Dear Friends and Colleagues of German and Scandinavian at the University of Oregon,

Fall greetings to you. Our academic year 2015-2016 ended with a fun-driven spring celebration honoring the diverse creative and scholarly initiatives of the Department of German and Scandinavian. Now 2016-2017 is already in full swing. Our research projects emerge from the hidden and silent corners of our study rooms as well as from full-throated discussions in our courses—discussions that give rise to our community’s collaborative spirit. If you ask me, there is no better place to be.

While thinking about how to give visual shape to our efforts I thought of creating a map of the universe with our Department at the center, and then to pinpoint the many locations where our research is published and read, where faculty and graduate students lecture, and where our students go to hone their German or Swedish skills. However, this international map would be too complex to design. We thus came up with the more modest approach of presenting the Department, our awards, talks, lectures, conferences, workshops and entrepreneurial undertakings, as a sun whose rays shine throughout the globe.

2016-2017 will be another productive year. Let’s call it a year of “German and Scandinavian SymCultures and Synesthetics.” We are teaming up to engage in active exchanges and debates about the relations of diverse artistic and social expressions. We would be thrilled if you as reader would join us in one way or the other, personally or by visiting our website.

The year starts out with discussing the extension of Bauhaus art into the US, especially through the art of Josef and Anni Albers whose special connection to the UO make our campus an apt location for a discussion of their work. This year’s Peter Gontrum Lecture “Bauhaus Design and Social Activism at Black Mountain and Beyond: Josef and Anni Albers on the Ethics of Craft” by Professor Therese Augst of Lewis and Clark will be held on Wednesday November 9th and will be accompanied by an A&AA exhibition of selected plates from Albers’ seminal book Interaction of Color, owned by the University of Oregon Architecture and Allied Arts Library, Special Collections. The exhibition is a collaboration between Esther Hagenlocher (curator) and Landry Smith (exhibition design) from the Department of Architecture. We hope to bring
together students and faculty from across campus, from the larger public and professional stakeholders in order to discuss European-American cross-cultural exchanges in experiential modernism and material cultures.

This focus on visual arts will be supplemented by our Music and Poetry conference in April: “Music in Poetry, Poetry in Music: An Interdisciplinary Symposium on German Art Song.” This collaboration between the German Studies Committee and the School of Music and Dance will present lectures (mixed with performances) and a Liederabend (Evening of Musical Performances of Lieder and Readings of German Poetry).

This Fall, Campus Weeks “Germany meets the US” -- supported by The Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany--return to the UO with the film screening of An Apartment in Berlin (Dir. Alice Agneskirchner, 2013), and a lecture, seminar, reading and cooking event by German poet and author Esther Dischereit on “Jewish Life in Germany today.” In addition, Eugene architect Jan Fillinger will nurture our interest in sustainability by introducing his designs of Passivhäuser--ultra-low energy buildings--in Eugene. Esther Hagenlocher will give a talk on “Color in Architecture,” its perception and performance.

Our Scandinavian section is also very active. We are extremely fortunate that the Anderson Fund allows us to strengthen our interest in Norway. We have invited two speakers. Professor Arne Lunde, UCLA, will give a lecture titled “Look to Norway!’ The Nazi occupation of Norway in Hollywood Wartime Cinema, 1942-1945” in January, and Professor and visiting scholar Paal Bjorby, Associate Professor in The Nordic Institute at the University of Bergen (Norway) will present his research on the historian/dramatist/epistolarian/moralist Ludvig Holberg and his musings on Woman, Marriage and Naturrecht.

Our graduate students have invited Professor John McCarthy, Professor of German & Comparative Literature Emeritus, Vanderbilt University, to talk on “Reading and Writing in an Age of Consumerism,” for Winter Quarter.

We are very grateful for our friends who allow us with their support to present fellowships to our students, and to expand our intellectual and scholarly partnerships across the US, German and Scandinavian Cultures in order to foster “the training of transformational leaders and informed participants in the global community” as the UO mission statement reads. Please stay in contact or come and visit. Our next Spring Celebration is scheduled for April 26, 2017.

On behalf of GERSCAN’s faculty, staff and students I wish you a pleasant end of this year and health and happiness throughout 2017.

Fondly,
Dorothee Ostmeier, Head
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