideration for COPLAC membership, with a decision on MU’s application expected early next year.

I think Kelly and Joel sealed the deal for us.

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A Faustian Bargain, or My Journey to COPLAC ‘14

–By English major, Joel Miller

*I learn by going where I have to go*, says the final line of Theodore Roethke’s villanelle *The Waking*. And, I think this line best sums up my experience at my first academic conference. Let me back up and explain. Early in the semester, I was tapped on the shoulder and offered the chance to read my poetry and represent Mansfield at the COPLAC conference in Keene, New Hampshire. I agreed; work and studying be damned. The appointed time came, and there I was, standing in the rain outside Belknap Hall, wondering just what I had gotten myself into. We crammed into the university minivan and set off. For me, COPLAC was a disquieting experience. I had grown used to Mansfield. It was like a job, each day punching the time clock and doing my job. As I walked through the beautiful campus, I encountered every academic discipline and art displayed by a pantomime of strangers. The Mephistopheles in my head whispered that I could have been all of these things once, if I had only cared. It was during the subdued ride home that I struggled to find the significance of this experience. I think I have the desire many other poets have: the desire to make someone laugh at a witty line, to choke them up at the end of an emotional crescendo, or just to pass on a message, some meaning. All I had was three poems and ten minutes with a handful of stone-faced onlookers who didn’t appear to be as thrilled about the Faust legend as I am. Back at Mansfield, the stars were shining, when I reached my truck at the edge of the godforsaken parking lot, and I was at peace. I realized that in my tendency to see everything with eyes filled with ambition and regret, like Faust, that it’s easy to become blind to the things I already have.
The Professional Writing Track

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English majors already have a significant advantage over their peers in the workplace. A strong command of English is an asset in any job, and mastery of style, sentence and paragraph structure, grammar, and punctuation and mechanics will go a long way toward helping you craft effective written communications. You will also find that research skills and analytical close reading skills are invaluable in the workplace. You’ve also long been writing clearly and concisely for specific audiences, and these attributes are even more important on the job.

After college, however, you will rarely find yourself writing research papers, essays, and reading responses. Instead, you will be expected to contribute to and perhaps even author any number of common business documents, such as business plans, forms, instructions, job descriptions, mission statements, policies and procedures, process explanations, promotional writing (including brochures, newsletters, press releases, and sales letters), proposals, and questionnaires. Reports are a mainstay of the workplace, and these often include abstracts, appendices, conclusions, executive summaries, glossaries, introductions, and tables of contents.

What’s more, there are many kinds of reports, including annual reports, feasibility reports, investigative reports, progress and activity reports, trip reports, and trouble reports.

Then consider internal and external corporate written communications. Companies and organizations regularly send acknowledgement letters, adjustment letters, complaint letters, form letters, inquiries and responses, reference letters, refusal letters, and sales letters. These messages may be communicated in different written formats, including traditional business letters, email, and memos. You might be tempted to scour the Internet and Microsoft Word for templates, but you’ll soon find this doesn’t help. After all, professional writers are increasingly expected to be savvy in design for print as well as media. In other words, the look of your writing will be just as important as your content, and you should learn to design original documents with basic principles of typography, proximity, alignment, repetition, contrast, picture superiority, SNR, empty space, etc. in mind. Print and media aside, most companies today need professional writers to assist with electronic communications, including website and social media development, instant messaging, and SEO (search engine optimization). What’s more, there are specific rhetorical strategies appropriate to each form of professional writing, including the “you viewpoint,” buffer, goodwill, and writing sensitively for global audiences in high and low-context cultures.

And what of landing a job in the first place? It may surprise you to know that a lot of professional writing happens before you even enter a profession. As a prospective employee, you should know how to develop a “resume all,” initiate a job search, write tailored resumes and cover letters, develop interviewing skills, negotiate salaries, and craft acceptance and refusal letters.

Our new Professional Writing Track is designed to give you all the above and more:

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Studying Abroad in New Zealand

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Māori village in Rotorua, our host discussed *Whale Rider* with us and explained it as an accurate description of his experiences—and proceeded to list off the names of his cousins and other relatives who had roles in the film.

Another connection between class and my experience abroad came from the works of Hone Tuwhare, a famous Māori poet whose poetry we read for class. To the Māori people, the appreciation of land is a core value that is generally shared across the culture. This is evidenced through their language and tattoos, which feature elements of nature very prominently. In Tuwhare’s poetry, he describes the landscape of New Zealand in a way that personifies the land as an almost sentient being.

In Rotorua, one of our hosts explained that the phrase “*Kia Ora!*”, which is most commonly used as an informal greeting, can have a variety of additional meanings including “I recognize the good in you”. After visiting New Zealand and attaching so strongly to that place and the Māori village that I had lived in, I felt that this entire culture (which no Americans I knew at the time were aware of) had been treated unfairly in terms of its representation and understanding in the US. While I had come to recognize the good in a culture I previously knew nothing about, I felt that there was no guarantee that anyone else without my experience would. But, having had the opportunity to study Māori literature in class here, I can now confirm that many people in the class also “recognize the good” in Māori culture and people—and they didn’t even have to leave Mansfield to do it.
sense of assurance in my writing, which has since helped me write papers in all my classes,” Walker said. She also expressed the importance of research: “Research is an aspect of education that exists in every discipline. Being able to develop and maintain good research skills will lead to a successful college education.”

Walker also explained how her background in English gave her an upper hand: “Majoring in English certainly helped me to win the North Hall Prize. I was able to quickly develop good research habits because it’s been a crucial part of all the English classes I’ve taken so far.”

The long research paper category winner was Chelsi Wood’s paper, entitled “Elizabeth the Rhetor: The Makings of Female King.” Wood said, “It focuses on Elizabeth’s use of rhetoric during her reign as Queen. Also included is a reflection on the different sources she ‘borrowed’ from as inspiration for her own use of rhetoric, including her half-sister Mary Tudor. I had initially written this paper for Advanced Writing for English Majors as part of a learning experience in rhetoric.”

“That original paper was an examination of the rhetoric used in two different pamphlets, written just before and during Elizabeth’s reign, debating the issue of female rule. I then expanded my arguments and ideas for my capstone course in the History major, which was Elizabethan England,” Wood said.

Wood also expressed a newfound confidence upon winning in her category. “Winning the prize gave me an overall boost in confidence. Grades and reflections on your work in class can only go so far in expressing your level of achievement. However, working on this paper over the course of two different classes, with two different professors, and in two different disciplines, pushed me to work to my fullest current potential. Being chosen as the best paper among all of the other submissions was overwhelming, and made me realize that I had become something new after my time at Mansfield University,” Wood said.

Wood explained that her new ability to research has benefited her even after graduation. “Research is something that was not a focus of my high school education, where quality of writing was a focus. Therefore, I feel as though research was an overwhelmingly important asset to my college learning experience. I had no idea how to conduct research when I arrived at Mansfield University, and that I have graduated I have begun doing outside research on my own. Research is what is allowing me to continue to educate myself while I am not currently in school,” Wood said. “I am still deciding what I would like to do with my future. I have graduated from Mansfield University with degrees in both English and History.”

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“However, this award will be an asset to me no matter what I choose to do with my life. The award is proof that I have learned both excellent communication skills and research skills. Both of those are sure to be an asset in which future employers or graduate schools will see the value.”

Wood credited her two major areas of study with her success in the writing contest.

“Both of my majors, History and English, were critical to my success. English helped the most in improving the quality of my writing, whereas I feel as though the History major improved my research skills the most. Advanced Writing for English Majors and Literary Theory were probably the most helpful with this specific paper. Also, my other English classes were helpful, in that they allowed me to increase the quantity of my writing, which in turn improved the quality through consistent practice.

“Dr. Doerksen was also incredibly helpful, since I took many British themed literature courses under her direction, which is the background of my paper. My research based History courses, primarily under the direction of Dr. Holderby and Dr. Guenther, were essential to developing my skills as a researcher. I feel like being a dual major allowed me to be better in both of them, than if I had only chosen one of them as my major,” Wood said.

The Professional Writing Track

The Professional Writing Track and hyphenation, capitalization, numbers and numerals, quotations, abbreviations, graphics, references, front and back matter, and typecoding; attention will also be given to grammar and style. To make this course hands-on and practical, students will join weekly editing workshops: topics include copyeditors’ marks, publishing and editing flowcharts, neutral language, design and application of house and press styles, collaborative methods, design principles, client communications, digital editing tools, ethics, professional organizations, and the copyediting job search. Students will also learn to develop criteria for evaluating submissions; gain an understanding of libel, copyright, and IPR law; and practice job interview skills. Students will have ample opportunity to individually practice proofreading, copyediting, and design as well as compare their work. To simulate a work environment, students will also work in collaborative editorial teams on manuscripts covering a range of writing genres, including journalistic, trade, professional, scholarly, and technical publications.

As a B.A. English/Professional Writing major, you will also have many choices for electives to further develop your writing skills. You will, of course, also share a set of core courses with students in the B.A. English/Literary and Cultural Analysis track so that you will be able to read exemplary writing and engage with the writing of others. We also hope that along the way, you will take advantage of our many internships offerings so you can gain even more real-world writing and work experience.

Well-trained professional writers have a distinct advantage in a highly competitive job market. Those who communicate clearly are also the most likely to advance in a company or organization. If you are interested in preparing for a career while you earn your B.A., consider Professional Writing!
Faculty Spotlight

Dr. Fanny Arango-Keeth, Spanish, has recently been appointed to the research committee of two international 19th Century Latin American Studies Organizations: *Escritoras latinoamericanas del siglo XIX* (ELLAD) and *Red internacional de investigación de estudios latinoamericanos del XIX* (RIEL-XIX).


Dr. Brad Holtman, German, traveled to Italy in March in order to refresh his skills in Italian language and culture. The trip was in conjunction with proposals he prepared for two new Italian courses. The proposals have gone through curricular process, have now passed Senate, and are awaiting final approval by the President. If this approval is given, we will begin offering Italian in Fall 2015 as a Global 1 general education offering.

Dr. William Keeth, Spanish, has had his article, “La metapoética de la generación del 50,” accepted by the literary journal *Revista de crítica literaria latinoamericana*.

Dr. Brad Lint, English, presented his article, "Karuna and Critical Theory", at the International Symposium for Contemplative Studies in Boston from October 30 to November 2.

Dr. Lynn Pifer, English, has had her essay, “Thulani Davis’s 1959: Telling a Transformative Tale of the Civil Rights Movement,” accepted in Laura Dubek’s anthology, *Living Legacies: Literary Responses to the Civil Rights Movement*.


Dr. Edward T. Washington, English, served as a Review Panel member for the 2014-15 PA Partners in the Arts (PPA) Project Stream Grant Program, Bradford County Region, August, 2014. The Bradford County Regional Arts Council (BCRAC, Towanda, PA) administers the PA Project Stream re-grant program throughout seven counties in Northern Pennsylvania in partnership with the PA Council on the Arts. PPA Project Stream funds provide project-specific support to arts organizations and individuals for public arts projects with grant applications reviewed by regional panels. The Panel met at the Keystone Theatre in Towanda on August 18, 2014, for the all-day review of the grant applications. This the second year in a row that Dr. Washington has been invited to serve on the PPA Review Panel.

Literary News

Jonathan Coe will soon publish *Expo 58*, a novel based on the World’s Fair of 58 in Brussels.

James Ellroy has recently published a new novel about the Los Angeles police state called *Perfidia* (Random House).

Henry Holt has acquired the rights to a new biography of Robin Williams.

Haruki Murakami who just followed-up his novel, *Colorless Tsukuru Tazaki and His Years of Pilgrimage*, with the novel, *A Strange Library*, will publish six short stories called *Men and women* (Tusquets).

Seix Barral has announced it will publish 20 unedited poems by Pablo Neruda at the beginning of 2015.

Mario Vargas Llosa will publish *Los cuentos de la peste* in 2015, an unedited play inspired by the Decameron.