

Poetry in Song

The Music of the Saint Louis Chamber Chorus

Creating programmes for a choir that generally sings without instrumental accompaniment is no easy matter. To use a gastronomic analogy, a typical choir's 'menu' would feature madrigals as an appetiser, followed by an entrée of folksongs with a side order of spirituals, and culminate in a soufflé of a pop song arrangement. Mouth watering? Perhaps on occasion, but not the right recipe for building and retaining an audience over a series of six programmes each season. Yet for the past sixteen years that has been my challenge, as the artistic director of the Saint Louis Chamber Chorus. It has been my responsibility to maintain its distinctive character reputation - as the premier independent *a cappella* choir in the Midwest - through the quality of both repertoire and performance.

Recognising that even St. Louis has a finite number of 'hard-core' choral enthusiasts, I have tried several ways to expand our base of supporters and raise our profile in the wider artistic community. One approach has been to put together unusual repertoire in a thoughtful and even provocative manner, using a single theme as a starting point. Puns have abounded in the fashioning of titles, I must admit, as in *Going for the Jocular*. In this concert we presented humorous songs, such as William Schuman's arrangements

from the Sears Roebuck catalogue entitled "Mail Order Madrigals," and musical witticisms, like a pastiche setting of the mass using melodies from *The Sound of Music*.

Once I've devised a series of possible concert themes, I must arrange them in a coherent sequence, maintaining variety and accessibility for performer and audience alike. One would soon run out of singers and listeners if consecutive concerts were too similar in repertoire and theme. In recent years I have placed individual themes within a wider unifying context. Two years ago our season bore the title *Great Musical Cities*, and used works written in, and about, particular cities to conjure a 'sound portrait' of Rome and Jerusalem, Vienna and London, and Venice and Cork. Following the success of that series it was vital that we find an overarching theme that would hold a similar appeal. The result was an investigation - over two seasons - of how certain poets have inspired great music, and this, I suspect, is what particularly interests readers of *The Figure in the Carpet*.

It has always struck me how some authors have elicited numerous musical responses, while others have remained largely unsung. Perhaps their verse contained such musical overtones that to

set it to music might seem redundant, or perhaps its subject matter did not fire the musical imagination? Among my final list of poets, this seemed to be the case with Browning, whose dense imagery and sheer verbosity put off most composers. However, because there were a few outstanding settings by Granville Bantock, a major British composer of the inter-war years, I ploughed ahead. Eventually I decided to pair Browning with Goethe, which offered some fascinating comparison not just textually but also musically. Another 'shared' programme was performed recently, in which we contrasted settings of Catullus, from ancient Rome, with those of his great influence, Sappho. For this concert we commissioned a rising star on the Australian music scene, Clare Maclean, to set a Sappho poem in the original Aeolic Greek, which our singers then had to learn!

These singers are our greatest asset, of course, and they have long proved themselves up to a challenge. Some months before their rendition of Sappho, they had given the world premiere of a setting of Horace's "Ode to Dellius," which the British composer David Matthews set, using classical Latin pronunciation. This was the highlight of an entire programme devoted to the great Augustan poet, whose most infamous tag, "*carpe diem*," was also set to music, by the Czech composer, Antonín Tucapsky.

Other poets in our series have included Shakespeare, Robert Herrick, Rainer Maria Rilke, and St. John of the Cross. Excerpts from the last two of these are featured on our most recent compact disc, *Songs of the Soul*, which will be released in Europe in early 2005 by the Swiss label, Guild Records, and made available in the USA through our web site, www.chamberchorus.org

The last three poets sung this season take us from my own country, England, and finally bring us to my adopted American home. Our February 13th concert features settings of the great



The St. Louis Chamber Chorus in front of Graham Chapel, Washington University. Photo by William A. Bascom.

continued...

Anglican poet John Donne, presented in Christ Church Episcopal Cathedral downtown. Then, on April 3rd, at Grace United Methodist Church – close to the WU main campus – we will present some enchanting settings of Tennyson. A very obscure work on the programme will be “The Lady of Shalott” by the now forgotten Wilfred Bendall, who gave up his own composing to act as Sir Arthur Sullivan’s amanuensis. Another novelty will be “Songs of the Princess,” written by Gustav Holst for his students at St. Paul’s Girls School, to be sung simultaneously in multiple rooms! Finally, for an examination of Whitman’s influence upon composers of this century and the last, we move to Kirkwood’s Grace Episcopal Church, a distinctly American setting with its architecturally clean lines and Tiffany glass. Here, on May 15th, you can hear both established versions of Whitman, by the great American composers William Schuman and Roy Harris, together with a fresh response to his imagery, a new setting of “The Unknown Region,” written for us by the British composer Sasha Johnson Manning.

There is insufficient space in this article to discuss in greater depth how

each of these poets have inspired their composers. However, it should be obvious that particular metrical schemes, such as sapphics or iambic pentameters, may suggest certain rhythmic patterns. Thus our Whitman concert will reveal composers reacting more to imagery than a narrow sense of ‘beat.’ However, through our earlier programmes we have already seen how not all composers are slavish to their lyricists. For example, despite his initial training in classics, David Matthews avoided Horace’s verbal elisions in favour of the clarity of each and every Latin word. Of course, the question of whether there is a commonality in the reaction of these composers to individual poets rests with the audience. Indeed, it has been a fascinating by-product of this ‘poetic’ series to learn how differently our singers and listeners have responded to the same piece, hearing anew familiar texts and debating how well the music suits them. Such reactions confirm that the Chamber Chorus remains true to its lofty mission, “not merely to entertain, but to educate and inspire.”

Philip Barnes is artistic director of the Saint Louis Chamber Chorus.

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the figure in the carpet

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Writer – Another Kind of Hero

I remember an old saying suggesting that once one became a certain age one had the face one deserved. Although I have conveniently forgotten the ‘certain age’ noted in the saying, connecting the character lines etched into our faces with our tendency to laugh or worry, be happy or sad, makes sense as a bond between an approach to living and a most visible aspect of a human life – our faces. The most visible ‘face’ of a writer is the text he or she presents to the public, and I believe it, too, hints of a bond between an approach to life and the character lines etched into an author’s projects. I thought of this a few weeks ago when reading about the death of author Iris Chang. She had not yet reached that ‘age’ of obvious facial character lines, but the bond between her approach to life and her ‘face’ as expressed in her text is one she earned and deserved. In the eyes of many, it made her a hero. It may have also contributed to her early death.

Iris Chang, author and journalist, fueled an international protest with the publication of her 1997 book, *The Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II*. The

book was on *The New York Times* best-seller list for 10 weeks, and during that time sold half-a-million copies. In a 1998 interview with *The Straits Times* of Singapore, Ms. Chang described her reaction to this success and her reason for writing *The Rape of Nanking*: “I wrote it out of a sense of rage. I didn’t really care if I made a cent from it. It was important to me that the world knew what happened in Nanking back in 1937.” Although born and raised in America, Chang had a deep personal interest in telling this story. Her grandparents fled Nanking just before the Japanese occupation, and she had heard family stories of the massacre during her childhood. As an adult, she was unable to find much about the massacre in print. Although there is probably not a child today in much of the western world who has not seen grim photos of the gas chambers at Auschwitz, the systematic massacre at Nanking had been almost lost to history in China, Japan, and the West.

There were reasons for this silence. As Orville Schnell, the dean of the Graduate School of Journalism at the University of

California, Berkeley, reported in *The New York Times* story announcing Chang’s death, “She sort of threw the curtain back on a period that the Chinese Communist Party and the Japanese hoped was shrouded in official declarations of a new collaboration. But it turned out there was a lot of unfinished business.” Moreover, as Chang’s book illustrates, there were people who had lived through the events both in China and Japan waiting for someone like Chang to tell the story of that ‘unfinished business.’ Based on interviews with elderly survivors and on newly discovered and previously unpublished documents (in four languages), Chang tells the story from three perspectives: that of the Japanese soldiers who performed it; that of the Chinese civilians who endured it; and that of the Europeans and Americans who refused to abandon the city but struggled to save almost 300,000 people from perishing in it.

The main outlines of the brutal massacre are well established. In 1937, the Japanese army captured the city of Nanking – then the capital of China – and the surrounding countryside. Within some 6 to 8 weeks, they not only



Dr. Jian Leng

editor's notes

looted and burned the defenseless city, but also systematically raped, tortured, and murdered as many as 300,000 Chinese civilians. What amazed and enraged Chang was that the story of this atrocity continued to be denied by the Japanese government. As Chang notes on page 200, "One reason information about the Rape of Nanking has not been widely disseminated clearly lies in the post-war differences in how Germany and Japan handled their wartime crimes. Germans have incorporated into their post-war political identity the concession that the wartime government itself, not just individual Nazis, was guilty of war crimes. The Japanese government, however, has never forced itself or Japanese society to do the same."

This sense of justice was at the core of Iris Chang's approach to life and is visible in all the texts she presented to the public. Chang's first book, *Thread of the Silkworm* (1995), was a biography of the Chinese scientist, Tsien Hsue-shen (Xuesen Qian), who came to the United States during the 1930s, but was accused of communist sympathies and deported during the McCarthy witch-hunt era. Tsien later guided the development of China's intercontinental missile program. Following *The Rape of Nanking*, Chang published *The Chinese in America*, a survey of the Chinese in America, their accomplishments, and their 150-year struggle to be accepted. Before she took her own life, Chang was doing research on and interviewing American survivors of the prisoner of war camps in the Bataan peninsula after the fall of the Philippines during World War II. This topic is foreshadowed in *The Rape of Nanking* (p.173) where Chang notes that "Only one in twenty-five

American POWs died under Nazi captivity, in contrast to one in three under the Japanese."

The brutal details of these events, added to the pitiless horrors following the fall of Nanking, surely contributed to Chang's depression. In a Reuters news release, Holocaust historian Rual Hilberg admits that small episodes of individual tragedy affected him especially strongly. He said he became sickened after doing research on the fate of a Jew who sued the Nazis for the right to purchase coffee. In the same news release, a historian of Stalin's reign of terror, Robert Conquest, said he, too, was severely affected by smaller episodes amid larger tragedies. Only the passion of a hero can face these savage episodes in human history repeatedly in order to tell the larger story through painful, brutal, individual stories of senseless pain and death. Although time and attitude may leave us with the facial character lines we deserve, not all heroes find the ends they deserve. Not all heroes survive the ordeal. Iris Chang died by her own hand. But her texts, marked by the character lines etched into the search for justice that drove her approach to living, will not die. They become a line in our own social character that we should cherish. As the *Washington Post* noted in its February 19, 1998, review of *The Rape of Nanking*: "Something beautiful, an act of justice, is occurring in America today concerning something ugly that happened a long time ago and far away. The story speaks well of the author of the just act, and of the constituencies of conscience that leaven this nation of immigrants."

Jian Leng
Assistant Director
Center for the Humanities



Events in January

All events are free unless otherwise indicated. Book events are followed by signings. All phone numbers take 314 prefix unless indicated.

Tuesday, January 4

SLPL Machacek Book Group meets, call branch for details, 6424 Scanlan, 10am. 781-2948.

Thursday, January 6

SLCL Grand Glaize Writers Workshop, present your work for discussion & critique, over 16, 1010 Meramec Station, 7pm. 636-225-6454.

Book Share: Not Your Mother's Book Group discusses books on paranormal romances, SLCL Florissant Valley Branch, 195 New Florissant, 7pm. 921-7200.

U. City Great Books Discussion Group discusses *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne, Trinity Presbyterian Church, 6800 Washington, 8pm. 994-7914.

Friday, January 7

Laureates of the Heart meets, Rock Road Branch Library, 10267 St. Charles Rock, St. Ann, 1pm. 429-4845.

Saturday, January 8

Author D.J. Williams visits Schlafly Branch Library, 225 N. Euclid., 2pm. 367-4120.

Laurence Galian, author of *Sun at Midnight: Revealed Mysteries of the Ahlul Bayt Sufi*, visits SLPL Carpenter Branch, 3309 S. Grand, 3pm. 772-6586.

Monday, January 10

LBB presents local writers William Gass, Eileen Dreyer, Richard Newman, Richard Burgin, Suzanne Rhodenbaugh reading from their work in the anthology *Under the Arch*,

Duff's, 392 N. Euclid.

Tuesday

William L. Taylor
Passion of My Time
Year Journey
Revolution, LBB
6731.

Foreign Literature
Taras Bulba by M.
Campus Library
727-6118.

Wednesday

Boone's Bookie
Glassby Anita S.
Branch, 300 Clar
227-9630.

St. Louis Public
Richmond Hts. C
Dale, 6:30pm. \$

Ron McLarty re
Memory of Run
7pm. 367-6731.

Thursday

Phillip Boehm re
Death in Danzig
N. Euclid, 7pm. 3

LBB presents Ke
his book *The Me*
Farming Has En
Supply, Schlafly
Euclid, 7pm. 367

Readings @ The
Robyn Schiff, N
reading from the
Art Museum, 375
3033.

SLPL Carpenter
discusses *Sun*
Mysteries of the A
Galian, 3309 S.

St. Louis Poetry C
at Genesis Cafe
Every 2nd Thurs

Friday

SLCL Rock Road

St. Louis Literary Calendar

Euclid, 7:30pm. 821-5834.

Monday, January 11

Author reads from his book *The Names: An Advocate's Fifty Years Through the Civil Rights Struggle*, 399 N. Euclid, 7pm. 367-6731.

Central Book Group discusses *Nikolai Gogol*, WU West Campus Library, 7425 Forsyth, 7:30pm.

Tuesday, January 12

Book club discusses *Sea of Cortez*, SLCL Daniel Boone Community Center, 2pm and 7pm. 636-6731.

Writers' Association meets, Community Center, 8001 Delmar, 5 non-mems. 205-2679.

Author reads from his novel *The Morning*, LBB, 399 N. Euclid, 7pm.

Wednesday, January 13

Author reads from his translation of *Stefan Chwin*, LBB, 399 N. Euclid, 7pm. 367-6731.

Author reading from *What You Eat: How Corporate Power Endangered America's Food*, SLCL Barr Branch Library, 225 N. Euclid, 7pm. 367-4120.

Contemporary presents *Twemlow, & Julie Dill*, Contemporary, 60 Washington, 7pm. 863-6731.

Barr Branch Book Group at *Midnight: Revealed*, *Shul Bayt Sufi*, by Laurence Grand, 7pm. 772-6586.

Center presents Poetry Night, 6018 Delmar, 7:30pm. 770-9130.

Thursday, January 14

Book Group discusses

Why Courage Matters: A Way to a Braver Life by John McCain, 10267 St. Charles Rock, 10am. 429-5116.

Nichepower.com presents a telephone class, "Power of Press Releases," 10:30-11:30am. Free with St. Louis Media Toolkit. www.nichepower.com.

Saturday, January 15

Romance Writers of America (MO Chapter) meet, B&N, 9618 Watson, 10am. Julie Opdyke speaks on "Setting Your Writing Goals for 2005 & Beyond," 9:30am; Deborah Davis Schuey presents "Grammar Fun," 11am. www.morwa.org.

SLPL Carondelet Branch Mystery Lovers' Book Club meets, 6800 Michigan, 10-11:30am. 752-9224.

SLPL Barr Branch presents *A Year of Hitchcock: Frenzy*, 1701 S. Jefferson, 3pm. 771-7040.

Sunday, January 16

St. Louis Poetry Center holds its monthly workshop, U. City Library, 6701 Delmar, 1:30pm. For submission details, 770-9130.

Monday, January 17

River Styx presents poets Crystal Wilkinson & Brian Taylor reading from their work, Duff's, 392 N. Euclid., 7:30pm. \$5/4. 533-4541.

Tuesday, January 18

SLPL Machacek Book Group meets, call branch for details, 6424 Scanlan, 10am. 781-2948.

SLCL Florissant Valley Branch Book Club discusses *Tis: A Memoir* by Frank McCourt, SLCL Florissant Valley Branch, 195 New Florissant, 2pm. 921-7200.

SLPL Kingshighway Book Group discusses *American Gods* by Neil Gaiman, 2260 S. Vandeventer, 6:45pm. 771-5450.

Wednesday, January 19

LBB presents Susan Vreeland reading from her book *Life Studies: Stories*, Schlafly Branch Library, 225 N. Euclid, 7pm. 367-4120.

Richmond Hts. Memorial Library Book Group discusses *The Great Fire* by Shirley Hazzard, Richmond Hts. Community Center, 8001 Dale, 7pm. 645-6202.

Writing Workshop for amateur writers, SLCL Mid-County Branch, 7821 Maryland, 7pm. 721-3008.

SLCL Oak Bend Evening Book Group discusses *A Widow for a Year* by John Irving, 842 S. Holmes, 7:30pm. 822-0051.

SLCL Florissant Valley Branch Book Club discusses *A Place of Hiding* by Elizabeth George, SLCL Florissant Valley Branch, 195 New Florissant, 7:30pm. 921-7200.

Thursday, January 20

Alton Brown, host of Food Network's *Good Eats*, reads from his book *I'm Just Here for More Food*, LBB, 399 N. Euclid, 7pm. 367-6731.

St. Louis Writers' Guild presents Bob Baker on "How to Use the Internet to Promote Your Book," B&N, 8871 Ladue, 7pm. 821-3823.

U. City Great Books Discussion Group discusses *The Fall of the House of Usher* by Edgar Allen Poe, Trinity Presbyterian Church, 6800 Washington, 8pm. 994-7914.

Saturday, January 22

SCBWI hosts a "Writers Workout" at its Jan. casual meeting, B&N Crestwood, 9618 Watson, 9-11am. Register with julied3@sbcglobal.net.

Monday, January 24

Kenneth Kamler, M.D., reads from his book *Surviving Extremes: What Happens to the Human Mind and Body at the Limits of Human Endurance*, LBB, 399 N. Euclid, 7pm. 367-6731.

Leamos! Carpenter Spanish Book Group discusses *Delirio* by Laura Restrepo, *en español*, 3309 S. Grand, 7pm. 772-6586.

Tuesday, January 25

MO-Tell holds its Gateway Meeting & Story Swap, Salad Bowl Cafeteria, 3949 Lindell, 6-9pm. 997-3474.

Jennifer Haigh reads from her novel *Baker Towers*, LBB, 399 N. Euclid, 7pm. 367-6731.

Wednesday, January 26

Central Book Group, Meeting Room 1, SLPL Central, 1301 Olive, 4:30pm. 241-2288.

SLPL Barr Branch Book Group discusses *The Known World* by Edward P. Jones, 1701 S. Jefferson, 5:30pm. 771-7040.

SIUE's English Language & Literature Association Speaker Series presents Paula Bennett discussing *Emily Dickinson's* life and poetry, SIUE Conference Center/MUC, 4pm. jmoy@siue.edu.

Thursday, January 27

Jan Burke, author of the *Irene Kelly* series, reads from her mystery *Bloodlines*, LBB, 399 N. Euclid, 7pm. 367-6731.

Schlafly Book Group discusses *We Were the Mulvaney's* by Joyce Carol Oates, Schlafly Branch Library, 225 N. Euclid, 7pm. 367-4120.

Alliance Francaise Cercle de Lecture discusses *La Peau de Chagrin* by Honoré de Balzac, 8505 Delmar, Ste. G, 7:30pm. 432-0734.

WU English Dept's Writing Program presents John Dalton reading from his new novel *Heaven Lake*, Hurst Lounge, Duncker 201, WU, 8pm. 935-7130.

Friday, January 28

Underwood Poetry Reading Series presents Stephanie Pippin & Srikanth Reddy, Gallery Urbis Orbis, 419 N. 10th, 7pm. 725-6927.

Saturday, January 29

COCA's Women Center Stage series presents mother & daughter writers Sheila Kohler, author of *Crossways*, and Sasha Troyan, author of *Angels in the Morning*, discussing their work and lives, COCA Theatre, 524 Trinity, 9am-noon. \$25/\$20. 725-1834.

Saturday Writers meet, Cultural Arts Center, 300 Civic Park, O'Fallon, MO, 11am. \$3 non-mems. 636-379-9362.

Sunday, January 30

The Center for the Humanities at Translation Series presents "The Faces of *Carmen*": film screening of *Carmen Jones* and *Carmen: a hip hopera*, Classroom Bldg. 102, WU, 1-5pm. 5576. See announcement this issue.

Contemporary Fiction and Non-Fiction Reading Group discusses *Alexander Hamilton* by Ron Chernow, WU Campus Library, Moog Lounge, 2pm. 770-0730.

The BookClub discusses *The Influenza: the Epic Story of the Deadliest Plague in History* by John M. Barry. For details & venue: 636-451-3232.

Monday, January 31

The Center for the Humanities at Translation Series presents "The Faces of *Carmen*": a Symposium with Evlyn Gould, Dan Friedman, Don Pesce, & Jeff Smith, Lab Sciences Center, 300, WU, 7:30-9pm. 935-5576. See announcement this issue.

Notices

St. Louis Writers Workshop runs a course in Beginning Fiction, taught by Denise B. Mons. 7-9:30pm, Jan 10-31, venue 135. 692-2629.

Wednesday Club of St. Louis announces its 79th Original Poetry Contest, deadline Feb. 1. Prize: www.wedclubpoetrycontest.org.

Abbreviations:

B&N: Barnes & Noble; LBB: Left Bank Library; SIUE: Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville; SLCL: St. Louis County Library; SLPL: St. Louis Public Library; UMSL: University of Missouri St. Louis; WU: Washington University.

Young Readers' Literary Calendar

Announcements

Events for The Center for the Humanities in January

For space reasons, we list mainly events for school-age children. For pre-school story times, contact branches of SLPL and SLCL, B&N, and Borders bookstores. Registration is required for most library events.

Tuesday, January 4

SLCL Bridgeton Trails Branch presents **Young Adult Booktalk**: discuss current books and write reviews, ages 12-15, 3455 McKelvey, 4pm. 291-7570.

Thursday, January 6

SLPL **Baden Teen Book Club** discusses interesting novels, ages 13-18, 8448 Church, 4pm. 388-2400.

Saturday, January 8

Read penguin stories, including *My Penguin Osbert* by Elizabeth Cody Kimmel, Borders St. Peters, 1320 Mid Rivers Mall Dr., 11am. 636-278-5000.

Mondays, January 10, 24, & 31

Global Kids look at Ireland's history and culture, SLCL Rock Road Branch, 10267 St. Charles Rock, 7pm. 429-5116.

Thursday, January 13

Schlafly Branch Library presents **A Tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**, family night, 225 N. Euclid, 7pm. 367-4120.

Friday, January 14

Theatreworks/U.S.A. presents *The Adventures of Curious George* from the books by H.A. Rey, Florissant Civic Center Theatre, James J. Eagan Center, 1 James J. Eagan Dr., 7:30pm. Also **Sun 16**, 2:30pm. Ticket prices @ box office. 921-5678.

Saturday, January 15

Read *Whoever You Are* by Mem Fox, Borders St. Peters, 1320 Mid Rivers Mall Dr., 11am. 636-278-5000.

Tuesday, January 18

Fun with Fairy Tales, family night, SLPL Julia Davis Branch, 4415 Natural Bridge, 6pm. 383-3021.

Thursday, January 20

SLPL **Carpenter Teen Book Club** meets, grades 6-9, 3309 S. Grand, 4pm. 772-6586.

SLCL Daniel Boone Branch presents **Teen**

Movie Night, featuring *Holes*, from the book by Louis Sachar, ages 12-18, 300 Clarkson, 6:30pm. 636-227-9630.

Saturday, January 22

Read *Snowmen at Night* by Carolyn Buehner, Borders St. Peters, 1320 Mid Rivers Mall Dr., 11am. 636-278-5000.

Saturday, January 29

Read *The Snowy Day* by Ezra Jack Keats, Borders St. Peters, 1320 Mid Rivers Mall Dr., 11am. 636-278-5000.

Notices

SLPL branch libraries present "Conversations with a King: The Speeches of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.," one-man show, ages 5 & up, 10am all locations and dates. **Baden Branch**, 8448 Church, 388-2400, Jan 11; **Barr Branch**, 1701 S. Jefferson, 771-7040, Jan. 5; **Buder Branch**, 4401 Hampton, 352-2900, Jan 24; **Cabanne Branch**, 1106 Union, 367-0717, Jan. 18; **Carondelet Branch**, 6800 Michigan, 752-9224, Jan. 20; **Julia Davis Branch**, 4415 Natural Bridge, 383-3021, Jan. 10; **Kingshighway Branch**, 2260 S. Vandeventer, 771-5450, Jan. 6; **Machacek Branch**, 6424 Scanlan, 781-2948, Jan. 4; **Schlafly Branch**, 225 N. Euclid, 367-4120, Jan. 12; **Walnut Park Branch**, 5760 W. Florissant, 383-1210, Jan. 26.

St. Louis Mercantile Library presents an exhibit: "Dream Trains: The Forgotten Magic of Children's Railroad Books," from the National Railroad Library & private collections, 8001 Natural Bridge, hours vary. Through Jan 31. 516-7240.

Check the online calendar at www.cenhum.artsci.wustl.edu for more events. To advertise, send event details to litalcal@artsci.wustl.edu, or call Amanda Beresford, Calendar editor, at 314-935-5576.

Conversation: What is a Child?

Professors Gail Boldt and Cynthia Lewis of the Language, Literacy, and Culture Program in the College of Education at the University of Iowa will present a Conversation, "What is a Child: A Discussion on Contemporary and Conflicting Views of Children and Childhood," on **Monday, January 24, 2005, at 4:00 p.m.** in the **Formal Lounge of the Women's Building** on Washington University's Hilltop Campus. This will be the first in a series of events in 2005 at Washington University to publicize the new interdisciplinary minor in Children's Studies.

This event is co-sponsored by the Lawrence Cohn Literacy and Learning Laboratory and the Center for the Humanities at Washington University in St. Louis.

Translation Series:

Symposium: The Many Faces of *Carmen*

Participants will discuss critical issues that arise when a literary character, in this case Carmen from Prosper Mérimée's 1845 novella, is re-interpreted through various media, including opera, theatre, film, and dance. The panel will feature Dan Friedman, Dramaturg at the Castillo Theatre, New York City; Evlyn Gould, Professor of Romance Languages, University of Oregon; Dolores Pesce, Professor of Music; and Jeff Smith, Associate Professor of Film and Media Studies, Washington University in St. Louis. A screening of *Carmen Jones* and *Carmen: a hip hopera* will take place in conjunction with the symposium.

This event is co-sponsored by The Center for the Humanities and the Music Department of Washington University in St. Louis.

Film Screening: Sunday, January 30, 1-5 p.m., Music Classroom Building 102

Panel: Monday, January 31, 2005, 7:30-9 p.m., Lab Sciences Building 300