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## Letter from Content and Executive Editor

Dear Readers,

This issue of *Currents* is not quite what was expected, but has much to offer a reader! We are pleased to provide a great deal of Club news, with the usual enticing Activities Calendars and lots of great photos accompanied by the report from the AGM and an introduction of the newly elected Board of Directors. Welcome to a dynamic new team! Two restaurant and two book reviews join the usual art and film reviews in the entertainment and culture sections, so no one should feel at a loss for something to do even in the most uncertain weather of a Hamburg spring. And I am thrilled to welcome a new regular contributor, Margaret, who has a lot of valuable advice to offer Americans living in Europe. I already learned a great deal from her piece on tertiary education for ex-pat kids, and am looking forward to more similarly interesting articles in the coming issues. Finally, don't miss updates from FAWCO and the Landesfrauenrat – both are equally valuable resources and important causes that deserve our attention. As to the proposed theme, we have two great contributions, one describing a refuge for those seeking a place of faith and inspiration, and one offering invaluable insights on the universality of that search and, indeed, its destination. Indeed, an eclectic collection of edifying articles.

Wishing you happy reading!

Sus



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# AGM 2011 Report



by  
Brenda Anderson-Rivera

The AGM this year came and went by with what seems a blink of an eye. We were graciously hosted by our new U.S. Consul-General, Inmi Patterson, and her team at the little White House on the Alster. Due to the new heightened security restrictions, we can no longer hold evening meetings there but decided that the location was just too special to pass up the opportunity and long-standing tradition of holding our meeting at the U.S. Consulate in Hamburg. For those of you who have been to the location, it is a special place and it was made even more special filled with so many new and long standing members as we "oohed" and "aahed" over a variety of Sweet Dreams cakes.

Vicki FM was so nice to do a year in review and talked about the many activities we held from Easter to 4<sup>th</sup> of July, to Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas and Sitting on Santa's Lap Children's party. We covered the budget and FAWCO business before

we had the official 2011 vote for the new board and gave the final results of the silent auction. I had a great time serving with Vicki, Tamara, Beth, Chris, Kate, Tracy and Tina, and after two years of service by most of them, I think they deserve applause for a job well done. Being that I was Membership Chair last year, I had the fortune of meeting so many newbies to the club and did my best to make sure they came to as many events as they could and I tried to get them involved. When I was asked if I would take on the honor of running for presidency, I thought, who better to come in with new ideas, fresh perspectives as well as time and energy for the AWC? So, as we looked for other volunteers to fill these vacancies, we looked for people who shared the same passion that Beth, Tracy and I have for the club. I am glad to have Beth and Tracy's dedication and experience of being on the board at the same time I love the enthusiasm to help from Mary, Jennifer, Kate and Lauren. After the votes were counted, it was unanimous, we were voted in as the new 2011 board.

Tracy M. did a great job setting up the auction and she and

Vicki also contacted great companies like Pentax (HSV gear), Hagenbecks Tierpark (admission tickets), Concept Léger (blouses) and PICKAPOOH (children's hats), who were very generous with donations.

Members Jana F, Jess A, Beth G, Sandra S, Chris L, and Tracy all made awesome handmade goodies from beautiful necklaces to delicious jellies. Almost everything was sold except a few books and five purses, with the total proceeds of €909 going toward the AWC-chosen Watershed programme in India. Thanks to all the members who bid on items and also to Karen Bel of the Consulate who got into the action and helped make the auction a huge success!



As the meeting came to an end, Vicki thanked her board and presented them with awesome recipe-photo scrapbooks and we in turn thanked her for her two years of service as president. I am glad she is not going anywhere as I just might need her to work her magic negotiating skills, get those Blue Devils to perform for us, or convince Santa to make an appearance. As I relived the night in my head I realized there are so many more people to thank in addition to Vicki and her tireless efforts, especially with Tamara spending so much time in the States as she relocated. Isabell had two great years planning awesome activities and even changing it as the needs of the club changed. Kate did a great job with FAWCO until an important little package named Sophie came into the picture, and Tracy was there quickly to help. We had the most ad sales this last year with Tina doing her best. We could not have done everything we did without Chris L. keeping an eye on the budget, and Beth G. taking notes on it all. We are so fortunate to have had such a great team in 2010 on the board and as I serve you again in 2011, I can assure you the new team will do our best to exceed the expectations you have for us in the coming year.







Board 2010: Brenda A.-R., Isabell N., Vicki F.M., Tracy M., Tina G., Elizabeth G., Chris L., Kate B.



Board 2011: Brenda A.-R., Tina G., Jennifer M., Elizabeth G., Mary L., Tracy M., Lauren D., Kate W.



## *AWCH Guideline Changes*



*compiled by  
Sus Ewing Bölke*

The 2010 AWC Board voted on and approved the following changes to the official club Guidelines, clarifying that dues at 90 Euros are paid yearly and the budget and the board nominations will be published fourteen days prior to the AGM. For more details see your 2011 Directory under Articles II, Sections 1 and 2 and Article VI, E

### **Article II: Finances**

#### **Sec.1 Dues**

- A.** Dues are paid on a yearly basis of EUR 90.
- B.** Annual dues are to be paid in January.
- C.** For new members joining later during the year, the dues will be prorated quarterly.
- F.** Reduction of dues is open to members planning to leave Germany permanently during the AWC financial year. The member must submit a letter for consideration to the board.

No retroactive reimbursement will be made. A minimum payment of 50% of the annual dues must be made.

#### **Sec. 2 Budget**

- C.** The treasurer shall prepare a financial report of the previous year's income and general expenditures to be published **fourteen (14) days** prior to the AGM and then approved at the AGM.

### **Article VI: Nominations and Elections**

#### **Sec. 1 Nominations**

- E.** **Fourteen (14) days** before the election the nominating committee shall present in writing the candidates for office. This will include an announcement that additional nominations may be submitted to the nominating chair within **seven (7) days** of receipt of the proposed slate in order to appear on the ballot.

## *Meet the New AWC Board 2011*



**P**resident:  
**Brenda Anderson  
Rivera**

has been in Hamburg and the AWCH since April 2009. After serving two terms as Membership Chair, during

which "I did my best to attract as many new members as possible to the AWC and encourage people to get out there and get involved in the club and attend events," she is taking on a bigger role and "hoping I can have your support while I do my best to live up to the legacy of those who came before me."



**V**ice President:  
**Mary Lindgren** has been in Hamburg since May 2010. "Soon after I moved here, I attended a new member's event with the American Women's Club, and quickly joined. I have been lucky to meet many wonderful women through the AWC that have helped make the adjustment to Hamburg easier. The support that these women have given has

motivated me to become active on the AWC board to help work towards the club's goals."



## MEET THE NEW AWC BOARD



### **A**ctivities Coordinator:

**Lauren Dean** has loved Hamburg since she moved here from Detroit last June. "Prior to my move abroad I assisted my family with their event planning and catering business for eight years. I have been a part of the coordination of some great events and loved the planning process. Because of that I am enthusiastic about the prospect of having the opportunity to serve as AWC's Activities Coordinator."



### **T**reasurer:

**Jennifer Martine** was heavily involved in the financial industry after earning a BSBA in Finance from Villanova University and an MBA from Wake Forest University. "Applying these skills towards the AWC would not only be natural for me, but I would love to finally use these talents at an organization so dear to my heart."



### **S**ecretary:

**Beth Graß** is taking on yet another term in addition to the duties of young motherhood. "In 2011, I hope to improve the e-newsletter, help with the development of the new membership database, and help implement a downloadable activities calendar; all of this with the help of our genius webgineer Cat Conner. I look forward to serving the AWC Hamburg for another year!"



### **M**embership Chair:

**Kate Wilson** moved to Hamburg from Tucson, Arizona at the beginning of 2010. "Prior to our move, I was a Deputy County Attorney working in Juvenile Court. An aspect of my career I really enjoyed was the collaborative spirit all parties had in working with our kids. I am looking forward to that same spirit as our New Member Chair for the AWC, and to all the good times ahead."



### **F**AWCO Representative:

**Tracy Moede** hails from Maryland, the Washington D.C.-Baltimore-Annapolis Triangle to be exact, and has lived in Germany since 1988. "During my twelve years as a member of the AWC, I have handled the positions of circulation chair, the web info woman, membership chair and the FAWCO Rep substitute. I look forward to a fun and successful year on the board."

### Fears & Worries That You Might Recognize

If I send them to International or English school, they won't have any friends in the neighborhood & won't be German enough.

If I send them to German school, they will never be 'American'.

My child doesn't speak or read English as well as I did, how can they be expected to ace the SATs, and what do I/we do if they don't?!

They teach Math differently here. My child didn't know the meaning of the word equation or isosoles, so he flunked his first SAT!

His school doesn't offer AP exams...is this a disaster?

How can I help my child find his interests, if he's not interested in the same things I am?

Will my child be considered international or American, and which is more advantageous?

All my American friends in the States are going crazy over this. It's a frenzy. Are we missing something?

What do I do if they go over there & never come back!

How can my child NOT get in to my Alma Mater, & is her life over if she doesn't?

German teachers don't write recommendations & don't know the 'codes'. Will my child still have a chance of acceptance?

My child may not LIKE living in America; may not like Americans, may be ostracized as a foreigner; what if we make the wrong choice for him?

---

## So You Want to Get Your Kid into College in the States...



**Reflections on educating German-American Children by someone who's just been through it**

**April 1<sup>st</sup>:** D-Day for College Applicants to American universities...that sweet child of yours (not to mention, you!) has been sweating for AT LEAST two years over grades, extracurricular activities, SAT & SATII prep courses and exams (if you have been able to find them and work them into his/her schedule), application essays

(*who am I? What is my unique selling point? What would you say is your greatest character flaw*

by  
*Margaret Nelson Spethmann*

*& why?*, Tell us about a mistake you made and other scintillating questions easily answered by stressed-out 17 year olds), IB or Abitur examinations AND all of your hovering...

On April 1<sup>st</sup> at the LATEST, all universities have to inform you if they have accepted your child (HIGH TRAUMA – hopefully they get in somewhere that they LIKE, but what do we do if they don't!), and then the really HIGH DRAMA begins while your family decides whether they fly across 'the Pond' for the next four years while you go broke paying for flights and tuition ( *It costs HOW much a year now?! Why didn't we save*

*more earlier? Why aren't there more scholarships for expat children- they are Americans too!...why didn't we think about this earlier???*), or go to University, or dual system training here in Germany, England, or somewhere else in Europe???? ( yes, there can be advantages to this road for the child!). Don't worry. By **May 1<sup>st</sup>** the pupil makes, hopefully, her or his final decision, and the family can relax – at least until the next sibling's turn comes to run this gauntlet.

As our children are often the vessels for many of our hopes and aspirations, love and neuroses, this process of getting to the next step after home and high school is pitted with numerous stumbling blocks – logistical, emotional, and very real. Dealing with the child's education decisions, and later guiding that last phase of applications is one aspect. Dealing with your own emotions, a completely different can of worms. So let's look at the *easier* part first: educating your child with an eye toward sending them in the distant future ' home ' for the quintessential American college experience.

Here follow some thoughts on getting there with a minimum of surprises:

There is no one right way to get there.

Know that whether you decide to send your child through the German school system, the International School system, or at different times both, each system will have advantages that will make your child's achievements and college application stand out. While the International School's system more closely follows the American curriculum, the German system



demands depth and detailed knowledge of the subjects covered and is good college preparation. We, for example, sent all three children to German grammar and junior high schools (so that they could have German friends and 'feel' German), then changed in 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> Grade to an IB school, so that they would have time to polish their English in a variety of subjects & solidify their bilingual abilities.

Wherever you send them, there are a number of things you can do now, regardless of how young your child is, to help make the later process easier

1. Make every effort to get them reading books in English on their own all through their school years. The more automatic this process and the more they love reading, the easier the SAT verbal parts...especially if they start reading a newspaper in their high school years...
2. If possible, delegate a small but steady dose of grammar and written language tutoring of English to someone OUTSIDE the family and try to keep them learning the English vocabulary/grammar for the same concepts they are learning at German school as they go along (here tutoring once per week can really make a difference). If you've chosen International or English language education format, let them learn some German! It will help them stand out on their applications.
3. Give your child opportunities to try out different activities, learn about their strengths and weaknesses, and to get good at one or two things they are really excited about. Let them choose which ones, but also make sure they have to struggle with one or two that don't come easily. (These experiences later make great stuff for writing college application essays!)
4. Whatever else they are interested in, make sure they learn their math. Weaknesses in quantitative reasoning

are always harder to make up for later (as my 23-year-old who is now madly studying Math for the GMATs for Masters Programs now knows to her chagrin!)

5. If your school offers 'girl's day', or other opportunities for short internships or work situation visitations, take advantage of them! Try to match your child with some potential careers that fit their interests or talents. Even a day or two, or a short week in a friend's office or warehouse can be a real eye-opener. Sometimes this can be a relatively painless and therefore very helpful way to eliminate career choices ( 'UGH! I had no idea Advertising is sooooo useless. They spend all day talking about toothpaste! I could NEVER do that', or 'WOW! I want to be a brain surgeon! Its sooooo cool!').
6. Start getting organized about the impending college selection process in the 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Why do I say start so early? It takes a while to learn about your now-in-puberty child (who is beginning to develop into a stranger!); for the child to focus his academic and extracurricular interests; for both of you to research and get organized for all the exams, the types of schools, and which specific ones they might be interested in and qualified to apply to; and plan college visiting trips ( I suggest visiting in the summer before junior year and then either in spring or late summer before senior year. You would be amazed at how differently the choices/preferences shake out from these two vantage points. Grades can change, SATs can be worse, or better than expected, academic interests can shift).

The goal should be for your children to know themselves and to have taken over the driver's wheel of applying to college by the fall of their senior years in high school at the latest. Colleges want to hear the voice of the student who will be attending,

not the voice of a parent (they are getting very annoyed with helicopter parents!!). Remember that YOU are just support staff! By all means help with planning logistics and trips, blocking time to proof-read (ONLY IF ASKED TO!), or lending an ear when stress needs to be managed. Don't increase the pressure. It's already bad enough.

The important thing is that the child makes a choice that is right for the kind of person she or he is. They are the ones that have to go there and do the work. And you get to let go and move on to something else – like YOUR LIFE!

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# What Is Faith?



*by Jeannette Jordan*

This should by all standards be one of the easiest questions in the world for me to answer. Yet, I find explaining ‘faith’ most difficult. That’s strange because I’ve been in ‘the Church’ since I was 17 years old. I was ordained twice in two church denominations, Baptist and non-denominational. And, in 2006, I graduated with a Master of Divinity from a leading US university. After being Methodist, Baptist, courting Catholicism, Lutheran and then abandoning all denominations, five years ago I found myself making sense of life after joining a Messianic Jewish congregation. So, why is it so difficult for me to answer ‘what is faith’?

The best I can do to negotiate an answer is to go way back to a place long before my seminary training and all of those churches. I was sitting in some woman’s living room at a Bible study in Atlanta, Georgia. I had only been living there a few weeks, it was back in the 80s. My best friend Sarah, who passed away in 1992 after a long illness, introduced me to the group. I went to the Bible study, not that I was so keen on reading the Bible; but, being new in town at that point, I just wanted to meet some potentially new friends.

I remember sitting in some really uncomfortable chairs in a not-so-rounded circle in front of a fireplace. Someone passed around a tray of sandwiches and then drinks; just fruit punch. After a few awkward moments of trying to make small talk with people I had just met, a man who looked as old as time itself walked in. He sat near the fireplace; it was the middle of summer, so there were no flames. After what felt like eternity, he started to pray. I guess everyone knew this man because he never

bothered to say his name. That didn’t bother me too much as I was just hoping to find someone who could hang out at the mall with me.

I expected this man to start the Bible study with some type of scripture relay; you know that “turn to this book”, “turn to this chapter”, “turn to this verse” type of thing. Thankfully, that didn’t happen. He simply started the meeting by telling us this story.

He told us that each year he and a group of friends go deep into the woods for several days of camping and fishing whenever they can find a nearby lake. He said that on the first night of each camping trip; all the friends take part in a little ritual. They wait until the darkest part of the night before starting a walk through the woods. But, the most interesting part is they only carry one flashlight. One man is in charge of carrying the light and the others have walk in a single line; one holding on to the other. They walk through the woods until the man with the light leads them back to camp.

So, what was this all about, I dared to ask. It was all about faith, walking through dark places, holding on to the person in front of you and trusting the one with the light.

## *Vacations & Holidays*

**Hamburg school vacation**  
March 9 - 21

March 17 - St. Patrick’s Day  
March 21 - First Day of Spring

**Niedersachsen school vacation**  
March 30 – April 15

April 1 - April Fool’s Day  
April 18 - 26 - Passover

**Schleswig-Holstein school vacation**  
April 6 – 24

April 22 - Good Friday  
(all German and U.S. institutions closed)

**International School vacation**  
March 29 – April 16

April 24 - Easter Sunday  
April 25 - Easter Monday  
(all German and U.S. institutions closed)

**Bremen school vacation**  
March 3 - April 14

## Money for Free????

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- 2) Bookmark the amazon.de page when it appears. You may have to rename your bookmark to read amazon.de and not awchamburg.de
- 3) When you hit amazon.de from your favorites list it will link you to amazon.de via the AWC Hamburg site.



# News from the Anglican Church in Hamburg

by Deborah Ockert

Now that the former chaplain, Roger White, has retired, the Anglican Church has a vacancy to fill. The congregation, together with the Bishop of the Diocese in Europe, Geoffrey Rowell (otherwise known as the Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe) and Archdeacon Lloyd, are busy advertising and taking applications for a new minister for Hamburg. During the vacancy period in the next six months there will be a series of locum chaplains visiting Hamburg to tend the services on Sundays. The locum (or substitute) chaplains all have impressive credentials, being former archdeacons, bishops and university theologians, mainly from the UK, but all widely travelled, interesting and inspirational. Why not look in on a Sunday for a wonderful sermon, a cup of coffee and fellowship afterwards and a chance to browse through our large stock of second-hand English books?



2012 is not only the year of the London Olympics, the 50th anniversary of the Beatles' final concert in the Star-Club in Hamburg, but it is also the 400th anniversary of the founding of the English Church in Hamburg: the first Anglican Church in Europe outside the British Isles and the first non-Lutheran church to be permitted religious freedom within the City walls. This calls for a celebration! A series of events is being planned for the whole of 2012 for which sponsors and volunteers are welcome. Music especially will play a key role. Find out more here: <http://anglican-church-hamburg.de/400years/>

Music lovers will be interested to hear there will be a performance of John Stainer's "The Crucifixion" (1887) in the church on April 16, a Saturday evening, at 17:00. This famous work of English choral music is a perfect prelude to the Easter season and the concert is an opportunity for listening enjoyment and quiet reflection. If you can sing and would like to join the choir for this event, you are welcome to come to the workshop rehearsal on Saturday, April 9, from 09:30 to 17:00 at the church.

These and all other activities are in the English language. Regular services are Sundays at 10:30.

## St. Thomas à Becket, Hamburg

(Anglican/Episcopal)

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Website: [www.landesfrauenrat-hamburg.de](http://www.landesfrauenrat-hamburg.de)  
AWC Representative:  
Irmingard Zahn, tel./fax: (04162) 230, Email: [izahn@onlinehome.de](mailto:izahn@onlinehome.de)



1911 – 2011

All members of the AWC are cordially invited to take part in the celebrations to mark 100 years of International Women's Day on Tuesday, March 8. A detailed program – in German – with regular updates is available on [www.frauentag-hamburg.de](http://www.frauentag-hamburg.de) (then click on *Programm*) or [www.landesfrauenrat-hamburg.de](http://www.landesfrauenrat-hamburg.de) (click on *Internationaler Frauentag...* and then *Programm*). All events are free of charge. A few samples just to pique your interest: The Hamburg town hall (*Rathaus*) will be open from 10:00 to 15:00 with workshops and panel discussions on women's/gender issues with the topic "Emancipation. Power. Justice." going on in various rooms. The Chamber of Commerce (*Handelskammer*, Adolphsplatz 1, at the back of the *Rathaus*) will host a big birthday party with cabaret and live music from 20:00 onwards. A parade of girls and young women in period costumes from 1911-2011 is also planned as a showcase of emancipation in fashion. It will lead through the inner city to/from the town hall square with details of the exact route and time to be announced later.

Please feel free to contact me if you have questions and/or need help. Sorry the websites are in German only but I would certainly be happy to translate anything you would like to know.

Irmingard Zahn



by Mira Musafia

**M**y name is **Mira Musafia**.

I was born in Opatija, Croatia, where I've lived, except for a period in childhood spent in Africa, for most of my life.

I studied at the Medical University in Rijeka and after I graduated, I worked as a dentist. I moved to Hamburg in August 2010, because my husband Daniel, who is a Captain of the Merchant Navy, got a job as a company security officer at Columbia Ship Management (Deutschland) GmbH.

I have a seven-year-old daughter, Stella, who is in the first

grade in the Hafen City.

I'm happy that I became a member of AWCH. I like reading *Currents*, learning about people and events, such as Regina Daumann's article about Marc Chagall exhibition; I visited the exhibition as well and it delighted me. I also enjoyed the article by Ulrike Henn and I'll visit the *Galerie der Gegenwart* for sure!

There are a lot of things that I like to do in my spare time, such as visiting galleries, cinemas and theatres. I love reading and learning foreign languages, walking around the town and along the Alster, and going shopping. Sometimes I like the night life and dancing. I hope that I will meet other AWCH members with similar interests.

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## **The American Women's Club of Hamburg**

### **Coffee, tea and cake at the Witthüs**

#### **New and Prospective Members' Event**

**Wednesday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2011, 17.00 hrs**

Dear new and prospective members of the AWCH  
- and all other members who are interested -  
please join us for coffee, tea and cake in the Witthüs, a beautiful traditional  
café/restaurant in the Hirschpark in Blankenese.

(Cost: Your personal orders)



**Witthüs, Elbchaussee 499a, 22587 Hamburg**

**R.S.V.P.: by Monday, February 28, 2011**

**Email: [hhelpers@awchamburg.org](mailto:hhelpers@awchamburg.org)**

How to get there: S-Station Blankenese. Take any bus going into town; get off at the first stop: Mühlentberg (big Esso station). Stay on the same side of the street and walk up the street Mühlentberg. After 100 meters and you will reach the Witthüs in Hirschpark. There is also a description on how to get there on the Witthüs' website. <http://www.witthues.com>

Reminder: For membership and directory updates, please see your weekly e-Newsletter.

## Thank you to all the AGM2011 Silent Auction Donors

<b>Sandra Stapela</b>	Knitted socks, 8 jars of jams and jellies
<b>Hagenbecks Tierpark</b>	Four adult admission tickets
<b>Susan Stanley Witt</b>	MP3 player
<b>Vicki Filer Mensing, Chris Lorenzen, Beth Graß &amp; Tamara Heinig</b>	American food & cookbooks
<b>Tracy Moede</b>	Two sets wine glass rings, books, DVDs, crocheted baby hat and booties
<b>Dietmar Moede</b>	Two HSV scarves & lanyards
<b>Jess Allen</b>	Sock monkey
<b>Becky Tan</b>	Snuggi, purses, Chinese scarf, antique jumping jacks, Oscar books, opera tickets
<b>Kara Wahn</b>	Books
<b>Christy Griffith</b>	Books
<b>Brenda Anderson Rivera</b>	Purses
<b>Cat Conner</b>	Three hours computer service
<b>Tina Grieben</b>	Two hours personal assistant service
<b>Frauke Rademacher Heidmann</b>	Purses
<b>Jana Fakla</b>	Hand made beaded necklace and ring
<b>The Rover Rep Theatre</b>	Two tickets to the reading of Down & Out in London and Paris
<b>Ulrike Henn</b>	Professional Portrait Photo Session
<b>Marcus Dohle</b>	Clay Pidgeon Shooting
<b>Kate Bogumil</b>	Tour of Airbus – Six tickets
<b>Vicki Filer Mensing</b>	Scarves from Concept Léger, blouses from Marlowe Natur, baby hats from Pickapooch & books from Heymann Bücher
<b>Venita Kaleps</b>	Books & purses
<b>Beth Graß</b>	Crocheted baby blanket
<b>Nancy Tilitz</b>	Artistic Portrait



*Congratulations!*  
*Member Birthdays*

<i>March</i>	
Prue S	4
Jennifer M	14
Rita K	21
Jeannette J	21
Allene P	23
Kathleen (Kate) G	24
Rebecca T	28
Monika M	31

<i>April</i>	
Michele S	4
Coppelia H B	8
Karen P	15
Nancy T	16
Geraldine S	16
Elizabeth (Liz) E	17
Shawn K	17
Thelma F	20
Adele R	21
Tina G	22
Silke L	24
Deborah O	28
Natalie W	28
Ingrid O	28



by

*Susan Stanley-Witt*

### *Activity Review*

#### *Made by You big kids' activity*

I love homemade presents. Anyone can run out and buy new socks for mom or a new tie for Dad, which he will probably never wear. This is why it has become a tradition for the club's big kids (aged 11plus) to meet up at "Made by You" a month before Christmas. At "Made by You" in Manteinstr, Hoheluft, one picks out a dish or figure to paint and then afterwards it is popped into the kiln. The price of

the item includes the paint, supplies and firing. We always get at least ten people who sit in a reserved private room in the back chatting and painting for about three hours. It is the most popular 'big kids' event and gives our teenagers the opportunity to see each other. It is nice to have contact to other teens who are also growing up bilingually. The kids can talk to others who are in the same situation as themselves; primarily American mother and German father. We

mothers can also catch up with each other and exchange notes on the German school system and raising bilingual teenagers: two subjects about which we all have plenty of comments, questions and bits of advice. Most of us have not attended German schools and were just brought up speaking one language which puts us all in the same boat. Those few hours of painting and a therapeutic exchange of information are relaxing and comforting. I must admit I come for the conversation and I get a lot of nice homemade Christmas presents from my boys out of it too.





## ACTIVITY CALENDAR MARCH / APRIL 2011

Please check with activity leaders to confirm meeting times and places. More details on all meetings can be found in the membership section and on our AWC website: [www.awchamburg.org/activitycalendar](http://www.awchamburg.org/activitycalendar)

### MARCH 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 New Members Event Regina D.	3	4	5 Hotel Vier Jahreszeiten Lauren D.
6	7	8 Stich'n'Bitch Beth G.	9 German Practice Circle Lauren D.	10	11	12
13	14	15	16 Scrapbooking Brenda A.R.	17 Group Dinner Lauren D.	18	19
20	21	22 Stich'n'Bitch Beth G.	23 German Practice Circle Lauren D.	24 Ladies Who Lunch Mary W.	25	26
27	28	29	30	31 Charity Book Sale Shelly S.		

### APRIL 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Charity Book Sale Shelly S. #5 Bus Group Shelly S.	2
3	4	5 Stich'n'Bitch Beth G.	6 German Practice Circle Lauren D.	7	8	9
10	11	12	13 Scrapbooking Brenda A.R.	14	15	16 Long Night at the Museums
17 Easter Egg Hunt Silke L.	18	19 Stich'n'Bitch Beth G.	20 German Practice Circle Lauren D.	21	22	23
26	25	26	27 Mutti Kind Special Silke L.	28	29	30 Daytrip Spring Festival Lauren D.

**Wednesday, March 2**  
**17:00**

**New Members' Event**  
**Coffee, Tea and Cake at the Witthüs**

Where: Witthüs  
Elbchaussee 499a  
22587 Hamburg  
<http://www.witthues.com>  
Bus stop Mühlenberg  
(1 stop from S-Blankenese)

Cost: pay for what you order  
See invitation page 13

**RSVP:** Regina at [hhelpers@awchamburg.org](mailto:hhelpers@awchamburg.org)



**Saturday, March 5**  
**11:00**

**Private Tour of Hotel Vier Jahreszeiten**  
**With lunch at Café Condi to follow**

Where: Hotel Vier Jahreszeiten  
HVJ Neuer Jungfernstieg 9 – 14  
Jungfernstieg Station  
Cost: pay for what you order

**RSVP:** Lauren at [activities@awchamburg.org](mailto:activities@awchamburg.org)

In her magical book, *1,000 Places to See Before You Die*, Patricia Schultz introduces Hamburg's Hotel Vier Jahreszeiten with, "This is the stuff grand hotels are made of." This intriguing tidbit, coupled with the fact that the hotel is well over one hundred years old and has won every conceivable award, leaves us wanting to explore it. Join us for a tour of the lovely hotel followed by a light lunch at their Condi Lounge.

**Wednesday, March 9**  
**13:30**

**German Practice Circle**

Where: Mutterland (Eppendorf), Lenhartzstrasse 1

Learning German is more fun when you've got friends to learn with - and even more fun when you've got the ambience of a cozy café to enjoy! Join German learners and German speakers for our bi-weekly Wednesday German practice circle at lovely café lunch spots throughout the city. We are always in need of German speakers so if you feel so inclined to help out us newbies, we would love to have you join us!

**Email** Lauren at [activities@awchamburg.org](mailto:activities@awchamburg.org) for location information

**Wednesday, March 23:** location TBA

**Wednesday, April 6:** location TBA

**Wednesday, April 20:** location TBA

**Thursday, March 17**  
**19:00**

**Group Dinner at Brasserie La Provence**

Where: Brasserie La Provence (Ottensen)  
Eulenstrasse 42  
Cost: Pay for what you order



**RSVP:** Lauren by March 13 at [activities@awchamburg.org](mailto:activities@awchamburg.org)

Brasserie La Provence is a charming eatery that offers an open door to the best of Southern France. Its authenticity is showcased in the lovely decor and food and its worth is proven with the daily crowds that fill it completely. The Brasserie simply describes itself as a piece of France in Hamburg and we agree. We hope you will, too. Please join us for an evening of delicious eats and drinks and warm friends and conversation. Partners welcome. [www.brasseriealaprovence.de](http://www.brasseriealaprovence.de)

**Thursday, March 24**  
**12:00**

**Ladies Who Lunch**  
**Lunch—American Style!**

Where: Lecker-Licious Diner  
Bernier Weg 31  
Hamburg-Sasel

Cost: Pay for what you order



**RSVP:** Mary by March 23 at [wienkemr@aol.com](mailto:wienkemr@aol.com)

If your activities are centered around Hamburg-Mitte, then come to lunch outside of your comfort zone for some comfort food - American style. The American muffins baked by a German chef who lived in Florida for 15 years may be the best in Germany. He may even divulge his secret! The menu includes bagels, salads, Philly cheesesteak sandwiches, home-made burgers, corn chowder and cheesecake served in a traditional diner atmosphere with U.S. license plates and old photos to set the scene for some boisterous conversation. And don't forget the ice cream! From Hauptbahnhof take the U-Bahn to Volksdorf, Bus 24 Niendorf Markt to Op de Elg stop, walk about 10 minutes. Check [www.geofox.de](http://www.geofox.de) for the best public transport for you. Parking available on site.

**Sunday, March 27**  
**11:00**

**Mutti-Kind at The Spielstadt XXL**



Where: Niendorfer Weg 11 or Papenreye 26, 22453 Hamburg  
Cost: Adults: 6.90 Kids 3.90 (cost could be less depending on attendance)

**RSVP:** Silke Lossman by March 27: [sikelossmann@gmx.de](mailto:sikelossmann@gmx.de)

The Mutti-Kind group will enjoy hours of fun at the SPIELSTADT XXL, an indoor playground for children from 0 to 12 years. Babies can develop their fine motor skills in a special area of the center developed just for this. Mothers need playtime, too! While the children enjoy themselves adults can enjoy a coffee break in the restaurant.

**Thursday, March 31**  
**18:00-20:00**

**Charity Book Sale and Trade Party**



Where: Shelly Schoeneshoefer's home: Kleekamp 21  
Cost: Book costs: 0,50-2,00

**RSVP:** Shelly @ Tel: 422 6859 or [schoenshoe@aol.com](mailto:schoenshoe@aol.com)

This fun event is a fundraiser for Mentor Hamburg, an organization through which volunteers assist children from various Hamburg schools with reading. Like any non-profit organization there are



administration costs and therefore donations to Mentor Hamburg are always appreciated. That's where we come in! Please join us to purchase some new books to read (prices range from 50 cents to 2 Euros), swap those you have read, and enjoy coffee and light snacks. Your book donations will be greatly appreciated. If you are interested in donating please contact me ahead of time.

**Also Friday, April 1, 9:30-13:00**

**Friday, April 1  
19:45**

## **Number 5 Bus Group Dinner Party**

Where: Parlament Restaurant under the Rathaus

Cost: 45,00 includes 3- course menu, welcome drink, and show

RSVP: Shelly Schoeneshoefer, Tel: 422-6859 or

**number5@awchamburg.org** by March 27, First come First serve

This year our Bus Number 5 Group will spice up our activities by changing to the U1. This will allow us the chance to explore the many other parts of Hamburg that are worth discovering. We will start with a location where the lines intersect: U1 and Bus 5 both stop at the Rathaus offering us a perfect excuse to visit the lovely Parlament Restaurant (under the left side of the Rathaus) for dinner, drinks, and entertainment. The Parlament typically offers northern German cuisine but on this night will offer its guests a unique menu in honor of a special event. Recipes from Marlene Dietrich's cook book will be prepared in the Berlin kitchen style and Ginger will impersonate Marlene Dietrich to entertain us. For more information about the show, see: [Ginger-show.de](http://Ginger-show.de). Partners welcome. We look forward to seeing you there.

**Saturday, April 16,  
18:00-Sunday, April 17, 10:00**

## **Die lange Nacht der Museen/The Long Night of the Museums**

Where: 45+ Hamburg Museums

Cost: 12,00 includes entrance fees and access to transportation

This unique evening experience allows participants access to nearly 50 of Hamburg's popular museums as well as access in between each new spot. Read all about this great event at <http://www.langenachtdermuseen-hamburg.de>. Tickets can be purchased online.

**Sunday, April 17  
10:00**

## **12th Annual AWCH Children's Easter Egg Hunt**

Where: Steinberger Hotel Treudelberg Golf and Country Club  
Club Lemsahler Landstrasse 45, Tel 040 608 220  
(Poppenbutte Berg/Lemsahler Landstrasse)

Cost: Breakfast buffet: 19,00, Children 0-6: free, Children 7-11: 9,50  
Participation fee for children of AWCH Members: 4,00 and  
for children of non-members: 8,00

**RSVP:** by 9-Apr to Silke Lossman [silkelossmann@gmx.de](mailto:silkelossmann@gmx.de) or  
Susan Hansen at [langehanse@aol.com](mailto:langehanse@aol.com) or tel: 229 1178

Here comes the Easter Bunny...and a delicious meal as well! Following a tasty breakfast buffet will be our fun-packed children's Easter Egg Hunt. Don't forget an Easter egg basket and rain gear in case of inclement weather. We look forward to seeing you and your family there for a day of good eats, good friends, and lots of pretty pastels! <http://www.treudelberg.com>

**Saturday, April 30**

**Time TBA**

## **Daytrip to Gut Basthorst Spring Festival**

Where: Gut Basthorst

Auf dem Gut 3

21493 Basthorst

Cost: Adults: 4,00, Children under 16: free

**RSVP:** Lauren by April 25 at **activities @awchamburg.org**

Located just a 45-minute drive from Hamburg Hbf, Gut Basthorst is a lovely farmstead that offers a quaint setting, unforgettable food, and lots of must-have purchases. Its spring market boasts 150 select exhibitors displaying high-quality items for the home such as antique and vintage pieces, pottery, and woodwork, as well as crafts, jewelry, and fashion. Also for our entertainment will be the jazz band of Herr Morlak. Crafting opportunities are available for children as are theater performances, a fairytale workshop, a carousel, and fun with the farm's ponies, reindeer, and other animals. When our shopping has caused us to develop an appetite, we can conveniently visit the plethora of booths serving up culinary delights or the farm's own restaurant that offers regional specialties. It is possible that a shuttle will be available at the cost of 4,00. Otherwise we will arrange transportation. [www.gutbasthorst.de/fruehjahrsmarkt.php](http://www.gutbasthorst.de/fruehjahrsmarkt.php)

**AWC Cancellation Policy:** All events for which participants must reserve in advance and pay at the door must be paid for whether or not the person attends the event. However, if the cancellation is called in before the sign-up deadline, there will be no charge. If a person cancels after the sign-up deadline, she need not pay if a confirmed substitute can be found.



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### Books Too

is a new book club that meets every odd month. For more information please contact Kara at [bookstoo@awchamburg.org](mailto:bookstoo@awchamburg.org)



### Cancer Support Group

For confidential information about cancer and/or cancer support groups in Hamburg, you can call Allene Pistorius at **Tel (04181) 29 18 82.**

### Couples and Family Outings

Couples and families to convene on a monthly basis to do everything from finding the best pizza in town to sitting on Santa's lap at Christmas. This is open to all AWCH members, their partners and children. Contact Lauren our Activities Chair at [familyfunctions@awchamburg.org](mailto:familyfunctions@awchamburg.org)

### Cultural Subsidy

These are events which takes place several times a year, to fulfill your desire to experience Hamburg's vital and varied cultural offerings as well as one of the benefits of membership in the AWCH. We offer small discounts on tickets to major cultural events, e.g., opera, musical, or theater. Check our website for such offers or keep an eye on the activities calendar. And if you have an idea about an event to offer with the cultural subsidy, contact your activities coordinator(s).

### Film Reviewers' Group

The film group attends free press showings of films slated to open in Hamburg and writes reviews for *Currents* and other media. Communication is via email or fax. For more information, contact Becky Tan, [filmgroup@awchamburg.org](mailto:filmgroup@awchamburg.org)



### Girl's Night Out

Seeking women thirsty for cultural exchange and a refreshing adult drink, meeting up at hot spots around Hamburg for great conversations once a month -- the last Friday of the month. Contact Vicki at [girlsnightout@awchamburg.org](mailto:girlsnightout@awchamburg.org)

### HH Helper

This group helps new AWCH Club Members to live the good life in Hamburg! If you have recently joined our club and need some assistance, you are encouraged to contact Regina Daumann. She will not only give you details about the next New Members' Event but also refer you to the HH Helper in your area and to the groups and committees that might interest you. If you have already been a club member for some time and are interested in assisting new members in your area, please let us know. We are looking for more HH Helpers -- especially in the western and southern parts of Hamburg. Contact Regina Daumann at [hhhelpers@awchamburg.org](mailto:hhhelpers@awchamburg.org)

### Mutti-Kind Group

We are looking for moms and kids who like to get out and about! If you are interested in getting together, not just for playgroups, but mother/child-friendly activities, please contact Silke at [muttikind@awchamburg.org](mailto:muttikind@awchamburg.org)

### The Number Five Bus Group

Club members who live in the north/ northwest area of Hamburg would like to invite you to their area: parts of Eimsbüttel as well as Hoheluft, Lokstedt, Niendorf and Schnelsen. This area is dissected by the Number Five Bus which goes from the Hauptbahnhof via Gänsemarkt and Dammtor continuing almost all the way to Bönningstedt. Our meeting places will be easily reached on the Number Five bus. We extend our invitation to all of you to come see where we live. Contact Shelly Schoeneshoefer, [number5@awchamburg.org](mailto:number5@awchamburg.org)

### Proofreading Group

Proofreaders meet twice per issue to proofread *Currents*. It's a lot of fun! For dates for the next issue, see the note from the next Content Editor on page 2 and [currents@awchamburg.org](mailto:currents@awchamburg.org)



### Stitch 'n' Bitch

A handicrafts group that gathers to, well, stitch and bitch. That is, we get together to share projects, company and conversation. Contact: Beth at [snb@awchamburg.org](mailto:snb@awchamburg.org)

### Scrapbooking/Paper Crafting Group

This group is open to all levels of scrapbookers and paper crafters from beginners to advanced levels. We will get together to „scrap,“ share techniques and tools, and inspire others with our ideas as we work on our own projects. We have an English-speaking contact with acid-free supplies in Hamburg to help on your projects. Meetings held monthly and locations vary. Please contact Brenda at [scrapbook@awchamburg.org](mailto:scrapbook@awchamburg.org)

### German Practice Circle

Learning German is more fun when you've got friends to learn with - and even more fun when you've got the ambience of a cozy café to enjoy! Join German-learners and German speakers for our bi-weekly Wednesday German practice circle at lovely café lunch spots throughout the city. We are always in need of German speakers so if you feel so inclined to help out us newbies, we would love to have you join us!

Email Lauren at [activities@awchamburg.org](mailto:activities@awchamburg.org) for location information

### Opera Club

At the monthly meetings of the Opera Club, we are discovering opera one masterwork at a time. We meet several times to get to know a selected opera and then attend a performance together. Beginners are particularly welcome! Meetings are held Monday mornings in Hamburg-Poppenbüttel. Contact Elizabeth R. at [opera@awchamburg.org](mailto:opera@awchamburg.org)





## AWC Book Sale was a Great Success!!



by  
*Shelly Schoeneshoefer*

Congratulations to those who participated in the CISV fund raiser. We managed to collect 250 Euros from all the books donated from the club and friends. We had a wonderful party with food and drinks at my house where everyone could give their opinion on books they have read as well as buy some new books to add to their collection. The rest of the books were then donated to various organizations in Hamburg.

The money was then handed over to the secretary of CISV, Helma von Appen. She was excited that the children would have extra money to use for the organization this year. CISV stands for Children International Summer Villages and is there to promote global friendships. If anyone is interested in this children's organization, the internet site is [www.cisv.org](http://www.cisv.org).

org. I also have some brochures for those of you who are interested and have children 11 years old or older. My son went to Prague two years ago in their eleven year old camp and still writes to friends he met there. It is a great program where kids learn about different cultures around the world and it promotes communication and leadership skills.

Special thanks to Robert Hile, Margaret Nelson Spethmann, James Wright, and Gaby Erdmann who donated most of the books for this sale. Thanks to all those who participated and made this such a success!!



## Can You Count to Three?



by *Chris L.*

Well, if you can, you can play Bunco, a fun game of dice that does not require any special skills (except for the counting part).

On December 28, eleven of us gathered for an evening of food, fun and fund raising at Tracy M.'s home. After some great food and drink, we sat down for the serious (-) part of the evening: playing Bunco.

Tracy explained the rules and soon the only thing you could hear from a group of otherwise very intelligent and well-educated people was "One, ... two, ..." or just "One, ...one," with an occasional "Bunco" thrown in. When that happened, the mascot for the evening went flying from whoever had it last to the latest one to get Bunco.

While taking a well-deserved break in between, Ulrike talked more about the water project that we were raising funds for. Although there were three Bunco winners, the real winner was the ITWDP project – all those who won donated their prize money to the project, so all money collected went to this very worthy cause.

I for one can't wait for the next Bunco night!





by Tracy Moede

Due to the fact that few *eingetragene Vereine* or *e.V.* are able to donate monies to organizations which are not registered in Germany, FAWCO's target water project in Cambodia will not benefit from our successful fundraising. So that we can still make a difference to human lives and help them afford access to fresh water, we have chosen to support the **Integral Tribal Watershed Development Programme** (registered with

the *Jesuitenmission* in Nürnberg), which AWC member Ulrike H has been supporting for quite a few years now.

This program helps the tribal people of the Akole region in the state of Maharashtra, India. The tribal communities (people from the lowest social division of Indian society, also called the "Untouchable caste") are seasonally migratory and educationally and economically very backward. Their land is located on plateaus and in isolated mountain areas; it is heavily degraded. They face many agricultural problems through erosion, steep slopes, and general ruggedness. These areas are located in a rain-shadow where there is very little rainfall, ca. 4-5 cm annually. The ITWDP focus is to improve the tribals' small and degraded plots of land in order to increase their economic situation and to make them self-sustainable and also by giving them support in health and education. The ITWDP helps them to upgrade their social status, which develops their economical status. They then develop their sense of self-respect.

ITWDP is developing a watershed program for villages in this arid western district. This entails building a very sophisticated system of trenching and leveling as well as the construction of check dams to prevent erosion of the precious soil and to reclaim fields from the desert. A very specific planting program supports the retention of rainwater. These efforts have an impressive impact on ground-water

retention. Brown, arid soil blooms green and crops (such as castor seeds) provide the villagers with a quick income.

Sufficient water supplies can now help to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger. New opportunities for children to stay in the villages go to school and obtain a proper education are available. Women become empowered through education and business training. For example, women are the ones who handle the money and manage the small businesses and environmental sustainability is ensured. Child care is also taught at monthly health camps for mothers and their children.



At the FAWCO Region 5 meeting in Munich in November, the ITWDP was presented to all the AWC groups in Germany, some of which are also unable to donate to charities not registered outside the country. The AWC Düsseldorf felt strongly enough about the programme that they have donated EUR 4,000.

Although the AWC has been supporting the ITWDP for only a short time, we have already raised EUR 120 at the Bunco Game Fundraiser and EUR 755 from the 2011 AGM Silent Auction and EUR 154 from the book sale also at the AGM. What a great way to start the year! Thanks to all who have helped us get this far.



## PAservices - Your Personal Assistant

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PAservices - Your Personal Assistant, Tina Grieben, call me at 040 46 09 09 10  
or send me an E-mail to [tina@grieben.eu](mailto:tina@grieben.eu)

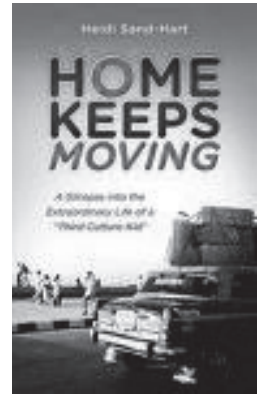


## Home Keeps Moving. A Glimpse into the Extraordinary Life of a "Third Culture Kid"

by Heidi Sand-Hart

Review by Sus Ewing Bölke

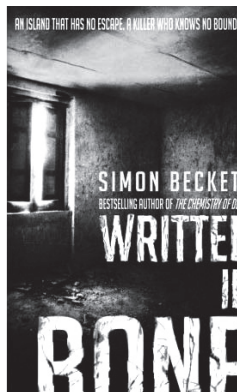
Heidi Sand-Hart contacted me herself through the club website looking for public relations. Of course, we fellow expats try to help out one another. Not that either one of us is an expat in the sense now considered most common. I am an American living abroad indefinitely. Heidi is what is today known as a Third Culture Kid (TCK). Specifically, she is a Missionary Kid. Born in London to a Finnish mother and a Swedish father, she was already dealing with three cultures even before the family departed England on a kind of life-long world tour moving from one mission to another. As she points out in her book on the subject, she has lived in 42 countries on three continents and attended nine different schools. Her friends and relatives (including an adopted grandmother in England, and an adopted grandfather in India) are spread across the world. She feels loyalty to four very different nations, creating sometimes crucial issues of identity, patriotism and criticism.



This description of the TCK experience includes but goes beyond Sand-Hart's autobiography to become a book as remarkable as its author, part self-help, part sociological research survey, part reflection on a situation less unique than it appears at first glance. She documents not only the thrill of travel and new experience but also the frustration, anger and sadness of the nomadic life of a missionary kid. In addition, she shows the prevalence of the phenomenon by including numerous contributions by other multi-cultural adults with similar-different (yes, I meant it that way) backgrounds. This volume is slim, but if you or a loved one falls into this category of restless, almost rootless world-travelers, you will find some fascinating insights within its pages as well as anecdotes both hilarious and heart-breaking.

## The Dr. David Hunter mystery thrillers By Simon Beckett

Review by  
Stella Kwong-Riechmann



I received a new book for Christmas by an author unknown to me. As I have an unsatiated need for forensic thrillers, I am always up for discovering new authors, besides my "Old Faithful"-James Patterson.

The book, *Written in Bone* by English author Simon Beckett was fast moving and suspenseful to the end. It is what I call a page turner. Simon Beckett's book stars a forensic anthropologist who is called to assist police departments in England wherever he is needed. There are so many twists and turns that it has the reader suspecting various characters in the book. And when we think that it is the end, there is still more.

Simon Beckett went on an assignment for the Daily Telegraph Magazine to Tennessee's world-famous Anthropological Research Facility, the Body Farm. The Body Farm is a place of training for the FBI profilers and other police enforcement personnel. Simon Beckett utilized what he saw in the Body Farm and what he learned there and together with his meticulous approach to research, made his novels so frighteningly authentic.

After I read the Christmas gift in two days, I found that I have to have more. I went into the internet and looked up all the books that Simon Beckett have written and bought them all.

I have completed three and am about to finish the last.

*Written in Bone* takes place in Runa, a small island off the northwest coast of Scotland. It is one of the most remote outposts of the UK where a local retired detective found the feet and a single hand of a burnt victim in an abandoned croft. Since there was a derailment of a West Coast commuter express train, most of the forensic team had been dispatched to the accident for victim identification. So the authorities called on Dr. Hunter, a well-known forensic anthropologist and one of the top in the UK, to assist in the case. Dr. Hunter started his career as a GP. After the tragic death of his wife and daughter, he found himself immersed in forensic anthropology and a consultant to difficult unsolved crimes.

The *Chemistry of Death* starts with Dr. David Hunter working as a doctor in a remote Norfolk village to forget about the tragic car accident that took away his beloved wife and young daughter. There, in Norfolk, the locals find the body of a young woman, then another. This close-knit community where Dr. Hunter then called home and refuge becomes a maelstrom of fear and paranoia. Here, the reader reads on and just when they think they have solved the crime, a new twist appears.

*Whispers of the Dead* takes place in Knoxville, Tennessee, where Dr. Hunter finishes his research in the Body Farm and is invited by his colleague to be a consultant and an assistant

on a crime scene. A badly decomposed body has been found in a remote rental cabin out in the woods and it looks like a homicide. The receipt to the rental cabin indicates five days have been paid for but the degree of decomposition is far too advanced for such a short time. Here start the investigation and the intrigue. When another body is found, Dr. Hunter is pushed deep into the heart of a terrifying manhunt that causes him to wonder whether the team is on the trail of a maniac who cannot be stopped.

Simon Beckett writes in a cunning, shocking and heart-stopping manner that makes it hard to put the book down. So I find myself reading deep into the night without wanting to close my eyes to sleep until I get to the end. I find Beckett's books thrilling, easy reading but I also learned a lot about crime scene detection and forensic work. This page turner has left me wanting for more. I have now read all four of Becketts' books and am awaiting another one to come to print. He certainly knows how to lead me on and push my buttons.

For those who are into mysteries and unsolved murders plus forensic science, this is the place to find it. Never a dull moment, turning the pages well into the night is what awaits one when one of Beckett's books is picked up.

This is the second modern day English author whose books I have read. So I am so happy that Simon Beckett found me.

Look for his books:

The Chemistry of Death	2006
Written in Bone	2007
Whispers of the Dead	2009
The Calling of the Grave	2010

Enjoy!



by  
*Jeannette Jordan*

### *On the Menu:* **Le Buffet**

inside Karstadt Department Store  
Mönckebergstraße in Hamburg

Can someone please tell me if this is legal?: good food and good shopping all under one roof. I'm talking about what I discovered on the top floor of Karstadt department store in downtown Hamburg. There's a restaurant on the top floor that is an absolute food palace.

It's called '*Le Buffet*.' Hence, the name says it all: it is a buffet. But don't have a flashback and think about those long lines and tons of children running around the Sizzler.

As soon as you turn the corner from the elevators, you are met with your first set of food stations. Then it circles with chefs on both sides and servers waiting to fill your plate. Some items are made to order and others you pick from prepared menus for the day. There is also a vegetable and salad line where you



### Restaurant Review Rating System:

- 1 spoon – needs improvement
- 2 spoons – not good, not bad
- 3 spoons – good food, nice place
- 4 spoons – amazing, totally love it



Jeannette Jordan is not your normal food critic. She is just a woman with an appetite, and more food allergies than we dare try to name. See what she dishes up in her Restaurant Review

can choose a large or small plate. That determines the price you will pay.

About those plates, make sure you are hungry because this meal won't come cheap. I paid about EUR 8 for a small salad station plate and a bottle of water. The guy in front of me had a salad, meat and vegetables on the large plate, desert and a drink. When he forked over a EUR 20 note, the cashier only returned a few small coins to him.

You will also find fish on at least one station, Asian cuisine, and generally a chef along the side carving up something to you're liking; and please don't forget to stop and at least dream big over the desert station.

My only complaint is that the offerings don't seem to change. On my second visit to Le Buffet I found all of the same items at each of the food stations. But the company was great, the view was good and it is a great place to meet. So I give three spoons to Le Buffet.

### **Mexican Food anyone?**



by Brenda  
*Anderson-Rivera*



I was walking by a new establishment one day after my German class and I just had to go in; after all, it was advertising California cuisine! I just had to investigate it! I walked in to see what I would call fresh Mexican food with a twist, something like a combination of "Baja Fresh" for all those Cali gals with a mix of "Chipotle" thrown in. Are you like me, and have longed for some HOT salsa, homemade guacamole and some black beans? Well, we have found a spot with three locations in HH (Eimsbüttel, Winterhude and my favorite, Rotherbaum). I think I jumped up and down, having finally found fresh cooked and chopped cuisine that was fast and could be taken on the go, with four different types of hot sauce. You can get anything - salad, burritos, quesadillas, and tacos filled with two types of vegetarian options as well as six meat options (Mole, Chorizo, Shredded steak, Grilled chicken/steak, etc.).

Most everything is under EUR 6 per item, so it is great to do on any budget. It has been a few months since that day and I am happy to say in addition to the awesome fresh food they now carry American soda in the "normal cans" (such as Hawaiian Punch, 7-up, and A&W Root beer, to name a few) and a ton of Hershey's and other candy bar products (Skittles, Take5, Reese's etc). That was just the beginning of my love affair with **Qrito**, and if you try it you might just run into me or someone I have turned onto the place. If you are looking for a good value, a spicy quesadilla or just a candy bar, this is the best value with the most authentic taste I have found in Hamburg. For locations check: [www.qrito.de](http://www.qrito.de)





## Out Of Focus

### Art Review



by Ulrike Henn  
with Johanna Doble

photo paintings created in the 1960s, the exhibit grants us a new insight into this important artistic period which formed the basis for Gerhard Richter's international fame.

Inspired by Pop Art artists like Roy Lichtenstein and their banal everyday objects as well as the Fluxus movement, Richter unperturbedly refined his painting skills and positioned himself against the in vogue "exit from the picture" trend of the 60s. Sensationalist photo spreads in magazines like *Stern* and *Quick* are sources for Richter's works, and are also on display. Taking his color palette from the photograph, he attempts to replicate the original picture, in some cases even incorporating captions and credits. His hallmark "blur," the hazy image surface, adds to the enigmatic quality of his paintings.

After Richter's escape from East to West Germany in March 1961, he started to process the impressions of his new life in large-scale photographic paintings. Even so they seem to depict single moments in time, they remain enigmatic; evil meeting the banal: Fast cars, exotic travel destinations, dreams and yearnings of the times, personal mementos, a toilet paper



Gerhard Richter, Motorboot, 1965, Privatsammlung, © Gerhard Richter, Köln 2011

roll, a simple kitchen chair, politics, treachery, crime and murder. Due to their relevance, they are considered images of an era, part of the collective consciousness of modern German society. This applies in particular to one of Richter's key works,

*October 18, 1977* (1988), on loan from MoMA in New York. The 15 paintings of this cycle deal with the death of RAF members at the Stammheim prison and represent a new type of historical painting. Uwe M. Schneede: "Richter created a new type of history painting, blurring the image and irritating viewers by leaving them in limbo".

The exhibit **Out of focus** runs alongside **Gerhard Richter** at the *Hubertus-Wald-Forum* at the *Hamburger Kunsthalle* through May 22. This exhibit shows Gerhard Richter's influence on the paintings and photographic works of 21 artists, together with around 20 works and an early experimental film by Gerhard Richter. The blurred and hazy, out-of-focus appearance is seen



Michael Engler (\*1942)  
Fatamorgana Nr. 8, 2007  
Lambada-Print, 100x140 cm  
© Michael Engler

as typical for Richter's painting. This also holds true for his representations of figures, landscapes or still-life paintings just as it does for his abstract paintings.

In this they follow Richter. There are, for example, the effects of a softened touch, of a veiled surface that lend the images a touch of mystery. The bleary haze of things in motion, by contrast, represent the progress and dynamism of modern life, like Wolfgang Kessler's photograph *Cutter*, 2010, that shows the frozen motion of a high-speed train. This exhibit offers a broad look at how the blurred surface has become a central characteristic in both figurative and abstract paintings and in photographs. The degrees of blurring define the border between realism and abstraction (clarity and precision) in the representation of reality.

The exhibits inaugurate an international series of exhibitions on the occasion of the artist's 80th birthday in February 2012. This includes retrospectives at the Tate Gallery London, The Centre Pompidou in Paris and the Nationalgalerie in Berlin.

The Hamburg exhibits have been coordinated as the first theme-related project within the Hamburger Kunstmeile. For details and the benefits of a **Hamburger Kunstpass**, please see *Currents* 12/2010 or visit their web site: <http://www.kunstmeile-hamburg.de/en/>



# At the Movies

compiled by Becky Tan

The following films will open in Hamburg: For a complete list of reviews consult [www.awchamburg.org](http://www.awchamburg.org) or [www.KinoCritics.com](http://www.KinoCritics.com).



## MOVIE RATING SYSTEM

- \*\*\*\*\* Excellent flick! Don't miss it!
- \*\*\*\* Good movie, worth going to see
- \*\*\* Not a bad way to spend a few hours
- \*\* OK, but read the review to understand my reservations
- \* Bad, but we've got to give them credit for making a movie!

ALL FILM REVIEWS AND  
MORE CAN BE FOUND ON



### The Tree \*\*\*

Starts March 3



Script & Direction: **Julie Bertuccelli**

Original Screen Play: **Elizabeth J. Mars**

With: **Charlotte Gainsbourg, Marton Csokas, Morgana Davies**

Eight-year-old Simone is on the back of the pick-up truck when her father suffers a deadly heart attack at the wheel. The car comes to a stop at the foot of the majestic fig tree next to their home in the Australian Outback. Grief overtakes the young widow (Gainsbourg) like the roots of the fig tree that – due to lack of water – are overtaking the garden and threaten to destroy the house. She's barely able to care for her children. While her three sons deal with the loss each in their own way, Simone (Davies) has very consciously decided to *be happy*. Convinced that her father's soul now resides in The Tree, she finds comfort sitting in the branches talking to him, waiting for the wind in the leaves to answer her. Through history trees have played an important role in the world's mythologies. People feel emotionally connected to trees and draw strength from touching them. Maybe Simone instinctively tapped into this. Maybe she got the idea from watching the ants that she had seen on her father's grave, climbing on the tree. To help her mother carry on, Simone shares her secret. Dawn starts to connect to the tree as well, curling up elflike at its roots, finding peace. The closeness between mother and daughter is put to a test when Dawn's new boyfriend (Csokas) not only inspires Si-

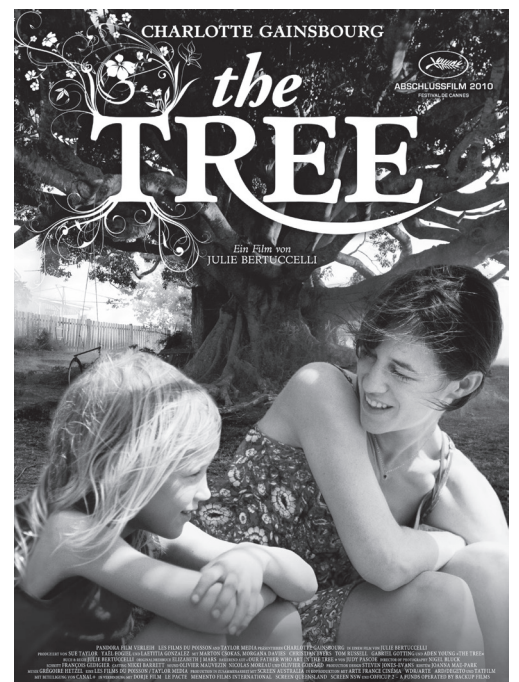
mone's jealousy but her ire and desperation when he prepares to take The Tree down to save the house. Each cut with the chainsaw feels like a limb is being cut off. The reactions that follow are understandable at first on an emotional level, but the turn the story takes is bewildering and the metaphors begin to fall apart. I enjoyed watching it anyway: an entirely wonderful cast with good chemistry between them; a magical landscape. And: I have a *thing* with trees too. (Carola Amsinck)

### The Tree \*\*

In the opening shots of Dawn (**Charlotte Gainsbourg**) and Peter (**Aden Young**) O'Neil having a nighttime tête-à-tête while swinging in a hammock, their intimacy is firmly established. With four children, their contentment is ensconced in a rambling home shaded by a towering fig tree in rural Australia. Until the day Peter returns from a business trip and fate grips his heart. Devastated, mom takes to her bed, leaving oldest son Tim (**Christian Byers**) to (try to) hold the household together as well as care for younger siblings Simone (**Morgana Davies**), Lou (**Tom Russell**) and unspeaking Charlie (**Gabriel Gotting**).

Pining for her father, Simone fixates on his spirit living in the fig tree; to make the tree homely Simone

hangs family photos and keepsakes from the branches. When she finally tells her mom, Dawn is amazed yet placates her. Next, Lou waters the tree although there is water rationing



because of drought. The neighbor loudly complains about the huge wandering roots. And eight months down the road, searching for a plumber for root related problems, Dawn inadvertently stumbles into a job with George (**Marton Csokas**). Who not only fixes her pipes but also revitalizes Dawn much to, especially, Simone's proprietary chagrin.

**Elizabeth J. Mars's** original screenplay, with writing help from director **Julie Bertuccelli**, is based on Judy Pascoe's novel *Our Father Who Art in the Tree*. Their challenge, to imbue supernatural qualities that change an entity (the tree) into a life form, is not met on celluloid. Grief, adjusting to an altered life, and jealousy mingled with imagined disloyalty are enough to challenge any director. Yet there is this tree: ponderous shots (close-up, wide and from various angles) of the tree do not make it mortal. With the many subplots, Bertuccelli loses focus: snippets of mom, the kids, neighbors et al. give us more to question than to understand. As they drive off "into the sunset" I could only wonder what their future shenanigans might entail. (Marinell Haegelin)

### **Almanya – Willkommen in Deutschland \*\*\***

Starts March 10

Script: **Nesrin Samdereli**

Direction: **Yasemin Samdereli**

With: **Lilay Huser, Demet Gül, Fahri Yardim, Vedat Erincin, Rafael Kussouris**

In the '60s West Germany started to recruit so-called 'guest workers' from Southern Europe and Turkey to temporarily fill the gap that World War II left in the workforce. Many stayed. In this comedy Hüseyin (**Fahri Yardim**) takes the opportunity to earn a better living. The young family that he left behind in the backwaters of Turkey joins him a few years later to make 'Almanya' their home. Now – 40 years later – the family has grown to four generations and we accompany them on a family trip to Turkey, where the old Hüseyin (**Vedat Erincin**) has – Surprise! – just bought a house. The trip back to the 'old country' is met by the family with almost as little enthusiasm as the move to Germany way back when. The youngest family member, six-year old Cenk, born to Turkish / German parents, is confused about his cultural identity. To answer his many questions and to entertain him on the way to Turkey, his cousin tells the family history. In flashbacks we learn how her grandparents met, of the culture shock moving from Orient to Occident, and of encounters in the new country. Moving to another country holds the chance to see the 'new' from the perspective of the 'old' - and eventually the 'old' in a new light. Comedy is the perfect vehicle to share these insights, and make unpleasant truths digestible. The film succeeds mostly thanks to the child actors and good lines delivered with good timing in really funny situations. Especially **Kaan Aydogdu**, who adds the perspective of Hüseyin and Fatma's (**Lilay Huser**) eight-year old son Muhamed.



Other scenes are painfully unfunny, among them: 'old Hüseyin' and his letter to the German chancellor, or the Turkish village women passing on prejudices about 'the Germans'. Chances were missed to view Turkey with equal bewilderment, when the German-born generation visits the country of their ancestors. I fully expected the family to stay in Turkey; I heard no good reason to return – even though the house in Turkey turns out to be just a façade, without TV. (Carola Amsinck)

### **Biutiful \*\*\*\***

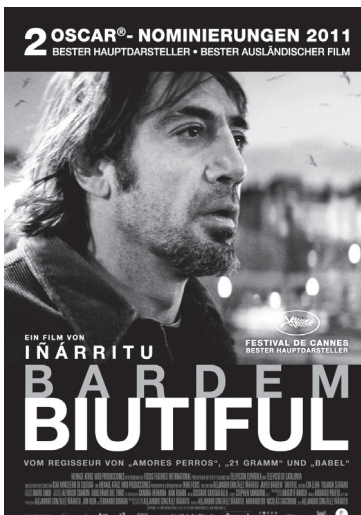
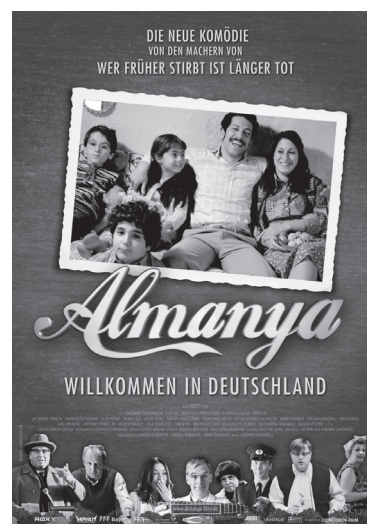
Starts March 10

Uxbal (**Javier Bardem**) is a poor, uneducated man in Barcelona. He has the responsibility for his two school-aged children after their mother is diagnosed as bi-polar and therefore, incompetent to raise children. She lives alone and works as a prostitute, including occasional visits to Uxbal's rich brother, Tito. Still the small family interacts and the children have a relatively normal life; their strict father Uxbal makes sure that they will become responsible people with a good education and a better life, contrary to all the adults around them.

His illegal job entails interaction between entrepreneurs and exploited illegal workers from Senegal and China as well as the corrupt police. This is risky business and the stakes are high and often collapse, e.g., when the police arrest Africans selling cheap goods on the streets or Asians do not survive in their close living quarters or money does not flow. The difference between Uxbal and his bosses is that he actually cares about people and wants to do the right thing. He also seems to have a talent for speaking to corpses in the morgue and delivering messages to the families. He has a huge heart and nothing to look forward to except that some day it will stop beating.

He shares his problems with an older woman named Bea who can only agree that there is no solution.

This Mexican-US film by **Alejandro González Iñárritu** (who also wrote the script) is a milieu study in that we follow the desperate life of Uxbal and, in the end nothing has changed for better or worse. My German colleague said, "Oh, you Americans (meaning me) always have to have a light at the end of





the tunnel.” It’s true that I wonder why I watch people suffer for 147 minutes when there is no hope and death is an



improvement. Perhaps Javier Bardem is the answer. He is so extraordinary, so excellent and entirely believable, that he fills the screen the entire time up to his last breath (for which he won best actor in Cannes 2010). Inárritu is familiar with the area of Barcelona and the people portrayed which makes the story absolutely believable, but nonetheless sad. Occasional small human kindnesses such as Uxbal giving a home to an African mother who then includes his kids in her love make human existence meaningful. Otherwise, we could all go shoot ourselves. (Becky Tan)

**I am Number Four** (Ich bin Nummer Vier) \*\*\*1/2  
Starts March 17

Director: **D.J. Caruso**

They’re among us, though probably not in Roswell, as in the TV series. A few Loriens - human-looking aliens from planet Lorien - escaped from their home planet when it was conquered by their enemies, the Mogadorians. John Smith/Number Four (**Alex Pettyfer**) is one of nine Loric teenagers with unique abilities who have a special destiny to fulfil. John and his guardian Henri (**Timothy Olyphant**) move from place



to place, always leaving when their security is compromised. Although the Loriens try to blend in and keep a low profile, their deadly enemies hunt them down one by one. Three are already dead, and Number Four is the next one on the list. Too bad that keeping a low profile can be quite a challenge when you’re in high school, look like a model and have supernatural powers - like Number Four. When Sarah (**Diana Agron**), who loves looking at the world through a camera lens, publishes pictures of John on the internet, trouble isn’t far away. But this time Number Four is in love and refuses to run.

This fast-paced thriller with relatable characters, lots of action and dramatic fight scenes is fun to watch from beginning to end. Teenager or not – if you like stories combining science fiction and fantasy with real life, you’ll probably enjoy this film. If you enjoy it so much that you hope for more: The book *I Am Number Four*, written by **Jobie Hughes** and **James Frey** under the name *Pittacus Lore* is only the first book in the *Lorien Legacies* series. (Christa Greiff)

**Conviction** (Betty Ann Waters) \*\*\*1/2  
Starts March 17



**Tony Goldwyn** directs **Hilary Swank** and **Sam Rockwell** in a movie written by **Pamela Gray**, and based on a real-life drama.

In 1980 the murdered body of a woman is found in a trailer home on the outskirts of Ayer, Massachusetts. Two years later, Kenny Waters (**Sam Rockwell**), known for his volatile temper, is arrested and sentenced to life. Traces of Kenny’s blood type found at the scene, and the testimonies of two women (one the mother of his daughter) who say that he admitted to the crime, is the evidence against him. Kenny’s sister Betty Anne (**Hilary Swank**) never doubts his innocence, however. When it’s clear that an appeal and decent defense will cost too much money, Betty Anne decides to finish high school and then study law herself. At the cost of her marriage and the loss of her kids, she battles on and finally passes the bar. By then, however, over ten years have passed and she is told that all the evidence from the case has surely been destroyed. Convinced it can not be, Betty Anne persists and does manage to locate the bloodied items. With the support of the Innocence Project in New York, and thanks to newly developed DNA testing, it is confirmed that the blood did not match Kenny’s. Sure that her brother will now be freed, Betty Anne is shocked to discover that the local judge and police themselves have reason not to have the case re-opened...

With totally convincing performances by **Hilary Swank** and **Sam Rockwell**, *Conviction* is a disturbing film that underlines that, while life is unpredictable, conviction, determination and hard work will almost always produce the hoped-for outcome. (Osanna Vaughn)



**I Shot My Love \*\*\*\***

Starts March 17

The mother of Israeli filmmaker **Tomer Heymann** states that ever since her son had a camera in his hand, he began to film everything in sight. That may be all right in your family, but what if you are looking for a new relationship? In *I Shot My Love*, we meet Heymann who has an obsessive need to document everything around him. His last film *Paper Dolls*, an award winning documentary on drag queens, brought him to Berlin. During his visit he meets the love of his life, Andreas Merk, who, strangely enough, deals with Heymann's eccentric use of the camera. One opening scene, which looks like a one-night stand, shows Tomer filming Andreas while they shower together. Andreas accepts this as though it happens all the time. Perhaps that was the moment that Tomer fell in love with him? This documentary showed at the 2010 Berlinale. My interview with the protagonists is in the *Currents* special issue Berlinale 2010, page 12 and online under Films / Film Festivals 2010 / Berlinale – "Obsession with the Camera". (Shelly Schoene-shoefer)

**In Einer Besseren Welt (Hævnen) (In a Better World) \*\*\*\* 1/2**

Starts March 17

The African heat and dust seep off the screen and into our pores as Anton (**Mikael Persbrandt**) is jostled while driving to the remote refugee camp where he saves lives. In pristine Denmark, where Claus (**Ulrich Thomsen**) has returned after his wife succumbs to cancer, a remarkably poised ten-year-old Christian (**William Jøhnk Nielsen**) reads his mother's eulogy. It is the same small town that Anton commutes to, where his (now estranged) wife Marianne (**Trine Dyrholm**) and two young sons live. Like the African heat, malevolency imperceptibly seeps into their lives.

Their oldest son Elias (**Markus Rygaard**) endures relentless bullying at school. Until, that is, Christian shows up, and stands up for him. A friendship is easily forged between Elias, distraught and forlorn over his parents' impending divorce, and bereft Christian, whose pent-up rage against his father drives him to lead them on an uncharted slippery-slope course. Their initial fray throws their parents, stymied by their own personal conflicts, together; they grope, in adult fashion, to deal with these naughty boys. But Christian, with Elias's help,



has a bigger target and a bang of a solution on how to handle him. Yet they are unprepared for how far revenge can be taken, and the full, sorrowful meaning of tragedy.



Deftly directed by **Susanne Bier**, who wrote the screenplay with **Anders Thomas Jensen**, it is with insightful skill that the dilemmas are probed: revenge vs. walking away; how much to compromise one's integrity for a friendship; forgiveness with no strings attached. The acting is understatedly excellent, **Morten Søborg's** cinematography judicious, and **Johan Söderqvist's** original music in concert with **Pernille Bech Christensen** and **Morten Egholm's** editing take us from one continent to the other without our having jet lag. Without moralizing the complexities of the prickly sides of human nature, the empathetic clarity with which alternate perspectives about relationships, between fathers and sons, men and women, friends, enemies, strangers, is food-for-a-long-time thought, and worthy of the Oscar©. (Marinell Haegelin)

**Gnomeo and Juliet \*\*\* 1/2**

Starts March 24

The story is a good introduction to a Shakespeare tragic tale directed by **Kelly Asbury**. It was made with the whole family in mind:



however I wouldn't recommend it for children younger than five years. It is hilarious, although there are some scary moments for youngsters; it also has tragedy and can be quite sad in some moments. The main lesson is that prejudice can block our lives but love can redeem us all. The adaptation turns tragedy into a happy ending. The voices are great, the English accents are delightful or is it because I am into Brits and I saw it in English? Voice actors are **James McAvoy** (Gnomeo), and **Emily Blunt** (Juliet). The music is great with both classic and original songs by **Elton John**. The porcelain characters are very well designed and show good human resemblance. The anime-statue realism is very good also.

The story starts with the known rivalry between two families, in this case, in gnomes' gardens. When two of the youngster gnomes go on an incognito mission, the magic of love is created. That is, of course, because neither of them knows who the other one is. This can be a good time to discuss with our children how we as humans prevent ourselves from meeting





nice people just because of our prejudices. By bypassing the prejudices there is a chance to overwrite fate. There are a flamingo and a frog working as love allies. Both of the characters are sweet, wise and fun. There is a moment in which the flamingo recounts the tale of his lost love which I found very touching. The amount of destruction is really not necessary to make the point; I found the super lawnmower "Terror Terminator" to be between comic and intimidating. After the deaths of Gnomeo and Juliet, the families re-conciliate, but are our heroes really dead? (Amanda Watts)

#### **Das Schmuckstück** (original French: *Potiche*) \*\*\*\*

Starts March 24



**Catherine Deneuve** is the pretty, prim and proper Madame Suzanne, wife of factory director Pujol (**Fabrice Luchini**), mother of Joelle (**Judith Godreche**) and Laurent (**Jeremie Renier**). The children are grown-up, her bossy macho-husband prefers flirting with his young secretary Nadège (**Karin Viard**) and Suzanne feels unappreciated, just like a *Potiche* (eye-candy), a useless decoration in the house. Whilst her choleric husband is ranting about his lazy workmen he suffers a heart attack. What to do? The show must go on. Suzanne is chosen to act in the name of her ailing husband – so he confidently demands. Things turn out differently. Instead of exploitation she promises the workmen prosperity and fair treatment. She teams up with the communist Mayor Babin (**Gérard Depardieu**), an unexpectedly romantic and supportive ally. The formerly inconspicuous director's wife turns out to be a better leader, a progressive woman with innovative ideas. All seems well and flourishing. When Pujol recovers he is happy to come back as head of the family, pushing Suzanne aside and unyield-

ingly demanding his place as boss of the factory. There is no way that Suzanne can again become a *Potiche*. She plans her revenge.

With cynical dialogue and sparkling wit this comedy by **Francois Ozon** (*8 Women*, *Swimming Pool*) is very satisfying entertainment. You can sit back and enjoy the excellent interaction of talented actors, marvel at the colours and décor of the '70s accompanied by French chansons of the time and smile at the wickedly funny scenes. At the same time it offers not only a view back in history but highlights the limitations of the so called "power woman" with biting humour. Not all that much has changed during the last thirty years. (Birgit Schrumpf)

#### **Winter's Bones** \*\*\*\*

Starts March 31

Ree Dolly (**Jennifer Lawrence**) is not your typical 17-year-old. Ree does not have the luxury of escaping her difficult life in the Ozarks of Southwestern Missouri. Instead of attending high school and participating in the normal activities 17-year-old girls do, Ree must raise her younger brother and sister, while at the same time taking care of her mentally ill



mother. Ree's father, Jessup, is in and out of the family's life, as well as in and out of jail. The last time Jessup was arrested for cooking crank (a form of methamphetamine), he put the family house and attached land up as bond. The local sheriff notifies Ree that Jessup has not been seen for a couple weeks, and is not expected to show up for his court date. If this happens, Ree will lose the family home, and in turn the means to care for her siblings. Ree sets out through the dangerous woods of the Ozarks in search of her father. As is quickly seen, Ree's extended family in the Ozarks live by strictly followed and enforced rules – do not talk to or trust the authorities, and do not question the 'men folk' of the Dolly family. If these rules are broken, stiff consequences will occur. Unfortunately for Ree, the only male figure in her life is her paternal uncle, Teardrop (**John Hawkes**). Teardrop is controlled by the Dolly family rules, but appears to struggle with wanting to help his niece. This gives Ree no assistance. As Ree attempts to find out on her own what has happened to her father, the director **Debra Granik** does a wonderful job at showing the colors of the Ozarks through banjo- and fiddle-accompanied songs, distant gun pops in the woods, the gutting and cooking of squirrels for dinner, and the dress and mannerism of the Dolly family men and women. This is successfully done without playing to any kind of cliché or type. Ree seems to understand the boundaries that are set by her community, yet does what is necessary to protect her family. (Mary Lindgren)

**Winter's Bone \*\*\*\*\***

Starts March 31



Know the proverb “make a penny do a pound’s worth”? Director **Debra Granik** has done just that, with stellar backing from everyone involved. The story is simple and told against a frozen winter backdrop, deep in the hilly terrain of the southern Missouri Ozarks. Environs that reflect the pain of dire poverty, where wary eyes stare out of gaunt sinewy faces and no one is quite to be trusted. Gumption is fleshed out in the form of Ree Dolly (mesmerizing **Jennifer Lawrence**), a 17-year-old girl, and the surrogate mom to Sonny (**Isaiah Stone**) and Ashlee (**Ashlee Thompson**) since their dad landed in jail. Ree schools, teaches arts of survival and nurtures them with wisdom beyond her years: “Never ask for what otta’ be offered” she tells Sonny as he gazes hungrily at neighbors skinning a deer.

When Sheriff Baskin (**Garret Dillahunt**) shows up on the doorstep, he talks to Ree, not her withdrawn mom, as eyes watch. Her crank-cooking dad, out on bail with an impending court date, has set their house and woods as bond collateral; Ree stonily states she does not know where he is, and, she will find him. So begins her journey into a treacherous landscape inbred with relatives of relatives, introverted, individualistic, and, as unflinching as Ree, until Ree respectfully confronts them. With livelihoods dependent on methamphetamine, this mite of a girl is threatening. Teardrop (**John Hawkes** in a chilling performance) callously warns Ree, to no avail; Thump’s gal, Merab (**Dale Dickey** is great) snaps when Ree keeps poking around after her daddy: “you was warned nice, why didn’t you listen?” Teardrop steps in, “this gal ain’t gonna tell nobody nothing”, then later cautions Ree: “... my lil’ brother, (probably killed)... if you ever find out (who done it) don’t tell me.”

Stark visual storytelling with currents so ominous you will catch your breath, *Winter’s Bone* is as raw and fresh as a slab of succulent Midwest steak. **Michael McDonough**’s cinematography and **Affonso Gonçalves**’s editing imbue, and shot on location, using locals in supporting roles, **Dickon Hinchliffe**’s original music encircles and haunts. When you hear Marideth Sisco sing, you know you cannot get any closer to real than that.

Based on **Daniel Woodrell**’s novel, **Debra Granik** and **Anne Rosellini**’s screenplay encapsulate the harsh reality of isolation, dauntless courage and yes, even hope, that course through

this addition to the cornucopia of Oscar© nominated films. “I’d be lost without the weight of you two on my back”... sweet Ree, talking straight, makes it hard for any audience not to listen. (Marinell Haegelin)

**The Fighter \*\*\*\*\***

Starts 7 April

Lowell, Massachusetts: recipient of the 1999 All-American City Award, birthplace of Jack Kerouac, and, a favorite of filmmakers. Robert Mandel shot opening scenes for *School Ties* (1992) and HBO’s documentary *High on Crack Street* (1995) was filmed here, as was Ricky Gervais’s *The Invention of Lying* (2009), to name a few. Now Lowell is ringside and center as home to Richard Eklund and „Irish“ Micky Ward in the 2010 biopic *The Fighter*. Dicky, former professional boxer in the Welterweight division and New England Welterweight Champion, was instrumental to half-brother Micky, retired junior welterweight professional boxer, a World Boxing Union champion and featured in *Fight Night Round 3*, a boxing video game.

That being said, one of Lowell’s own **Mickey O’Keefe**, a sergeant with the Lowell Police Department, was Micky’s mentor and plays Himself as trainer to Micky Ward, played by **Mark Wahlberg**, who trained four years for this film and, fought the fights. His strong, restrained performance counterbalances **Christian Bale** as the agitated, drug addicted Dicky. Bale lost weight, noted Dickey’s mannerisms and speech: “Dicky has a whole rhythm to him, a music. Christian had to understand how his mind works“, says the director, and we catch a glimpse of during the end credits.



**Melissa Leo** captures the dictatorial control Alice Ward (seems to have) wielded over her nine children. Nice, quiet Micky is easy to deal with and compliant to their whims concerning his boxing career, until **Amy Adams** as equally strong willed, smart and feisty Charlene Fleming pops up. Charlene gave Alice and the bevy of seven sisters as good as she got, and there are scenes the gals win, hands down.

Director **David O. Russell** tells the family story with intelligence, sensitivity, and lots of humor, which draws us in, and has us rooting, never mind if you have an aversion to boxing. Authentic fight footage is inter-cut, and the ‘home movie’ effect is cleverly used to give us background information. No wonder film editor **Pamela Martin** is an Oscar© nominee; she



cut this film so brilliantly we were at the end of the film when I realized I had been there before. We are all in the winner's circle at the end of this very entertaining, very well crafted boxing film that venerates brothers' love and a family's bond, and establishes the current Pride of Lowell.  
(Marinell Haegelin)

**Womb \*\*\***

Starts April 7

This German-Hungarian-French film by **Benedek Fliegauf** showed at the 2010 Filmfest Hamburg. Rebecca marries Tommy, boyfriend since kindergarten, who then dies in an accident. She refuses to accept the loss and manages to clone an embryo which is implanted into her "womb" and thus she bears a son who is the image of her lost husband. She lives alone with him in a house on a lonesome beach. I could say there is much symbolism and room for discussion about ethics, loneliness, and the mother in law who disapproves, but it doesn't really grab anyone's attention. The film is slow and without music. The best part is the gorgeous scenery on the beach of Schleswig-Holstein where the film was made. (Becky Tan)

**Der Name der Leute (Le Nom des Gens) \*\*\***

Starts 14 April

Arthur Martin (**Jacques Gamblin**) is a quiet, respectable veterinarian who works with the French Bureau of Animal Epidemics. Bahia Benmahmoud (**Sara Forestier**) is an outgoing, politically active young woman who seduces right-wing men in order to "convert" them to become left-wingers. And, although, Arthur is already left-wing, she gives him a chance for her favors.



It is a stormy relationship because the two outwardly are as different as night and day. The similar secrecy that is a part of their backgrounds and those of their parents is what finally brings them together in a serious way. Bahia's father was an Algerian refugee who saw most of his family murdered by the French. Arthur's family has never spoken about the fact that his maternal grandparents were murdered by Nazis. When Ba-

hia's father married a French hippie and when Arthur's mother married a gentile, they shut the book on sorrow and didn't allow that trait in their children either.

This comedy was a big hit in France and it is obvious why - the French have such a passion for politics. (Thelma Freedman)

**Never Let me Go \*\*\***

Starts April 14

Starring **Carey Mulligan, Andrew Garfield and Keira Knightley**, based on the novel by **Kazuo Ishiguro**, directed by **Mark Romanek**, screenplay by **Alex Garland**.

The story follows the lives of three children who grow up together at an English boarding school. The seemingly idyllic school is founded on a dis-

turbing practice - all the children have been cloned with the sole purpose of becoming organ donors when they are older. Kathy (Mulligan) has loved Tommy (Garfield) for as long as she can remember, but it is her friend Ruth (Knightley) who eventually becomes his lover. For many years their lives are intertwined, then they get separated and finally reconnect when Ruth's health has deteriorated significantly after donating a second organ. Few donors survive beyond the third. It is a time for Ruth to make amends with the friend she knows she had hurt badly, and for Kathy and Tommy to acknowledge their love for each other and see if there is some way to postpone the inevitable.

While the acting in the movie is all round excellent, the unfolding of the story stretches credibility to the limit. The idea of children being cloned is disturbing but possible. On the other hand, the way they accept their fate with little questioning or

resistance is hard to believe - particularly once they start becoming independent and interacting with the 'normal' world, which they appear to be totally free to do. (Osanna Vaughn)

For a complete list of reviews consult [www.awchamburg.org](http://www.awchamburg.org) or [www.kinocritics.com](http://www.kinocritics.com).



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