

Time Present

The Newsletter of the T. S. Eliot Society

NUMBER 79

SPRING 2013

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The Letters of T. S. Eliot, Volume 1: 1898–1922 (revised edition), and Volume 2: 1923–1925.

Edited by Valerie Eliot and Hugh Haughton.

General Editor John Haffenden. Faber and Faber, 2009.

Reviewed by Timothy Materer
University of Missouri

In his review of the first two volumes of T. S. Eliot’s letters (*New York Times*, September 30, 2011), the poet William Logan asked “for whom is this vast projected edition intended?” The answer is that it’s intended for us, members of the T. S. Eliot Society and similarly devoted students of his work. Although the “week-by-week crawl” through Eliot’s life tries Logan’s patience, this immersion in Eliot’s life gives us a fuller sense of the poet’s frustrations and achievements as he pursued literary eminence. Many readers and reviewers nevertheless share Logan’s doubts about the scale of the 1,749 pages in these two volumes. There are now two further tomes, III (2012; 1926–27) and IV (2013; 1928–29), totaling 1,780 pages, which will be reviewed in the next issue of *Time Present*. Eliot’s estate instead might have followed the example of those of his close contemporaries, Ezra Pound and Wyndham Lewis. Pound’s *Letters: 1907–1941* appeared in 1950, more than twenty years before his death, and Lewis’s *Letters* were published in 1963, six years after his death. These editions gave us a sympathetic overview of their lives and became the bedrock of scholarship on both writers. Although an early volume was no doubt unfeasible, a selected edition of Eliot’s letters might have allowed a wider perspective on a career that has generated ill-informed debates as often as insights.

Eliot’s own desire not to have his letters published is one reason for the delay in publication. In the introduction to the first edition of Volume 1 (1988), Valerie Eliot explained that she persuaded her husband to allow an edition of letters on condition that she did the selecting and editing. When she began her research in 1965, she found that few letters were available. Soon there were so many that the original plan to run through 1926 was shelved and 1922 became the end date. She then promised “the second part next year, to restore the balance” (xvii). Volume 2 in fact came out twenty-one years later, in 2009, together with a separate revised Volume 1. In the preface to the revised volume, coeditor Hugh Haughton states, “as the materials grew more copious the publication of subsequent volumes was postponed, until eventually the edition had to be reconceived on a more ample scale” (xxi). According to Valerie Eliot’s assistant in editing the 1988 volume, Karen Christensen, Mrs. Eliot’s reason for delaying publication was that there were “vital gaps” in the correspondence. But long after Christensen helped finish drafts of the first two volumes, she concluded that the delay was not a matter of scrupulous scholarship but of “overprotectiveness” (*The Guardian*, January 28, 2005).

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The Passionate Eliot and How He Got That Way

Some dozen years ago, an English professor at Loyola University Chicago (surprisingly, not that one) commended me for some of my ideas about T.S. Eliot. I had been writing and talking about Eliot's engagement with the First World War, his feelings for Jean Verdenal, and the persistence of the homoerotic in his poetry. The professor's enthusiasm stemmed from his sense that such work was good and necessary because Eliot was too often "sanitized" by academics, too often scrubbed, as it were, of the messy, unpredictable, and colorful entanglements of lived experience. No doubt he was right. The twentieth century had handed down a largely disembodied, disengaged, magisterial Eliot with little of interest under his nails. Yet a change was well underway; indeed, I was at that time exhilarated by the sense that I was taking a small part in a broader project of reading Eliot in a new way that others found useful.

That project, which we might call the de-sanitization of T.S. Eliot, is now virtually an institution of its own. Restoring Eliot's work to the rich contexts in which it was created has been accomplished many times over in excellent books by Eliot scholars in the past decade or so. Beginnings and endings of shifts in critical awareness are difficult to assign and usually more arbitrary than objective, but it seems as good a time as any to survey the landscape. What follows makes no claim to completeness but is, rather, merely an exercise in following one thread over a limited patch of critical ground.

A collection that gathered in and set some of the terms for the contextual turn in Eliot studies was Jewel Spears Brooker's *T.S. Eliot and Our Turning World* (2001). In this book appeared Michael Coyle's chapter on Eliot and radio (a story Coyle has continued to tell, including in 2009's *Broadcasting Modernism*), David Chinitz's on Eliot and the "Lively Arts" (a forerunner of his own 2003 book on Eliot and popular culture), and others pointing out specific ways in which Eliot was influenced by a host of voices and forms from his own time and times past.

It is hard to believe, but it is nearly a decade since Chinitz published *T.S. Eliot and the Cultural Divide*, which presented Eliot's relationship to popular culture as far more fluid and complex than had been assumed for decades. One comes away from Chinitz's book with a vivid picture of an Eliot moving amongst and moved by many of the popular, even "low", forms of his time—comedy, thrillers, vaudeville, melodrama, music hall. The lordly, detached

Eliot gives way to one enamored of Marie Lloyd, Charlie Chaplin, and Agatha Christie, and as at home in sawdust restaurants with oyster shells as in any ivory tower.

Perhaps 2003–2004 is the watershed date for the de-sanitization (or, more simply, the humanization) of Eliot, as that is also when the volume edited by Cassandra Laity and Nancy Gish, *Gender, Desire, and Sexuality in T.S. Eliot*, appeared. The attribution of desire, albeit "discarnate" or "mimetic" desire, is an effective way to lift the lid on some of a poet's mysteries, and this book's sustained reflection on the theme of homoeroticism constitutes a further significant step in the direction of putting flesh on the dry bones of the inherited Eliot.

If we thought we knew something about Eliot and sex, in 2008 Gabrielle McIntire's *Modernism, Memory, and Desire: T.S. Eliot and Virginia Woolf* was published and showed us just how unruly, if frequently hidden, a sexual energy animated the paragon of high modernist poetry. Some of Eliot's private writing was the very opposite of discarnate, and much of it, including some collected in *Inventions of the March Hare*, reveled in bodily detail far beyond—or, better, below—the register of the highfalutin and virtually bodiless Eliot of much twentieth-century criticism. McIntire reveals an Eliot with a passion not only for the bawdy but for (at least literary) experiments in sexual, racial, and violent deviance, an Eliot with a dirty, and possibly dangerous, mind.

When, precisely, did all of this begin? Given the recent surge of interest in biographical Eliot criticism, one might forget that the project of tethering Eliot's work to the world made a tentative start as early as 1977, with James E. Miller's book *T.S. Eliot's Personal Waste Land: Exorcism of the Demons*, a study that in some ways has never received the recognition it deserves. The book's exploration of Eliot's earthly passions, particularly homoeroticism, and his feelings for French student Jean Verdenal, caused a quite stir but brought about no immediate sea change in Eliot studies. That had to wait approximately another twenty years, until important new criticism (by Rachel Blau DuPlessis, Wayne Kostenbaum, Colleen Lamos, Michael Levenson, Michael North, and others) set the stage for the books to come in the first decade of the new century.

Most recently—one might even say *finally*, not in relief, but as an acknowledgment of the way the book's approach encapsulates all the others—Anthony Cuda's *The Passions of Modernism: Eliot, Yeats, Woolf, and Mann* (2010) reveals the principle, the habit of mind, behind Eliot's diverse engagements with the world: in popular culture, in sexuality, in mass media, in the bawdy body. *The Passions of Modernism* gives a name to the phenomenon observed

Essay continues on Page 4

The 34th Annual Meeting of the T. S. Eliot Society

St. Louis, September 27-29, 2013

The Society invites proposals for papers to be presented at the annual meeting in St. Louis. Clearly organized proposals of about 300 words, on any topic reasonably related to Eliot, along with biographical sketches, should be emailed by June 15, 2013, to the President, Michael Coyle (mcoyle@colgate.edu).

Papers given by graduate students and scholars receiving their doctoral degrees no more than two years before the date of the meeting will be considered for the Fathman Young Scholar Award. Those eligible for the award should mention this fact in their submission. The Fathman Award, which includes a monetary prize, will be announced at the final session of the meeting.

Eliot Society members who would like to chair a panel are invited to inform the President of their interest, either with or independently of a paper proposal.

Peer Seminar: Eliot and Asia

Recent debates about globalization and transnationalism in literary studies have raised interest in how the Asian “Orient” inspired modernist innovations in “Occidental” societies. This seminar invites papers that explore how transpacific intercultural dialogue figures in Eliot’s poetry or may have shaped the guiding principles of his modernism. Which texts, individuals, or life experiences fostered Eliot’s interest in Asia, and how did his study of these traditions, in turn, catalyze his development as a poet and critic? How does he regard the role of translation in this context? Where is there clearest evidence of Eliot’s response to the literatures, religions, and arts of Asia, and how does this response compare with that of Pound, Williams, Moore, Stein, Stevens, or other authors? Does Eliot’s collocation of Asian and non-Asian perspectives in his poetry mark a significant departure from hegemonic “Orientalism,” in Said’s sense? These questions are meant only to be suggestive, and participants are more than welcome to adopt other approaches to the general topic.

The seminar will be led by Anita Patterson, Professor of English at Boston University, where she teaches courses on American literature, modernism, and black literatures of the Americas. She is author, most recently, of *Race, American Literature and Transnational Modernisms* (Cambridge UP, 2008), and is co-editor of the book review section for

Twentieth-Century Literature. She is currently working on a book about *Japonisme* and the emergence of American modernism, drawing on works by Eliot, Pound, Fenollosa, Okakura, La Farge, Noguchi, and others.

This year’s seminar is open to the first 15 registrants; registration will close July 1st. Seminararians will submit 4-5 page position papers by email, no later than September 1st. To sign up, or for answers to questions, please write Frances Dickey (dickeyf@missouri.edu).

Memorial Lecturer: Jahan Ramazani

Jahan Ramazani is Edgar F. Shannon Professor of English at the University of Virginia. His 2013 Eliot Society lecture on “T. S. Eliot, Poetry, and Prayer” will draw from his forthcoming book, *Poetry and Its Others: News, Prayer, Song, and the Dialogue of Genres*. Ramazani has authored many notable books including, most recently, *A Transnational Poetics* (2009), winner of the 2011 Harry Levin Prize of the American Comparative Literature Association, awarded for the best book in comparative literary history published in the years 2008 to 2010. The citation for this prize called Ramazani’s book “breathtaking in its global scope and critical incisiveness,” noting that “the spectrum of issues and poets treated in this book is nothing short of stunning.”

Previous books include *The Hybrid Muse: Postcolonial Poetry in English* (2001); *Poetry of Mourning: The Modern Elegy from Hardy to Heaney* (1994), a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award; and *Yeats and the Poetry of Death: Elegy, Self-Elegy, and the Sublime* (1990). He edited the most recent edition of *The Norton Anthology of Modern and Contemporary Poetry* (2003) and, with Jon Stallworthy, *The Twentieth Century and After in The Norton Anthology of English Literature* (2006, 2012). He is also an associate editor of the new *Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics* (2012).

Ramazani grew up in a family where he often heard Persian poetry recited. After he graduated from the University of Virginia in 1981, a Rhodes scholarship took him to Oxford, where he studied modern literature with Richard Ellmann. Ramazani wrote his dissertation on Yeats at Yale University before joining the University of Virginia’s faculty. He has received a Guggenheim Fellowship, an NEH Fellowship, the William Riley Parker Prize of the MLA, and the Thomas Jefferson Award, the University of Virginia’s highest honor.

The Passionate Eliot, continued from Page 2

and explored by Miller, Chinitz, Gish and Laity and their stable of essayists, Brooker and hers, McIntire, et al: Eliot's capacity to be moved. "[T]he passion of the artistic imagination," in Cuda's words, "the process by which the creating mind assumes the character of *the moved*—without or even against its conscious awareness—rather than that of *the mover*" (2): this, I would suggest, is the basic capacity the contemporary critics named above as well as a host of others have been laboring—for almost twenty years or over forty—to attribute to Eliot. Thus, Cuda's book comes last, chronologically, in this partial list of major critical interventions emphasizing Eliot's contexts, culture, and conflicts, but it comes prior, conceptually, to the rest by virtue of the fundamental nature of its claim. An Eliot studies with an understanding of Eliot's process of being moved—and of registering that experience as poetry—is one equipped to characterize his particular experiences of being moved: by humor, by music, by love relationships, by landscape, by politics. In precisely this way, *The Passions of Modernism* is a foundational book. Cuda writes: "In response to its startling recognition of incompleteness, Eliot asks urgently, does the mind turn away...? Or does it learn to submit to and endure the intense emotions that arise from the limitations of human experience, with all of its doubt and mystery?" (88). The answer, according to the

critical project outlined above, is clearly the latter. It is an oversimplification of Cuda's argument, of course, to name only Eliot's process of "being moved" without looking at the rigorous detail in which that process is described in the book. Yet it is difficult not to see how—in the recognition scenes Cuda probes so perceptively, in the surrenders of Eliot's several "patients"—the figure of Eliot's "passion" comes to stand as a metaphor for any number of his engagements with forces and forms outside himself. A student beginning to study T.S. Eliot in 2013, rather than in, say, 1983, is likely to find a poet fully capable of being moved by the stuff of modern life. That difference is what the contextual turn in Eliot studies has made possible and what *The Passions of Modernism* maps in the very DNA of Eliot's writing.

Other works are in progress that will no doubt expand and complicate our new picture of a movable Eliot. Additional volumes of letters, the discoveries made by the editors of the *Complete Prose*, the always increasing depth and rigor of Queer approaches, and any number of new inquiries by young scholars (and old ones) will likely reveal an even more complex and human Eliot than the one we can now say we know. One never knows what new directions a critical movement will take, but it is safe to say that the next one in Eliot studies will draw from a more diverse, more colorful, happily less sanitized pool of ideas than was the case only a generation ago.

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BOOK REVIEWS

The Letters of T. S. Eliot, Vols. 1 and 2, continued from Page 1

In the revised Volume 1, Houghton also explains that the new editions attempt to include all available letters. Those excluded in 1988 as of "minor interest" (xxi) were included in the revised edition because they help to document the poet's life. The volume now contains almost two hundred new letters by Eliot and as such is the best introduction available to the poet's early life. Both of the volumes under review include illustrations, chronologies, detailed footnotes, both a general index and one for correspondents, a biographical glossary, and many letters written to Eliot. The amusing and even occasionally lighthearted Eliot who writes to his cousin Eleanor Hinkley and friends such as Conrad Aiken is quickly submerged when Eliot marries Vivien Haigh-Wood in June 1915 and begins his struggle to support his wife with publications and teaching. The night before he sails

to America in July, he defends the marriage to his father: "She has everything to give that I want, and she gives it. I owe her everything" (119). But we begin to see the marital decline when he confesses to his brother in September 1916, "The present year has been, in some respects, the most awful nightmare of anxiety that the mind of man could conceive, but at least it is not dull, and it has its compensations" (166). Among these, as expressed by Eliot in a "private paper," which is quoted in the introduction to Volume I, was "the state of mind out of which came *The Waste Land*" (xix).

Volume 1 happily contains as much literary as domestic information. Eliot sends a draft to Conrad Aiken of "The Love Song of St. Sebastian," subjects his friends to his obscene Bolo poems, and corresponds with Pound about "Prufrock" and *The Waste Land*. The revised volume re-dates and fully annotates their correspondence on *The Waste Land* manuscript. But we return to Eliot's daily routine when he joins Lloyds bank (Vivien notes that the regular

hours seem to improve his dark moods), works on *The Egoist* and *The Little Review* in the evenings, and copes anxiously with the two-month stay of his mother, brother, and sister in the summer of 1921. Soon after the visit, he suffers the emotional collapse that nevertheless gave him the opportunity to complete *The Waste Land*; and in October 1922 he publishes his epoch-making poem in his own newly founded journal *The Criterion*. One must concede that this detailed record helps us grasp his drive, despite so many frustrations, to set his professional life in some kind of order.

With varying degrees of subtlety, the editors indirectly comment on issues such as Eliot's anti-Semitism and troubled marriage. Anthony Julius says that anti-Semitism in Volume 2 is "luridly on display" (*Daily Telegraph*, December 13, 2009). Eliot indeed makes disgraceful anti-Semitic remarks to those he can safely make them to, such as the New York lawyer John Quinn in 1923, and instructs an editor to remove an anti-Semitic remark from a 1925 review only if it's likely to give offense (it was retained). Yet the prejudice is not often expressed, and his friendships with and publication of Jewish writers such as Sydney Schiff are also on display. Apparently to give perspective, the editors added to the revised volume a long letter of 1920 from Eliot's mother in which she concludes by mentioning her "instinctive antipathy to Jews" (482). This use of non-Eliot letters, almost two hundred in Volume 1, gives weight to the editorial thumb. Some twenty-five letters by his mother support Valerie Eliot's claim that from "his mother . . . he inherited an anxious, nervous temperament" (1, xviii). The inclusion of a letter from Eliot's father, Henry Ware, to his brother, a minister, about syphilis as "God's punishment for nastiness" (1, 41) gives a vivid but too partial impression of a man who rebelled against his own father's wish that he too would become a minister. He is better remembered, as he is in the glossary, as the man who said of his religious upbringing that "too much pudding choked the dog" (1, 820).

The letters of Eliot's sensitive brother Henry (nine letters in these two volumes) are always intrinsically interesting, and his perspective on Vivien as someone who indulges her suffering is based on both correspondence and on personal contact. More than twenty-five additional letters by Vivien Eliot in the revised first volume (for a total of more than sixty by the poet's first wife) allow for a fuller self-portrait. We

experience not only Vivien's neurotic outbursts but also her high spirits. While Eliot is visiting the family in 1915, she brags to her admirer Scofield Thayer that "grass widows do seem . . . to be so very *very* attractive" and that Bertrand Russell is "all over me, is Bertie, and I simply love him" (120). Of the new letters by Vivien in the revised Volume 1, more than half are to Mary Hutchinson, who is provocatively described in the glossary as the poet's "very intimate friend" (823). In 1920 she confides to Mary that a weekend with her husband in a friend's house was "very conducive to reviving passion" (495). But her general tone, rather like Eliot in his poetry, is complaint. Eliot was scrupulous to a fault in searching for cures for Vivien's many mental and physical ailments. She suffers from influenza, migraines, colitis, shingles, eye and teeth problems, and of course depression; and her husband is open to any promise of a cure, including hydrotherapy, starvation diets, and preparations of glands and Bulgarian bacillus. In 1925, she wrote to Eliot from an English rest

home: "I am sorry I tortured you and drove you mad. I had no notion until yesterday afternoon that I had done it. I have been simply raving mad. You need not worry about me" (2, 773). Soon after this letter Vivien writes to her maid Ellen Kellond that she feels "banished from my home" and intends to take her life: "It is difficult here, but I shall find a way. This is the

*"We experience not only
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end" (804). Of course Eliot incessantly worries, and it was far from the end.

The three years of Volume 2 (1923–25) can hardly rival for interest those of Volume 1, and it's in the second that the conception of the letters as a comprehensive record of Eliot's career takes hold. In the preface Haughton explains, "this second volume documents the founding and early years of *The Criterion*" (xv). Thus Volume 2 includes the business letters in which Eliot solicits contributions, negotiates with authors, and struggles with financial details. As in Volume 1, even letters that are admittedly "straight-forward arrangements to meet" (xxi) are included to document day-by-day events. Where does this editorial policy lead? After 1925, Eliot had forty more years as a writer and publisher, and volumes 3 and 4 cover only two years each. Moreover, as Ronald Bush has observed, the inclusion of many letters from other correspondents in Volume 2 becomes a "distinct editorial intervention" (*Modernism/Modernity*, September 2010). For example, in what is also a homage to the publisher's founding father, more than two dozen letters

from Geoffrey Faber are included to help document Eliot's negotiations to join Faber and Gwyer. Were not letters available that might have filled in the picture of Eliot's poetic career? Bush observes that there are no letters from Arnold Bennett, whom Eliot consulted about dialogue in "Sweeney Agonistes," nor from Ezra Pound, whose letters enliven the first volume. Contrary to my feeling, Bush is pleased that the edition "appears not to make a selection of Eliot's own letters to satisfy the appetites of a supposed common reader." Yet Bush understands that even this comprehensive volume implies both selection and intervention. A solution to the problem would be to offer a selected letters for readers interested in Eliot as a poet and cultural figure while the full record continues to emerge. Meanwhile, students of Eliot are fortunate to experience this immersion in the state of mind that produced his haunting poetry.



Joseph Maddrey, *The Making of T. S. Eliot: A Study of the Literary Influences*. McFarland, 2009.

Reviewed by Will Gray
Greenville, South Carolina

As Eliot himself might say, the function of such a book as this is neither that of B. C. Southam's admirable compendium, nor of such extended studies in Eliotic allusion as Grover Smith, Leonard Unger, and Patricia Sloane have produced. Southam's text is dedicated to tracing the sources that lurk behind the lines of Eliot's *Selected Poems* and—as a sourcebook—succeeds so admirably that most readers of this review would rate their copies as dog-eared and spine-broken. Smith's even earlier *Study in Sources and Meaning* surveys the allusive landscape behind *The Complete Poems and Plays*, though its monographic approach, which lends texture to his investigation, also creates a reading experience far more suited to sustained focus than to sourcing. Smith's student Unger found, while writing *Eliot's Compound Ghost*, that he became most interested in documenting the categories of literary influence in Eliot's work. Sloane took undoubtedly the most provocative path, by singling out the Bleistein poems and investigating the very aspects that had become polarizing to readers.

Maddrey's aim is different. As he makes clear, beginning

in his acknowledgments, "What I have attempted here is not literary criticism, but a personal investigation and synthesis . . . the result of my own desire to produce a concise overview that will enhance enjoyment and understanding of Eliot's poetry" (v). The result, his book, combines the personal character of a work like Herbert Howarth's (exemplified in *Notes on Some Figures Behind T. S. Eliot*), but within a sourcebook structure even simpler than Southam's.

Scholars of Eliot will no doubt recognize the urge Maddrey has followed: to corral the dozens of influences behind Eliot's creative writings, to turn a spotlight until their sometimes shadowy figures become just defined enough to recognize. Every student of Eliot has experienced the nagging suspicion that an additional literary source remains just out of our mind's reach. As a consequence, this book fills a need in Eliot studies: that of a brief literary sourcebook arranged not by poem (as is Southam's) but by topic.

Maddrey, as he readily confesses, is not a literary critic: by day, he is a television producer and documentary filmmaker. That fact, however, produces as many freedoms for his book as it does limits. He has no academic axe to grind, and no particular critical argument to forward; he also lacks the background to know the heated literary scuffles that have circled the sources he considers.

Given his profession, it is little surprise to find that his book's strengths and weaknesses unite in his tendency to oversummarize his sources or, in the language of his daily world, to leave too little on the editing floor. The resulting rhythm may frustrate those who already know these sources, but will likely reward those for whom they are new. Maddrey is at his most effective when he is (quite capably for an amateur) summarizing in a single page the significance for Eliot of the *Bhagavad Gita* or of Jessie Weston. And in fact, many sections take as their subject a poem of Eliot's, an influential figure, or a concept/text. Less commonly—and frustratingly for this reviewer—some sections consider less focused, biographical moments such as Eliot's "Interlude in Paris," his struggle to find a fulfilling job, or his physical breakdown. These appear to be connective tissue, but read as thin attempts at comprehensiveness, a standard the book is ill designed to reach.

On the whole, Maddrey succeeds in his aim to provide an overview that enhances the potential "enjoyment and understanding of Eliot's poetry" and, though understanding seems much more in view here, we might turn Philip Sidney on his head and surmise that we can also gain delight from a thing through a willingness to be taught.

Eliot, as it is well known, sent mixed messages about the reader's yen to identify allusions. At one point he openly "regret[ted] having sent so many enquirers off on a wild goose chase after Tarot cards and the Holy Grail" in the wake of *The Waste Land*. However, he also wrote his poetry—especially the early poetry—in such a way that demanded a reader with a similar literary background to his own. Eliot preferred not to point out the fact that he was alluding;

he wanted the reader on her own to know his allusion, its source, and the curious gap between those contexts. Whereas he could have told his reader, for instance, that “the army of unalterable law,” the final line of his early poem “Cousin Nancy,” was first written by George Meredith, “the whole point,” he remarked in a 1961 interview with Tom Greenwell, “was that the reader should recognize where it came from and contrast it with the spirit and meaning of [his] own poem.” It is a naïvely solipsistic notion, one he came to outgrow with his later writing.

Indeed, the fact that Eliot changed in his approach toward allusion is curious. In the same 1961 interview, he also mentions that, in his later poems, “there isn’t so much quotation.” He had developed into the kind of writer who wanted his readers to be either fully engaged or else (less desirably) “the sort of readers who are interested to ferret out sources.” By that point in his life, however, his early writing had already ensured that he would be perceived as the kind of writer who needed books like Maddrey’s to be written if others were to continue reading, enjoying, and understanding him. As the decades pass, and as the history of literature expands, the likelihood that a student will naturally encounter all (or even many) of the sources behind Eliot’s own work becomes less and less likely, if it is possible at all.

In the early 1970s, Anthony Burgess told *The Paris Review*, “The ideal reader of my novels is a lapsed Catholic and failed musician, short-sighted, color-blind, auditorily biased, who has read the books that I have read. He should also be about my age.” In reality, we do want to become better readers of Eliot, despite our many dissimilarities from the writer himself. While it may be impossible—or even inadvisable—to familiarize ourselves with everything that influenced Eliot, Maddrey has given us the next best thing: a shortcut to understanding Eliot’s frame of reference. His sourcebook is ideal for students, but also for those scholars among us who are willing to admit that we do not always have a ready grasp of every major literary influence behind the poems.



M. C. Gardner, *The Man from Lloyds*

Reviewed by Michael Rogalski
Chicago, Illinois

According to the playwright David Mamet, the dramatist has two teachers: the audience and the empty page. If so, what can the dramatist (or anyone) gain from a consideration of his work in the limbo between page and

stage—that is, from a consideration of the script alone? Perhaps little. And so a caution is in order: what follows is a response to the bare text and not to a fully realized production of M. C. Gardner’s ambitious and flawed play, *The Man from Lloyds*.

Gardner imagines T. S. Eliot’s final hours: painful and hallucinatory and filled with recrimination. The play is an intense and surrealistic fever dream in which lines from Eliot’s oeuvre are interwoven with the playwright’s own to provide the dialogue among a handful of characters: Eliot himself; Vivienne Haigh-Wood, the poet’s first wife; Maurice Haigh-Wood, Vivienne’s brother; and Bertrand Russell, the famed mathematician and friend who betrayed Eliot.

Three other figures complete the cast of principals. First, The Man from Lloyds is Death incarnate. Next, Texas boozier and whoremonger Wild Cat Columbo is Eliot’s doppelgänger, his secret self—a Mr. Hyde to Eliot’s public Dr. Jekyll and the fount of Eliot’s bawdy Columbo and Bolo verses. (The same actor is called to portray both Eliot and Columbo.) Finally, there is the aching spectral presence of Jean Verdenal, Eliot’s intimate during his Paris youth, who was killed at the Battle of Gallipoli.

The thrust of the play’s argument is clear enough. As Gardner tells it, Eliot is haunted by the lies that were his life and by guilty memories of his abuse of Vivienne. Called to account by The Man from Lloyds, who appears as a looming shadow to take Eliot’s deposition on a “claim of conscience,” Eliot writhes in remorse even as he makes explanation. Summing up late in the action, The Man from Lloyds presses his charge, speaking in Eliot’s recorded voice: “You used the woman. . . . And then you used ‘Bertie’ to use the woman for whom you had no use. You used the Mathematician to subtract Ophelia from your life. . . . We wouldn’t want a woman’s nerves to interrupt the adulation of the world.”

The Man from Lloyds prepares this indictment in a carnivalesque rondo that sketches Eliot’s alleged deceit and then vividly elaborates it. The play portrays Eliot as psychologically damaged, given to auditory hallucinations, and as a man of contradictions, weak and vacillating yet heartless and deliberate. For example, there is a cartoon-like portrayal of Russell’s seduction of the ready Vivienne and of their subsequent affair. (Russell is outfitted as a wolf). We learn that their duplicity hurt Eliot deeply, but we learn too that the affair was a convenience for the poet and one that he abetted. He tells The Man from Lloyds, “I put the two of them together—we made a trinity of sin. They fell deep into perdition, because I pushed them in.” Why?

Vivienne explains, “We had no children. Tom didn’t fancy them—unless you count the *danseurs* of the Ballet

Russes,” and Wild Cat Columbo mocks ferociously, “Your Tommy’s as queer as a Bourbon Street leer.” Meanwhile, the memory of the lost Jean Verdenal hovers in the background, his handsome face projected poignantly at selected moments throughout the play, accompanied by the song of the sailor’s lament from Wagner’s *Tristan und Isolde*, which Eliot famously incorporated into *The Waste Land*. It seems Eliot too was lost at Gallipoli: helpless in his love, according to Gardner, he continued to seek the fallen Jean Verdenal for the rest of his days.

“Memory of loss is the most impossible of rivals,” Vivienne tells Eliot, and she begins to disintegrate in the face of his remove and under the pressure of guilt over her affair with Russell. Eliot and Maurice plot successfully to commit the frail Vivienne, victim of Eliot’s own spiritual and psychological dysfunction, to a sanitarium, where she remains until her death.

Very near his end, Eliot acknowledges his offense in a simple statement of chilling clarity: “She was the only one who knew me mad. . . . So my little Mary, Mary quite contrary to the madhouse you must go. . . . I didn’t have the courage to kill her—I buried her alive.” In the last scene a doctor vainly attempts to revive the dying poet, while Vivienne, Russell, Maurice, and Wild Cat Columbo look on.

Despite its cockamamie argument, *The Man from Lloyds* is not without its strengths as a piece of imagined theater. It calls for multiple design elements: sound and lighting and costuming, but also song and dance, masks, projected images and text, voiceover, video, and shadow play. It employs vivid, even outrageous theatricality that has the potential to entertain and hold an audience, although it also risks undermining itself in a welter of confused and over-the-top effects amid a surfeit of images.

The most striking theatrical elements that Gardner employs are song and dance and minstrel show, aspects of vaudeville and music hall that Eliot enjoyed, and he mines the repertoire of Al Jolson in particular. The play opens to a recording of Jolson singing “April Showers,” while Eliot performs a simple lilting dance. Early in their courtship Eliot and Vivienne sing a cheerful duet of another Jolson classic, “I’m Sitting on Top of the World.” And in a move that would surely deliver jaw-dropping shock (but could also provoke unintended guffaw), Eliot emerges on bended knee in blackface mask to sing “Mammy,” Jolson’s famous number from the movie *The Jazz Singer*. The play ends as the principals appear in minstrel masks to sing “Toot, Toot, Tootsie Goodbye” while they open Eliot’s casket . . . and find it empty.

Lively and jolting as the play’s theatrical effects read

on the page, however, their riotous impact could obtrude and become a production’s undoing. This seems especially likely given the fluidity and cinematic character of the dramatic structure, which incorporates flashbacks, jump cuts, and dissolves. For example, while the script denotes seven scenes in Act I, it also calls for the use of projected date stamps and title cards no fewer than ten times and sends the action reeling from 1963 to 1914 to 1947 to 1921 to 1963, and back to 1947—yet the scenes are also fragments of the poet’s memory and imagination during his final hours in 1965. An audience (a reader!) could become lost.

As further illustration of its surrealistic and troublesome theatricality, the play’s scenes are bracketed between symbol-laden reenactments of two historic assassinations, the murder of Archduke Ferdinand and the murder of President John F. Kennedy. The first casts Bertrand Russell as the Black Hand killer who shoots the Archduke and his helpless wife, clear stand-ins for Eliot and Vivienne. In the second and truly bizarre reenactment, Eliot imagines himself as the lone assassin who fixes the president in his rifle’s sight and coolly pulls the trigger. The graphic Zapruder film (made famous in Oliver Stone’s movie *JFK*), which captured the assassination as it happened, is projected in slow motion and in freeze-frame to pin the wounded president in his death throes. The scene reads as horrific, incomprehensible, and gratuitous. One wants to ask the playwright, “What are you thinking of? What thinking? What?”

This broaches another of Gardner’s techniques. In a nod to Eliot’s use of intertextual references, Gardner lifts lines from Eliot’s poetry and plays to provide much of the dialogue. In fact nearly a quarter of the lines appear sourced from Eliot’s work. (The script provides careful endnote references to all these.) While it is doubtful that many in an audience would appreciate how fully Eliot’s words are used, some of his better-known lines could resonate and provide a welcome sense of familiarity. On the other hand, splicing the lines wholesale outside their context is arguably a disservice, while exploiting Eliot’s own words selectively to build such a damning case against him is unfair at best. It would be surprising if Gardner could secure the rights to use Eliot’s work in this way.

Whatever antipathy he may feel toward Eliot the man, M. C. Gardner clearly admires Eliot the artist. Dense in its symbolism and imagery and vigorously theatrical to the point of excess, *The Man from Lloyds* employs Eliot’s work as well as his personal and artistic interests to create a portrait that is disturbing but not without empathy. Should it be produced, it will require the sure hand of an experienced and very disciplined director.

T. S. Eliot International Summer School

The fifth annual T. S. Eliot International Summer School will convene at the Institute of English Studies, University of London, 6-14 July 2013, with another outstanding program of lectures, seminars, trips to Little Gidding, Burnt Norton, and East Coker, and a variety of receptions, readings, walking tours, and social events. The academic program will bring together some of the most distinguished international scholars of T. S. Eliot and modern literature for lectures and seminars, including Nuzhat Bukhari, Robert Crawford, Lyndall Gordon, Nancy and Guy Hargrove, Hugh Haughton, William Marx, Gail McDonald, Marianne Thormählen, Megan Quigley, Sir Christopher Ricks, Ronald Schuchard, Jayme Stayer, and Wim Van Mierlo.

Special events will include a poetry reading by Christopher Reid, winner of the 2009 Costa Book of the Year Award; a special presentation of portraits of T. S. Eliot at the National Portrait Gallery, and two lectures in the Church of St. Magnus Martyr, “where,” writes Eliot in *The Waste Land*, “the walls / Of Magnus Martyr hold / Inexplicable splendour of Ionian white and gold.” Faculty and students gather most evenings for further camaraderie in The Lamb, a Bloomsbury pub. The School aims to maximize the opportunities for social interaction and intellectual exchange within a convivial and scholarly environment.

Students and citizens of literature of all ages and nations are welcome to attend the School. A limited number of bursaries (tuition waivers) and partial bursaries are available for deserving students who could not attend without some financial support.

For further information about tuition, fees, and accommodation, see our website at <http://ies.sas.ac.uk>



Senate House Libraries,
location of the Eliot Summer School

Eliot on the Diane Rehm Show

Tune in to NPR to hear Eliot Society members Jewel Spears Brooker and Anthony Cuda discuss *Four Quartets* with Diane Rehm on April 24th at 11a.m. Eastern time.

Eliot Society Panels at ALA

The Society is sponsoring two panels at the conference of the American Literature Association, May 23-26, 2013, in Boston. The sessions, organized and chaired by Nancy Gish, are as follows:

Encounters with the Other in T. S. Eliot's Poetry

“‘Little Gidding’ and the Ethics of Encounter”

Kinereth Meyer, Bar-Ilan University, Israel

“‘La forme précise de Byzance’: T. S. Eliot and the Prichard-Matisse Theory of Aesthetics”

John Morgenstern, Clemson University

“‘The Anatomy of Night’ in Eliot's ‘Burnt Norton’ and Djuna Barnes's Nightwood”

Timothy Materer, University of Missouri

T. S. Eliot's Plays: Poetic Drama, Performance, Performativity

“T. S. Eliot, Performativity, and the Concept of the Religious Life: Rereading *Murder in the Cathedral*”

Cyrena Pondrom, University of Wisconsin

“T. S. Eliot's ‘Sweeney Agonistes’ and Walter Benjamin's Baroque Drama”

Giuliana Ferreccio, University of Turin

“Towards a Slapstick Modernism: Shklovsky, Eliot, and Chaplin”

Bill Solomon, University at Buffalo

T. S. Eliot Society Annual Meeting,
St. Louis, September 2012

The Phonograph as Aesthetic
Component in *The Waste Land*

“The bird, the phonograph sing,” observes Ezra Pound in his essay “Cavalcanti” (1920). The poet is per force an auditor of phonographic transmission of song and music. The phonograph, preceding the gramophone, radically transformed the contemporary aural environment, making it possible to hear disembodied voices from the past along with the noises and sounds that filled the urban space. This paper reads T.S. Eliot’s technique of voicing musical and literary texts in *The Waste Land* (1922) as the poet’s response to mechanical reproduction and repetition of voices by the phonograph and kindred gadgets.

The Shakespearean and Spenserian song-lines reproduced in Eliot’s poem, for instance, are not simply mnemonic echoes but phonographic “singing” audible in the contemporary soundtrack which included Tudor and seventeenth-century songs and lyrics and the accompanying music revived by Pound’s contemporary, Arnold Dolmetsch. As James A. Winn points out, recordings of older music were more frequently heard in the twentieth century than in the nineteenth. Western Classical music was widely disseminated in early twentieth-century America through the phonograph, according to Mark Katz, thereby prioritizing listening over playing music as in the preceding century. His insights help in understanding how phonographic transmission impacts Eliot’s creative consciousness. This paper will explore the ways in which Eliot’s poetry does not merely “transmit” his auditory experience as “the latest Pole” did the *Preludes* but registers, as Pound’s comment highlights, the evolving role of the modernist poet as listener and his auditory response as aestheticization of the complex yet inescapable experience of listening to the phonograph.

In a culture experiencing secondary orality, as Walter J Ong terms it, in which telephones, radios and gramophones privileged verbal communication as primarily aural, Eliot’s efforts offer a renewed experience of the ancient oral-aural tradition of music and poetry.

Malobika Sarkar
Presidency University, Kolkata

Prufrock as Fool

This paper explores the meanings behind the “Fool” figure in “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock.” The fool figure has not attracted much attention in Eliot studies, though it is, arguably, the center of the poem’s earliest passage. I begin via *Hamlet*, discussing Polonius, Yorick, and Hamlet himself, as representatives of, respectively, the inane pressure of social conformity, the death of the fool as a link to healthy social ritual, and the recovery of foolish wit through intelligent madness. I consider the relative lack of the Fool tradition in American culture and, more specifically, in American Puritan culture, early and late. I then consider the importance of the reader’s response in adjudicating the significance and emotional power of Prufrock as Fool. I look for further incarnations of the Fool in Eliot’s writing, including Sweeney and One-Eyed Riley. Finally, I speculate on the religious significance of the Fool for Eliot, including possible links to the “Christian fool” of Saint Paul.

Lee Oser
College of the Holy Cross



Gesture and Kinesthesia in
T. S. Eliot’s Poetry

In his poetry, T. S. Eliot frequently invokes physical gestures that intensify the emotional and cognitive impact of his verse. Eliot’s poetry depicts the human body as it would be used on stage as part of a theatrical performance or in silent movies where so much depends upon an actor’s expressive physical gestures to convey a range of emotional and mental states. These specific, at times highly stylized, at other times seemingly natural, involuntary bodily movements, such as the command in “Preludes” to “Wipe your hand across your mouth, and laugh,” the twisting of a lilac stalk between a woman’s fingers as she talks in “Portrait of a Lady,” or the “trembling hands” of a waiter that appear near the “shaking” breasts of a patron in “Hysteria,” dramatize the psychology of his characters in ways that readers can grasp on an immediate sensory and kinesthetic level.

Although the dramatic nature of Eliot’s poetry is well known, most critics have focused on his use of dramatic voices, dialogue, and the dramatic monologue. Using recent

theories of gesture and performance (Carrie Nolan, Sally Ann Ness, and Adam Kendon), we propose that Eliot's invocations of gesture "inscribe," or physically transmit, a range of sensations and emotions to the reader. This approach to Eliot's gestures allows us to revisit his notion of the objective correlative as an essentially dramatic or performative concept drawing on ballet, modern dance, and cinema.

We focus on two of Eliot's most prominently invoked gestures: hand movements and the turn. Eliot is fully aware of the semiotic and expressive power of hand gestures, which he deploys symbolically and metonymically to dramatize the emotions of characters and the subtle interpersonal dramas enacted in his poetry. We pay special attention to mechanical, automatic, and otherwise involuntary hand movements (such as the typist "who smoothes her hair with automatic hand, / And puts a record on the gramophone") that suggest how technology has shaped the movements and rhythms of the body.

The turn is a gesture of abiding importance in Eliot's poetry. We distinguish between the full turn, which occurs more frequently in his post-conversion poetry (as in "the still point of the turning world" or the upward spiral in "Ash Wednesday") and the "pivot," a quarter or half turn, toward or away from somebody or something, which tends to occur at crucial points – indeed at "turning points" – in the dramatic development of a poem. A turn can convey future possibility, such as sovereignty and autonomy, but also recognition, regret, shame, and insufficiency – whether sexual, emotional, or spiritual. In "La Figlia Che Piange" when the woman "turn[s] away," she physically enacts and symbolically displays her autonomy to the reader, even as the speaker experiences the gesture as a rejection of himself or his romantic script of leave-taking.

Elisabeth Däumer and David Boeving
Eastern Michigan University



Cultural Contexts for T. S. Eliot's Understanding of Gender in the Early Twentieth Century

In "T.S. Eliot and the Performativity of Gender in *The Waste Land*" (*Modernism Modernity*, Sept. 2005), I argued that Eliot came to define gender as constructed rather than essential, and that this fluidity at the heart of identity is the source of much of the profound anxiety and instability that inhabits modernist texts in the first part of

the century. I now wish to examine the contemporaneous writings about gender which offer analogies to some of the ways in which gendered characters are presented in such Eliot poems as "Portrait of a Lady," "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," and some other early work up to and including *The Waste Land*. Post-structuralist critic Judith Butler has described "the way in which the anticipation of a gendered essence produces that which it posits as outside itself" through acts which the subject sees as coerced into production. These acts are "a repetition and a ritual, which achieves its effects through its naturalization in the context of a body. . . ." (*Gender Trouble*, 1999 rev. ed., xiv-xv). Such diverse writers as Magnus Hirschfeld, a European leader of the movement to abolish the criminalization of homosexuality, (*Sexual Anomalies*); Iwan Bloch (*The Sexual Life of Our Time*); Richard von Krafft-Ebing, (*Psychopathia Sexualis*, 1886), Havelock Ellis (*Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, 1915), and Edward Carpenter (*The Intermediate Sex*, 1908) have all offered portraits of gender which show some striking similarities to Butler's description of performativity. I argue that Eliot's views may clearly be seen within the context of an impassioned discussion of gender in the early twentieth century and not simply as an anticipation of post-structuralist analysis to come.

Cyrena Pondrom
University of Wisconsin



Eliot's Italian Trip, Summer 1911: Cathedrals, Palaces, Museums, and Landscapes

Overlooked by Eliot scholars, a small black notebook in Harvard's Houghton Library contains Eliot's notes on his Italian trip in the summer of 1911, following his academic year in Paris. In it he describes the cities he visited and the cathedrals, palaces, museums, and landscapes that he saw, with evaluations that have the air of a professional—and superior—critic of art and architecture. While there is nothing at all of a personal nature in the journal, it reveals his itinerary and his observations and is thus a valuable document in filling a gap in the Eliot biography, especially since few materials from this year have survived. It also gives us insight into some of his sources of inspiration for his literary works. This paper illustrates his trip with passages from his journal and my photographs of some of his important stops. Highlights include the Basilica of San Zeno Maggiore in Verona, the Villa Valmarana

with its frescoes by Giambattista and Giandomenico Tiepolo in Vicenza, the Basilica of San Marco and the Ca d'Oro with Mantegna's third painting of *Saint Sebastian* in Venice, the Scrovegni Chapel with Giotto's frescoes in Padua, the Certosa di Pavia near Milan, and the Accademia Carrara with its painting of *Saint Sebastian* (misattributed at the time to Antonello da Messina) in Bergamo.

Nancy D. Hargrove
Mississippi State University



Listening to Listening in *The Waste Land*

This paper reconsiders the relationship between voice and noise marked by the sound of T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*. While many critics have taken up the congeries of voices in this poem, I argue that this "organization of sound" (to take Edgar Varèse's contemporaneous definition of music) refers to—and depends upon—a larger sonic context: noise. The various cadences and disembodied voices within the poem are not only theatrical devices recalling the ghosts of tradition but also ways of remediating the invading rhythms,

drones and timbres of early twentieth-century urban life. I take Eliot's famous claim that "the conditions of modern life [in particular the internal combustion engine] have altered our perceptions of rhythms" as a starting point for listening to the ways in which the language of *The Waste Land* aspires to the condition of the phonographic. That is to say, we can imagine the poem as a series of "listening voices," i.e. a way of representing voice that reflects a variety of particular "listenings" rather than the fixed oratorical position of a proper "speaking voice." Just as Dada sound poets like Hugo Ball distorted lyrical effusion into noisy abstraction, Eliot's listening voices echo the very "mediumicity" of voice in verse. The gaps, distortions, deviations, decontextualizations, repetitions, and other rhetorical, typographic, and sonic estrangements within the poem emphasize the ways in which mechanisms and channels of communication always exist in the midst of noise. Noise parasitically invests and occludes the material of language, so that words themselves become mere noise (or, even, "mirror noise"). The phonographic call of *The Waste Land*, then, allows for a different conception of influence. It becomes, to return to the word's etymology, a "flowing in" of all sound in a way that simultaneously shapes and erodes a speaking and listening being.

John Melillo
University of Arizona

Modern Language Association Boston, January 2013

"And the Reputation the Place Gets": Eliot in Boston

In a 1960 essay called "The Influence of Landscape upon the Poet," Eliot recalled of his boyhood that the urban imagery of his youth "was that of St. Louis, upon which that of Paris and London have been superimposed." But between St. Louis and the capitals of Europe came Boston, and it's telling that Eliot's account elides his experience of Boston imagery. The key in this 1960 recollection is that Eliot's "superimposition" isn't so much physical as imaginative: Paris and London represent for him a superimposition not of place but perspective, a change less about what he saw than how he saw. Boston became, first, what he looked out from rather than what he looked to; second, what Boston means in Eliot's poetry is a way of looking that colors all else. In his readings at Harvard, his personal studies

of poetic tradition, Eliot learned to see the modern city through Baudelarean eyes—to see it as a flâneur.

Michael Coyle
Colgate University



"Cras Amet": Eliot, H.D., and the "Pervigilium Veneris"

This paper starts from the observation that both T.S. Eliot and H.D. draw on the "Pervigilium Veneris" ("The Vigil of Venus"), a post-classical Latin poem well known to their modernist generation. The paper uses the dimension of the "Pervigilium" that H.D. foregrounds (its refrain, "cras amet," a call to love) to offer a reading of how Eliot deploys the allusion to the "Pervigilium" at the very end of *The Waste Land*—a reading that bypasses its immediate reference to the

“swallow” in the myth of Procne and Philomela and instead highlights how the poem’s refrain about love informs the allusion. Accordingly, I reread *The Waste Land* as a kind of “love song”—as likewise sounding a call to love. To flesh out the conception of love this allusion might have suggested for Eliot, I turn to *Marius the Epicurean*, Pater’s novel in which the “Pervigilium” is prominently featured, and which likely mediated Eliot’s reception of and associations with the poem. Building upon Christine Froula’s reading of *The Waste Land* from the late 1980s, “Eliot’s Grail Quest,” I maintain that the call to love surfaced by an H.D.-inspired reading of Eliot’s allusion sheds light on forces behind what Froula presents as *The Waste Land*’s failure (which I read as resistant unwillingness) to complete the patriarchal grail quest narrative conjured by Eliot’s engagement with the figure of the Fisher King.

Miranda Hickman
McGill University

Eliot’s New England

Drawing on Eliot’s prose from his early years at Smith Academy and Harvard, as well as Eliot’s *Little Review* essay on Henry James published in 1918, in this paper I consider how *Marina* marks an important departure from Eliot’s earlier portrayal of Boston culture and society in “*The Boston Evening Transcript*” of 1915, and represents the culmination of Eliot’s formative, persistent effort to recognize the dignity and grace of his New England forebears. In this poem of homecoming, restored vision, and commitment to future generations, Eliot salvages the shipwreck and death by water depicted in the draft of *The Waste Land*.

Anita Patterson
Boston University

Louisville Conference on Literature and Culture after 1900, February 2013

(T.S. Eliot’s) Music Hall Vs. The Cinema

In recent years, T.S. Eliot’s writings on music hall, especially his elegy to the popular singer Marie Lloyd, have come to seem more central to the poet’s aesthetic and social thought. My title refers to the opposition that Eliot famously (or notoriously) drew in “Marie Lloyd” (1922) between the music hall, which he praises as a unique interactive art form, and cinema, which he criticizes for alienating its audiences by turning crowds into passive, isolated spectators. My paper recovers the context in modernist art and criticism for Eliot’s pointed comparison between music hall and film. Extended contrasts between the two entertainments can be found in the writing of drama critic G.H. Mair (a member of the Conrad-Ford literary circle), W.R. Titterton, and Thomas Burke. Although writers like Burke made negative comparisons between music hall and cinema that closely resemble Eliot’s, Vorticist painter William Roberts depicts an interactive film-going experience in *The Cinema* (1920) that builds on images originating in Walter Sickert’s late Victorian music hall paintings. My paper considers the extensive discourse on the relative merits of cinema versus music-hall-going in modernist criticism and painting, with the aim of establishing a context for Eliot’s evaluative schema in “Marie Lloyd.” The broader aim is to elucidate the paradox of modernist writers and painters defending late Victorian modernity over

twentieth-century technological modernity. At stake is not merely the question of which entertainment is aesthetically superior, but the proper social function of art.

Barry J. Faulk
Florida State University



Eliot, Versailles, and the Politics of the European Mind

This paper takes up the question of T. S. Eliot’s notion of the “mind of Europe” and cosmopolitan poetics more generally in relation to the broader effort to define a European identity in the “League moment” of 1917-1922. Aspects of Eliot’s essays and poetics can be productively read in relation not just to the “crisis of liberalism” during this period, but also the attempt to reframe and rework international institutions that would bind Europe and the world together at the level of culture. To this end, the essay situates Eliot’s poetics vis-à-vis those of his European contemporaries who were actively engaged in cultural politics immediately following the First World War and the signing of the Versailles accord.

Gabriel Hankins
Clemson University

ABSTRACTS

T. S. Eliot, The Modernist as Decadent

Eliot's connections with the attitudes and postures of literary decadence are by now pretty well known and recognized. I want to go beyond a census of assignably decadent poets, and beyond his affiliation with the transgressions of a celebrity decadent. I want to ask in a more searching way about a decadent poetics, more particularly, about poetic technique, about rhythm, and so

about tempo and, more largely, temporality and, indeed, a whole temporal imaginary. I'll build out this imaginative understanding of time through a reading of some of the poems from *Inventions of the March Hare*. I'll be developing and complicating our received understandings of decadence as a sensibility of late or last days, putting it into conversation with "modernism," which, with its associative concepts of novelty and improvisation, stands at least as its nominal opposite.

Vincent Sherry
Washington University

PUBLIC SIGHTINGS

Compiled by David Chinitz

Like the Archies ... Justin Cronin's *The Twelve* (2012) is the second book in a trilogy about a bioweapon gone wrong in the form of superhuman psycho vampires that cause an apocalypse. Kittridge, a former Marine, comes across a young girl, April, who tells him she's named after T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* and recites the first two stanzas. When Kittridge asks, "He got any other stuff?" she replies, "Not much that makes sense. You ask me, he was kind of a one-hit wonder."

... or Right Said Fred. "One-hit wonders are a noble breed. It's a fallacy that artists should have long, productive careers. William Wordsworth invented modern poetry in one ten-year bang, 1795 to 1805, but then he was cashed out, although he lived to write utter rubbish for another forty-five years. Walt Whitman wrote American literature's most towering achievements between 1855 and 1865, and then sucked for the next twenty-seven years. T. S. Eliot? Spent the twentieth century dining out on a handful of poems from his 1915–1925 hot streak. Rock stars did not invent burning out. They just do it louder." (Rob Sheffield, *Talking to Girls About Duran Duran: One Young Man's Quest for True Love and a Cooler Haircut* [2010]:118.)

As seen on TV. (1) *The Good Wife*, season 3, episode 5 (23 Oct. 2011). Title: "Colin Sweeney Agonistes." (2) *Boardwalk Empire*, season 3, episode 12 (2 Dec. 2012). Title: "Margate Sands." (3) *Jericho*, season 1, episode 1 (16 Oct. 2005). Title: "A Pair of Ragged Claws."

And women walk around, chatting about a painter.

"Strange isn't it how short the present is. I'm reminded of a line from T. S. Eliot: 'Men grow old, grow old. They wear their pant legs rolled.'" (Letter from actor Lee Marvin to his brother Robert, 28 Dec. 1952. Qtd. in *Lee Marvin: Point Blank*, by Dwayne Epstein [2013]: 84.)

Shivery Resonance. "A Pilgrimage to T. S. Eliot's Dry Salvages," by James Parker (*Boston Globe* 14 Oct. 2012) is a nicely written primer on the poem and its landscape, which Eliot portrays (says Parker) "with his patented downbeat ecstasy." Parker's opening comment on Eliot's headnote to the poem ("The Dry Salvages—presumably *les trois sauvages*—is a group of rocks, with a beacon, off the N.E. coast of Cape Ann, Massachusetts. *Salvages* is pronounced to rhyme with *assuages*. *Groaner*: a whistling buoy") gives an idea of the whole article:

The note is a poem in itself, really: factual-sounding at first, nearly pedantic, a miniature lecture (on etymology, pronunciation, definition) that nonetheless deepens on every side into shivery Eliotic resonance. He could have used *pages*, our poet, or *rages*—but no, it had to be the King James-y *assuages*. Suffering and succor. The name of the rocks themselves: aridity, salvation. And floating out there somewhere, the hopeless, enduring, sad old *groaner*.

ELIOT SOCIETY ELECTION

Two seats on the Eliot Society’s Board of Directors are up for election this year. All members in good standing—i.e., those whose dues are current, as well as honorary members—are eligible to vote. Ballots must be submitted by May 31 at the latest.

The election will again be conducted using an online ballot rather than paper ballots. To vote, please follow these instructions:

1. Click the “Eliot Society Election” link on our website (www.luc.edu/eliot).
2. In the login box that pops up, enter the user name **eliot** and the password **TSE1888**.
3. On the ballot screen, enter your first and last names and your email address. Then click on the boxes next to the names of up to two candidates. Clicking once will put a check in the box; clicking again on the same box will remove the check.
4. When you are ready, click the “Submit Your Vote” button.

Please note that the identifying information (name and email address) is required only for purposes of validation or in case of a problem with your ballot. Votes will be seen only by the Supervisor of Elections, David Chinitz, who will hold them in confidence. If you lack internet access or are otherwise unable to use the online ballot, please contact him (dchinit@luc.edu), and he will be happy to enter your vote manually.

Two persons, Chris Buttram and Julia Daniel, have been nominated. Terms for the elected candidates will be three years.

The Anxiety

By Ted Richer

1.
I had to stop reading.
...
Or—
...
I might never write like myself.
...
I had to stop reading Eliot.
...
Or—
...
I might never write.
2.
I stopped reading.
...
And—
...
I started to write like myself.
...
I stopped reading Eliot.
...
And—
I started to write.
3.
Read Eliot.
...
Started and stopped dead.

Ted Richer is the author of *The Writer in the Story and Other Figurations* (2003) and is included in Christopher Ricks’ anthology *Joining Music with Reason*. He tells us that “The Anxiety” (2012) is a sonnet.

Email List Serve

Members are invited to subscribe to the Society's informational list serve, which is used for occasional official communications only—never for discussion. To join, please contact the Secretary.

For Help With Society Matters

To submit papers for any conference session sponsored by the Society, or to make suggestions or inquiries regarding the annual meeting or other Society activities, please contact the President. For matters having to do with *Time Present: The Newsletter of the T. S. Eliot Society*, please contact the Vice President. To pay dues, inquire about membership, or report a change of address, please contact the Treasurer. The Society Historian is John Morgenstern (g.morgenstern@chch.oxon.org).

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Time Present is edited and published on behalf of the T. S. Eliot Society by Frances Dickey

with the generous support of the University of Missouri.

Book Review Editor: John Morgenstern

Design and layout by Sarah Handelman

Printed in the USA