

Annual Newsletter



Summer Study Abroad: Almaty

In Summer 2023, junior students Bina Lee, Maeve Taylor, and Mads Muller were part of the Summer 2023 Russian Language Area Studies Program in Almaty, Kazakhstan. All three participated in intensive language study in the cultural and artistic center of Kazakhstan, taking Russian language and Kazakh history/culture classes at Al-Farabi Kazakh National University with students from all over the US. During their 8 weeks in Almaty, they went to numerous cultural events, such as traditional theater, hiked in the gorgeous mountains surrounding Almaty, watched a version of “The Government Inspector” at the German theater, and took a week long trip to the South of Kazakhstan, where they participated in traditional wool handcrafts.

Cyrillic Commons

This year, the Russian Department converted the previous Seminar Room into the Cyrillic Commons! The space will now be used as a gathering space for students, a place to study, and to relax in between classes. Pictures of students, study abroad, and department events decorate the walls, along with arts and posters donated by the department. Stop by for some tea and to try and solve the current puzzle!



Senior Update: Michael O'Connell

This year Michael worked on two theses. His history thesis discussed Russian Orthodoxy, immigration, and identity in Philadelphia during the 20th century. His Russian thesis includes an analysis of the coronation ceremony of Russian empress Anna Ioannovna (1693–1740), and an overview of Russian/Soviet historiography on the political circumstances of her reign. This summer he will be working at the Icon Museum and Study Center in Clinton, Massachusetts. At the end of the summer he will go to Kazakhstan for his Flagship Capstone year. He is extremely grateful to his professors and peers for making this year enjoyable and successful!

360: Energy Afterlives

Professor José Vergara, Professor Selby Hearth, and Professor Joel Schlosser were involved in the Energy Afterlives 360, with students from many departments, examining the impact of coal, oil, and nuclear energy through art, political science, and earth science. The course culminated in a trip to Alaska during Fall Break, as well as the production of a Scalar exhibit that is currently on display in the Russian Center.



My Mama & the Full-Scale Invasion

On January 30th, the Russian Department went to a showing of the new play "My Mama & the Full-Scale Invasion" and spoke with the playwright, Sasha Denisova, at the Wilma Theater. Students spoke in Russian and in English with the playwright before and after the show, asking questions about the production and adaptation of the story.

Mark Z Danielewski

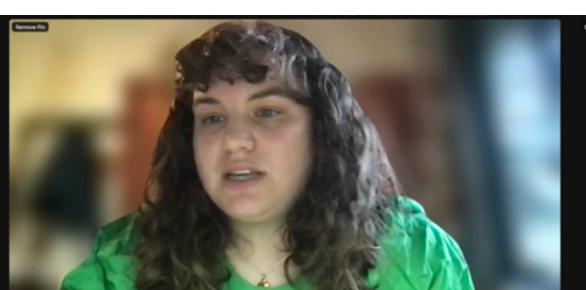
The Bryn Mawr Russian Department helped to host author, Mark Z Danielewski on March 26th & 27th. It was a special two days on campus, capped off with a brilliant evening of dialogue and a full house in Goodhart Music Room. From interacting with students, playing "MyHouse.wad" and considering multimedial adaptations, exploring artist books and literary experiments, to talking about imagination, all the events were exciting and special!



Social Climate and Politics leading up to 1937



December Revolution & response to Alexander I's rule



27th UCLA UG Slavic Conference

On April 27th, 2024, students, Tessa Lippmann, '25, Mads Muller, '25, and Michael O'Connell, '24, presented at the 27th Annual University of California Undergraduate Conference on Slavic and East/Central European Studies. Presenting virtually from Germany Bryn Mawr, and Haverford, Tessa and Mads were on the "Mirroring the Paradigm of the 18th-19th centuries Russian Culture" panel, while Michael presented on the "Cross-Cultural Relationships: in Search for Identities". Tessa presented on "The Winter Palace: its symbology throughout Russian and Soviet eras", Mads presented on "Concurrent Polyphony through Combat in Fyodor Dostoevsky's Demons and Toni Morrison's Paradise", and Michael presented on "The smell of the Rus' is in the air": White emigres and the American Rus' at ROVA Farms, 1934-1976".

The Master & the Margarita

The department welcomed director of the recent *The Master and Margarita*, Michael Lockshin, on May 1st. A private screening for Tri-Co community members was held at Haverford's VCAM along with a Q & A.

Russian Dinner

Russian Club Presidents, Anna Roumianstev, '25 and Lila Ackley '24, organized a Russian Dinner with the help of the department and other students. Faculty, staff, and students ate together and watched student projects. See photos of the night to the right.



SPT's "The Government Inspector"

Bina Lee, '25 and Mads Muller, '25, put on Nikolai Gogol's "The Government Inspector" with Bryn Mawr's Shakespeare Performance Troupe. The production used aesthetics of the Perestroika time period to create a distinctly 1980s aesthetic and leaned into a queer interpretation of the text, altering some of the romantic subplots and typical interpretation of the text. The play was cut by both students and directed by them over the course of two months, Professor Irina Walsh and Marina Rojavin assisted the students in pronunciation and context for the play, making sure that students. There were three performances of the show on April 11th, 12th, and 13th in Rhoads Dining Hall.

Check out photos of the show to the right, featuring first year students, Char Gillman-Boggs, Grace Thomas, Olivia Crolle, and Sarah Haskell. You can watch a video of the performance on the Shakespeare Performance Troupe's Youtube Channel and see more photos on SPTS Instagram @bmcspt.



Chornobyl Reactor Room

The Reactor Room is a digital installation that seeks to facilitate public engagement with the Chornobyl catastrophe and its history and mythology. It features work from students in course RUSSB220 Chornobyl taught at Bryn Mawr College by Professor José Vergara (Fall 2023) and RUSS043 Chernobyl: Nuclear Narratives and the Environment at Swarthmore College (Spring 2020), as well as projects developed by the Bryn Mawr Digital Scholarship Summer Fellows (Summer 2023). The class this fall semester helped to produce a physical representation of the digital exhibit, which contains representations of the items from Chornobyl, the ability to access the digital projects on iPads, and painted images of those involved in the Chornobyl catastrophe. The physical installation was finished in November of 2023 and will remain open for the rest of the 2023-2024 academic year.

Professor Updates

- Professor José Vergara received tenure and was promoted to Associate Professor this year. He was elected as the Vice President of AATSEEL this year and a board member of ACTR. He published "Encyclopedia of the Dog: Annotations to Sasha Sokolov's Between Dog and Wolf" in November 2023, "Writing for Beyond the Drawer." Slavic and East European Journal 67.4 (2023), and "Finding Our Words: Representations of Chornobyl and the Impossibility of Language." Slavica Bergensia. Vol. 14. Eds. I. (2023). He translated with Jane Costlow, Evgenia Nekrasova's "The Moscow Museum of Trash".
- Professor Marina Rojavin was chair of and participant in the roundtable "Teaching Postmodern Russian Media Literacy" at the 2024 AATSEEL Annual Conference. At the 2023 ASEES Annual Conference, she was a participant in the roundtable "Adaptable or Irrelevant?: Language Textbooks in the Time of War" and presented on the "Soviet Auteur Cinema" panel.