

GDR BULLETIN

NEWSLETTER FOR LITERATURE AND CULTURE IN THE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

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DRESDEN ART EXHIBIT

A loan agreement was signed on March 13, 1978 between the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden and three major American Museums for an exhibition entitled "The Splendor of Dresden: Five Centuries of Art Collecting". The exhibition will be shown at the National Gallery of Art in Washington DC May 30 - September 4, at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York October 17 - January 13, 1979, and at the Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco February 18 - May 26, 1979. The event will feature over 700 works of art from five centuries, making it the most comprehensive exhibition of art the GDR has yet sent abroad.

GDR WORKSHOP

The next session of the workshop "DDR-Literatur und DDR-Germanistik" will take place at the Karl-Arnold-Bildungsstätte in Bonn beginning September 29 - October 1, 1978. Two papers are planned to be presented on Kleist reception in the GDR and two others will discuss Christa Wolf's two most recent novels. Dirk Grathoff, Christa Thomassen, and Heinrich Mohr are anticipated to present these topics. A reading by Hans Joachim Schädlich is also planned. In addition to Jörg Bilke's involvement in this workshop, he has also recently organized a conference at the Ost-Akademie in Königstein from April 7 - 9 on GDR literature since Erich Hon-ecker (1971 - 1978), which is planned to be repeated during May or June, 1978.

VISITING LECTURERS

Professor Fritz Bennewitz, director of the Deutsches Nationaltheater in Weimar, is currently in New York City directing a production of Goethe's Faust, Part I. Bennewitz, who is particularly well known for his Brecht and Shakespeare productions, was the director of a controversial Faust production in Weimar in 1976. He is also cooperating with the Museum of Modern Art in offering a Brecht film festival.

FORTHCOMING CONFERENCES

MLA 78

There will be a special session on "Anna Seghers: A Socialist Woman Writer" at the MLA Convention in New York in December. In addition to the Special Session and the following workshop, a film evening is planned, possibly with "The Seventh Cross" (1944) or "Die Toten bleiben jung" (1968) or "Die Reise der Agathe Schweigert" (1969). For additional information, contact Peter Beicken or Elke Frederiksen at the Dept. of Germanic and Slavic L&L, University of Maryland, College Park, Md., 20742.

TRAVEL AND EXCHANGE

INTERNATIONALE HOCHSCHULFERIENKURSE IN DER DDR

Die DDR führt in diesem Sommer wieder 11 Hochschulferienkurse für ausländische Germanisten durch, in denen neben sprachlichen Qualifikationen auch landeskundliche Informationen und Kenntnisse über die DDR, ihre Gesellschaft und deren Probleme, vermittelt werden sollen. Die Kurse richten sich an Germanisten, Literatur- und Sprachwissenschaftler, Landeskundler, Forscher, Methodiker, Lektoren, Deutschlehrer, Übersetzer und Studenten. Teilnehmergebühren: 550 M + 20 M Einschreibgebühren f. Germanisten, 350 M + 20 M Einschreibgeb. f. Studentenkurse.

Hinter Ort und Daten wird in Klammern auf Kurs-schwerpunkte verwiesen.

Germanistenkurse:

Berlin, 30.6.-23.7.78 (Fremdsprachenmethodik); Weimar I, 1.7.-24.7.78 (Literaturwissenschaft, Brechtforschung und -rezeption in der DDR); Weimar II, 26.7.-18.8.78 (Sprachwissenschaft und Stilistik); Dresden, 9.8.-1.9.78 (wissenschaftl.-technische Sprachentwicklung, Übersetzungstheorie); Karl-Marx-Stadt, 3.7.-29.7.78 (sprachwissenschaftliche, psycholinguistische Grundlagen für Deutsch als Fremdsprache); Leipzig, 4.7.-27.7.78 (Fremdsprachenmethodik, -unterricht);

Studentenkurse :

Berlin, 30.6.-23.7.78 (Tradition und Entwicklung sozial.Nationalalliteratur der DDR); Halle, 9.7. - 30.7.78 (Literaturgeschichte und -geschichts-schreibung am Beispiel deutscher Klassik); Rostock 8.7.-30.7.78 (marx.-lenin. Literaturtheorie, human. und revolutionäre Traditionslinie); Greifswald, 3.7.-23.7.78 (Landes- und Gegenwarts-kunde, Kulturpolitik der DDR).

Kursgebühren schließen Unterkunft, Verpflegung, Lehrmaterial, Exkursionen und Veranstaltungen ein. Zu dem Programmangebot gehören Phonetik- und Sprachübungen, Exkursionen in die Umgebung, Diskussionen mit Personen des politischen, kulturellen und wissenschaftlichen Lebens, Schriftstellerlesungen, sowie Film-, Theater- und Konzertbesuche. Nicht enthalten in den Gebühren Anmeldungen sollten bis zum 30.Mai 78 bei den betreffenden Veranstaltern eingehen, desgleichen die Gebührenüberweisung. Als Termin gelten erstes und letztes Datum der jeweiligen Kurse. Für weitere Informationen wenden Sie sich bitte an : Embassy of the German Democratic Republic 1717 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20036

TEACHING IN THE GDR

The following letter was contributed to the BULLETIN :

From February to June 1977 I taught American History and Contemporary Problems at Martin Luther University, Halle, and bilateral classes at Karl Marx University, Leipzig. Teaching in the GDR is significantly different from the North American system : A student is not admitted into a university but into a program, each program being independent from the next. The students then become part of a collective. For example, the 35 students admitted every year to the English program at Halle are divided into two seminar collectives, which live together in the same part of the dormitory, develop a common cultural, athletic and political program, and take all courses together. Since all teachers in the GDR must specialize in two subjects, they take a heavy academic load : my group had 35 hours of classes every week, including practical English and Russian, grammar courses, English, American and Russian literature and history, English and American contemporary problems, pedagogy etc. Special advantages for entrance are given to applicants from working class background. Furthermore, 90% of the students were women. 90% of them also received stipends. The department expects that by admitting 35 students, it will have 35 teachers. At Halle so far nobody has failed English, though a few have failed Russian. The collectivity seems to have a high performance : Because one's grades

are public knowledge and the collective is judged according to its overall academic performance, it is the responsibility of everybody to help students with poor performance. On the whole the quality of the students was outstanding, especially their ability to present written and oral reports in a second language. The students have much contact with foreign students, especially with those from the Third World countries.

Perhaps the most positive reflection of their system was voiced by a student who asked me why young people in North America go to the university when there is no guarantee of a job. On the negative side, issues propagandized by the GDR such as Viet Nam, Chile etc. seem to stay on the surface. For example the students had no background knowledge of the history of Viet Nam before the U.S. intervention.

Tentatively, a GDR colleague from the English department will visit John Abbott college in March 1978, to explore establishing a teacher exchange next year.

Readers with further questions or interest in arranging a lecture on these experiences please contact the author : Alan Z.Weiss, John Abbott College, P.O.Box 2000 Ste.Anne de Bellevue, P.Q. Canada

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or to

Book Reviews - Barton Byg, Henning Fülbier, Marilyn Helt

Research in Progress - Reinhart Jost

Notes in Brief - Reinhart Jost, Barton Byg

Conferences - Peter Jesse

Travel and Exchange - Ingrid Weigand

Visiting Lecturers - Henning Fülbier, Ingrid Weigand

Bibliography - Leslie Adelson, Susan Hegger, Lynne Layton

All of the above can be contacted through Box 1104, Washington University.

Regional Contributing Editors:

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