

NOSTALGIC FUTURES

Yesterday's Comparative Literature in Tomorrow's World

Brock University (St. Catharines/Ontario)

Date: November 9-10, 2007.

Location: Department of Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures.
Brock University 500 Glenridge Avenue St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada L2S 3A1

Deadline for submission: August 15, 2007.

Graduate students are invited to submit abstracts of 250-350 words to conference organizers by email to: complitconference@brocku.ca

By virtue of its nature, Comparative Literature has consistently challenged disciplinary boundaries and come to consider a broad spectrum of transmodal texts. In recent years, there has been a continuing critical focus on texts created outside of the literary realm, particularly »the other arts« (visual, musical, filmic, dramatic, performative, etc.). Haun Saussy remarks in *Comparative Literature in an Age of Globalization* that »Comparative Literature has, in a sense, won its battles. [...] Comparative literature is not only legitimate: now, as often as not, ours is the first violin that sets the tone for the rest of the orchestra. Our conclusions have become other people's assumptions.«

Hosted by the graduate program for *Studies in Comparative Literature & Arts*, conference organizers seek papers which address the following issues: the first, considering the ways in which Comparative Literature has »won its battles« and whether or not these battles have been won at all; the second goal of this conference is to consider future directions for Comparative Literature, particularly the inclusion of the »other arts«, and the implications of this inclusion for Comparative Literature as a discipline. Finally, the third goal of this conference is to highlight studies in Comparative Literatures and Arts by graduate students and to consider through which theoretical frameworks should transmodal issues in Comparative Literature be approached.

Suggested topics:

1. What can the »other arts« offer to Comparative Literature?
2. Have pre-Theory Boom theories such as Romantic Theory, New Criticism, or Archetypal Criticism been lost?
3. What battles does Comparative Literature still have to fight? Is transmodal analysis a developing battleground or is the fight already over?
4. What is the role of contemporary critical theory in Comparative Literature, particularly vis à vis the arts? Is theory beneficial or detrimental to the study of literature and the arts? Can literary theory be applied successfully to artistic texts and vice versa?
5. Should Comparative Literature write theory or use theory?
6. Comparative Literature was traditionally a very Western study of literature and art; how should Comparative Literature study non-Western literatures and art forms?
7. How should the study of adaptation (i.e. film to text, text to film, text to opera, etc.) be accomplished within Comparative Literature? Is adaptation a theory of translation?
8. Is the study of Canadian Literature necessarily also Comparative Literature?
9. Should Comparative Literature privilege the aesthetic over theory?
10. How important is the study of translation to Comparative Literature? Should scholars be reading in the original or can translations be used?
11. What challenges does interdisciplinarity pose to Comparative Literature? How much knowledge does one need in each discipline to be considered viable?
12. Theoretically speaking, can aesthetics transcend visual and literary boundaries, or is beauty merely in the eye of the beholder?