

# Time Present

The Newsletter of the T. S. Eliot Society

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## *A Life's Devotion: The Collection of The Late Mrs. T. S. Eliot, Christie's Auction House, London.*

Reviewed by Inga Fraser  
Assistant Curator, Modern British Art, Tate Britain

Valerie Eliot, the second wife of T. S. Eliot, passed away on November 9, 2012. Just over a year later, on November 20, 2013, her collection of fine and decorative art and furniture was auctioned at Christie's to benefit Old Possum's Practical Trust, the charitable organization that she established in 1990 to support the arts. The sale was staged at Christie's headquarters on King Street, fewer than five hundred feet away from the London Library, the newest wing of which was built with generous funding from Old Possum's Trust. The London Library's current president, Sir Tom Stoppard, attended the preview of the collection, which days later sold for more than seven million pounds.

Such sales receive an inevitable boost as a consequence of the celebrity of the collector, and one tries to learn about the collector from the objects he owned. Although Mrs. Eliot acquired many of these artworks after her husband's death, we inevitably hope to divine something of the poet and his poetry. For instance, in the introduction to the sale's catalog, Christie's Associate Director Gemma Sudlow refers to the contrast among the works—watercolors by J. M. W. Turner and William Callow seen against works by Wyndham Lewis and David Bomberg—as reflective of the “contrast and comparison” that Eliot sought in his writing. “Observing the many works as they jostled for position on the walls of the Kensington flat they shared,” Sudlow elaborates, “one sensed an understanding of how Eliot observed



Henri Gaudier-Brzeska, *The Wrestlers* (linocut, c. 1914)  
Christie's Images Ltd. 2014

the relationship of artists to one another across time.” Spanning five centuries and an eclectic array of international styles and media, Valerie Eliot’s art collection placed sixteenth-century portraits in dialogue with eighteenth-century landscapes and with a modest but diverse assembly of works by impressionists from Manet to Signac, modernists from Picasso to Kandinsky, and postmodernists from John Piper to Stanley Spencer. The impressive scope of Mrs. Eliot’s collection, Sudlow concludes, demonstrates that as a collector she clearly shared her late husband’s “historical sense.”

Valerie Eliot’s particular interest as a collector was portraiture, specifically portrait miniatures, and some two hundred of these were included in the sale. According to Jo Langston of Christie’s, Mrs. Eliot’s collection of portrait miniatures, amassed over a twenty-year period, charted the development of the genre from its inception in the sixteenth century to its demise in the twentieth. Poet Craig Raine affirms in the sale catalog that these “miniatures were at the heart of [Mrs. Eliot’s] serious collecting.” “Valerie Eliot’s collection of miniatures,” he recalls, “hung on the right chimney-breast above the mantelpiece. It was as if some lavishly decorated veteran, some extraordinary hero, weighty with honours, were standing to attention.” Also featured in the sale were two portraits of the poet himself, including a watercolor made in 1940 by R. H. Wilenski, author of such works as *The Modern Movement in Art* (Faber & Gwyer, 1927). The later portrait, by the American artist Bernard Fuchs, was made posthumously and used to illustrate an edition of *Collected Poems 1909–1962*. Having worked primarily as a magazine illustrator, Fuchs highlights in workmanlike fashion Eliot’s most characteristic features and apparel in this charcoal drawing—the furrowed brow, the spectacles, the blue suit. However, neither of these portraits reveals as much of Eliot’s character as Wyndham Lewis’s portrait from 1938, pictured in the catalog over the mantelpiece in the Eliots’ Kensington flat but not included in the sale. In Lewis’s iconic portrait, the artist’s polished modernity suits the poet’s incisive editorial gaze, more so than the style of portraits produced by Wilenski or Fuchs. However, that these lesser portraits sold for well over their guide prices is no small testament to the great popular interest in Eliot as a figure of enormous influence in twentieth-century literary history and beyond.

## Performance of Anthony Burgess’s *The Waste Land*. International Anthony Burgess Foundation, Manchester, UK. February 28, 2014.

Reviewed by J. T. Welsch  
York St John University

Not long before his death, Anthony Burgess wrote, “I wish people would think of me as a musician who writes novels, instead of a novelist who writes music on the side” (*Economist*, 1991). He has not gotten that wish, of course, although a growing scholarly interest in Burgess’s astounding range of creative pursuits, spurred on in part by the generous archive at the International Anthony Burgess Foundation, is helping to situate his extensive musical corpus alongside his novel writing, translations, journalism, and many screenplays. At long last, the European premiere of Burgess’s setting of *The Waste Land* for flute, oboe, piano, cello, soprano, and narration—composed but only performed once to a small crowd in 1978—underscores the broader potential of cross-medial interpretation.

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“...from the Debussy-esque piano for the opening of “A Game of Chess” to the barroom rolls behind the pub scene...”

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The many musical allusions and citations in Eliot’s poem continue to have their due critical attention. The challenge, as with any interdisciplinarity, is in considering these extraliterary aspects on their own terms. As Burgess wrote, quite rightly, “Most musicians know about literature, but few litterateurs know about music.” Like his “Blooms of Dublin” and other musical-literary experiments, Burgess’s *The Waste Land* dwells on the real difference between technical forms, and therefore the real difference between such multimedia activations of a text and the handling of textual references to Wagner or to the pop songs in the poem as mere matters of cultural history or a flattened intertextuality. Unlike written annotations, Burgess’s score is able to reproduce—in real time—explicit citations, such as the soprano entering for the lines from *Tristan und Isolde*,

*continued on p. 4*

## The 35th Annual Meeting of the T. S. Eliot Society

St. Louis, September 19–21, 2014

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 13, 2014, 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 at the Limits of History and Historicism

Eliot's work has always raised historical questions: whether in the temporal vortex of *The Waste Land*, the medieval pageantry of *Murder in the Cathedral*, or the timeless suspension of the *Four Quartets*, the reader is invited again and again to meditate upon the past's presence. Austin Graham's seminar will accept that invitation, exploring the many ways in which Eliot's writings seek to apprehend history. What manner of historian is Eliot? To what extent does he seek to escape history, or master it? How does Eliot help us understand the larger modernist movement's attachment to the old, the archaic, and the passé? Participants are also encouraged to consider how Eliot's poetry is itself historical, and ask how history-conscious scholars ought to approach it. What is Eliot's true historical context? What are the stakes of thinking of him as an early twentieth-century artist, or as an avatar of an older "tradition," or as a creator of transcendent, ahistorical art? All manners of approach to these questions are welcome, and in our seminar we will work to connect

Eliot's past-minded verse to recent debates about the roles that history, context, and novelty play in literary scholarship more generally.

T. Austin Graham is an assistant professor of English at Columbia University, where he teaches American literature. He is the author of *The Great American Songbooks: Musical Texts, Modernism, and the Value of Popular Culture* (Oxford: 2013). His current project is a study of American historical fiction and the American historical profession in the twentieth century.

To enroll in the seminar, email the Vice President at dickeyf@missouri.edu. This year's seminar is open to the first 15 registrants; registration will close July 15. Seminarists will submit 4–5 page position papers by email, no later than September 1st.

### Memorial Lecturer: Sarah Cole

Sarah Cole is Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University and recipient of a 2014 Guggenheim Fellowship. Her most recent book, *At the Violet Hour: Modernism and Violence in England and Ireland* (Oxford, 2012), investigates the strange proximity of modernist aesthetics and violence in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In particular, Cole reads *The Waste Land* in the context of the First World War to examine the polarizing relationship between "enchanted" and "disenchanted" violence. Her *Modernism, Male Friendship, and the First World War* (Cambridge, 2003) explores the literary and cultural history of masculine intimacy in the twentieth century. Her article on *The Waste Land* and violence appeared in PMLA, and she has also published in *Modernism/Modernity*, *Modern Fiction Studies*, and *ELH*.

Cole teaches courses on British literature of the modernist period and her work on modernism is oriented toward history, with a particular focus on the First World War. She will be using her Guggenheim Fellowship to write a book reassessing the contribution of one of the twentieth century's most unrecognized geniuses, H. G. Wells. Her Memorial Lecture will consider Eliot's debate about history with Wells, using it as a springboard for thinking about different modes of history in Eliot's work, and in modernism more broadly.

Review of Performance of Burgess continued from p. 2

as well as implicit ones like the *Rite of Spring* motif the oboe plays against the poem's opening. The piece works best on this conceptual level, with the collage logic of the poem read both in counterpoint to and as one part of the overall sound collage; and, in this performance, the effect seemed most powerful where it was difficult to say which part was accompanying which.

The passages of original music are just as illuminating, from the Debussy-esque piano for the opening of "A Game of Chess" to the barroom rolls behind the pub scene at the end of that section (after quoting "That Shakespearian Rag"). While some gestures were more straightforwardly mimetic, like the staccato piano for the water-dripping song in "The Fire Sermon," the variety of approaches (including well-placed silences) work together as a kind of experiential exegesis. For all the recent technological attempts to sort this poem's layers into neat supplements for hypertexts or iPad apps, using the cello to point out the missing lines from the typist's episode or setting the grail theme from Parsifal against the opening of "The Fire Sermon" is certainly more immersive but also persuasive as a reading in its own right.

This particular production adds further layers to the mix, projecting photographs of ruined, burnt-out spaces and objects to illustrate the poem more literally. Jonathan Best, as narrator, opened the performance in a slightly different character, reading an unpublished essay in which the novelist remembers first memorizing Eliot's poem at age fifteen, before a university professor of his dismissed its "illiterate gallimaufry." It was a poignant setup, with Burgess himself, as it were, also airing his frustration with readers of the 1970s (writing on the poem's fiftieth anniversary) who found Eliot a bit of a bore, by way of introduction to a vibrant performance that would surely have won them over.

The use of furniture and props from the Burgess archive was another nice touch for this hometown premiere; and I gather that the Eliot estate has been just as supportive of the project, and of the prospect of a tour sometime soon. I hope it happens. Of course, *The Waste Land's* ability to sing for itself, and in more overlapping voices than could ever be reproduced, is a great part of what has captivated readers for nearly a century. These interpretations are just as essential, making available not only a historically specific reading, but also a very personal reading made shareable, for any listener to hear it anew.

## Ralf Yusuf Gawlick (composer) and Rafael Popper-Keizer (cellist). *At the Still Point of the Turning World, Op. 9 (2001–2).* *Musica Omnia, 2014.*

Reviewed by Nancy and Guy Hargrove  
Mississippi State University

Taking his title from lines sixty-two and one hundred and thirty of T. S. Eliot's *Burnt Norton*, composer Ralf Yusuf Gawlick has created a very innovative and avant-garde composition for solo violincello, performed on this CD by accomplished cellist Rafael Popper-Keizer. Gawlick explains in the CD insert that Eliot "speculates on time and existence through the movement towards/around/away from the still point," which is "a perceived moment in time." Thus Gawlick conceived of using an octagonal arrangement of eight music stands, one for each of the words in the line of Eliot's poem, leaving the performer free to choose to begin and end as well as how many segments to would play. Therefore, in every performance the cellist has complete artistic freedom to choose the movement and order of the piece as well as its length, which could vary from twelve to fifty minutes.

The music itself is dramatic and dissonant, with silences playing an important part, thus demonstrating musically the concept of the still point while the varied tempi and volumes suggest the turning world. Indeed, as Gawlick notes in the insert, the "music constantly fluctuates between movement and rest, sonic activity and inactivity, hesitation and impulse. Within the musical fabric's turning world, the numerous rests emerge as delicately sprinkled still points." Gawlick uses the full range of the cello to great effect in this haunting piece, which is expertly played by Popper-Keizer. Eliot scholars and devotees, especially those with an interest in and knowledge of music, will find this contemporary classical work both challenging and intriguing.



**Jason Harding, ed. *T. S. Eliot in Context*. Cambridge University Press, 2011.**

Reviewed by Margaret Greaves  
Emory University

Thirty-seven essays later, readers of *T. S. Eliot in Context* will sense that they have only skimmed the surface of Eliot's formidable array of interests and experiences. The volume manages to create a complex and surprisingly consistent study of a figure whose iconic status has at times in the past obscured the life and works. Editor Jason Harding aims to restore Eliot to his contexts, collecting balanced essays designed to provide a solid foundation for students of Eliot and to keep more seasoned scholars honest in their assessments. Guides to Eliot's poetry and literary allusions abound, but nowhere are so many different categories for understanding Eliot grouped in one place with a unified tone and vision.

The collection is divided into five sections, which often cross-reference one another: "Life," "Forms," "Literary Cross-Currents," "Politics, Society and Culture," and "Reception." Mercifully, the essays under these headings also have straightforward titles ("London," "Visual Art," "Dante," and so forth) that reinforce the collection's aim of accessibility. Although the methods and biases of the contributors vary, the approachability of the writing does not. The trajectory of the book is satisfying, beginning in the historical and biographical landscape of St. Louis and ending with a retrospective look at Eliot's place in what Patricia Waugh calls "our own problematically post-theory era" (394).

Recurring threads also give cohesion to the book. Unsurprisingly, the editor's essay works as a touchstone for many others, outlining the effects that Eliot's career in publishing had on his legacy of influence, literary friendships, and lifelong ties to Faber. Other essays complement one another in unexpected ways. Jeroen Vanheste's piece on the idea of Europe contains the best succinct account of Eliot's classicism that I have read, while Hannah Sullivan's essay on the classics goes into a deeper explanation of the relationship between Eliot's "classicism" and Greek and Latin "classics"—an issue that tends to confuse students of Eliot. Some essays even seem to have grown up together, as in the case of Jewel Spears Brooker's "Social Science" and Michael H. Whitworth's "Natural Science." Both pieces emphasize Eliot's attention to these disciplines' methodologies over their content—a

wise focus because, although Eliot was well versed in many of the specifics of these disciplines, he was always drawn to systems and theories over detail. As Whitworth puts it, "Scientific ideas may be drawn into a poet's ideas of poetic form and of the poetic vocation, without featuring explicitly in the poems themselves" (337). Without betraying his intent to read the connection between science and poetry metaphorically, Whitworth speculates on a few explicit connections between Eliot's work and quantum theory of atomic structure. In light of evolving research on Eliot and astronomy and physics, Whitworth's most tempting premise is that the temporal distortions described in special relativity informed Eliot's views on time and tradition.

Like Whitworth's essay, many chapters pepper long-established work with insights that emerge from the contributors' personal interests and research. To name just a few, David Fuller (trained in musicology) suggests how the incantatory elements of Eliot's poetry play into his notion of the individual talent, and Terri Mester combines Eliot's love of Russian ballet with his views on primitivism and dance as sacred ritual. William Marx adds a fresh dimension to Eliot's Paris year, emphasizing the poet's cultural loneliness in France alongside the standard account of his literary and philosophical development during his year abroad. Among the most innovative essays is Michael Coyle's on radio, which adds another perspective to the much-celebrated issue of Eliot and the cultural divide. Coyle brings to light the effort Eliot put into his BBC broadcasts, as he saw in the genre the chance to reach different communities than he could through a traditional lecture. Essays such as these push *T. S. Eliot in Context* beyond a reference guide for students. In the vein of publications aimed specifically at specialized academics, occasionally a controversial opinion is left unqualified. (For example, Marjorie Perloff hints at a romance between Eliot and his friend Jean Verdenal, an interpretation that remains uncertain at best and contentious at worst in Eliot studies—a point Rachel Blau Duplessis brings up in her essay on gender.) However, these moments are almost refreshing in a collection that might otherwise seem to be making too much of an effort at objectivity—an especially difficult undertaking given the high caliber of contributors, many of whom have spent their careers immersed in Eliot.

The mixed audience also allows contributors to show their inquisitiveness about, even their affection for, Eliot and his works. The essays are descriptive rather than argumentative, and even the touchiest issues are approached with professional cool-headedness. For instance, John Xiros Cooper outlines the critical history of Eliot and anti-Semitism with a tone of guarded respect, even when he takes Eliot to task for his least palatable moments (such as his decision to reprint poems with derogatory depictions of Jews three years after the Holocaust ended). While the essay on anti-Semitism manages to avoid it, other parts of the book adopt a corrective tone about issues that have already been challenged. Few scholars would accept at face value the many myths that have gathered around Eliot—for instance, his supposed disdain for humanism and his elitism. Sometimes, the revisionist tenor of a few essays risks missing two audiences: casual readers may not have been aware of some longstanding stereotypes about Eliot, and practiced readers are likely familiar with ways in which these have been contested.

The impulse to find what is missing rather than what a book offers is especially unfair in a volume that, by its nature, can never be exhaustive. “Contexts,” after all, are infinite. But it is striking that the contents omit the world wars—both of them. On the other hand, it would be difficult to fit the wars into single chapters because, in many ways, they are the ultimate contexts for much of Eliot’s work. In general, the book does an excellent job of including Eliot’s relationships with other poets and modernists, from Ezra Pound and the Bloomsbury group to his influence on Larkin, Hughes, and Heaney. However, it would have been nice to see more of Yeats, as the affinities and contradictions in the poets’ aesthetics shaped poetic movements for the rest of the twentieth century.

The attempt to reconstruct Eliot’s exact contexts is a herculean task. As Jewel Spears Brooker points out in her essay, Eliot’s attentiveness to the social sciences had much to do with a search for origins. The volume itself undertakes a mythical quest for origins, seeking to distill the discussions of nearly a century to arrive at what Eliot was. Through this pursuit, readers are left with a grounded collection of essays that students, teachers, and even critics will turn to when overwhelmed by Eliot’s versatility and depth. Harding’s ultimate mission, to “[enhance] the pleasure of encountering Eliot’s texts” (2), will appeal

to all readers, reminding us that enjoyment is not antithetical to critical inquiry.

**Susan Jones, *Literature, Modernism, and Dance*.  
Oxford University Press, 2013.**

Reviewed by Jennie Scholick  
University of California, Los Angeles

With a title like *Literature, Modernism, and Dance*, Susan Jones’s new monograph immediately announces itself as an ambitious, expansive, and wide-ranging study. It is also a major contribution to both literary and dance studies, in part due to its impressive scope, but equally for Jones’s ability to handle both literary and dance texts with delicacy, passion, and insight. Spanning a period of time from approximately 1893 to 1981, or from Mallarmé to Beckett via Nietzsche, Yeats, Woolf, Pound, Eliot, and others, this text brings a vast array of artists into the scope of modernism, making a convincing argument for the ways in which dancers, writers, and choreographers throughout the twentieth century worked in tandem and in parallel to explore modern questions about the body, gender, language, and technology. At its core is the statement that an understanding of Western dance aesthetics between the late nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries offers new and productive ways of thinking about the aesthetic innovations of literary modernism and is necessary to understand fully the transatlantic exchanges that occurred between literature and dance in this period.

While the importance of dance to symbolist and modernist writers is not a new topic—Frank Kermode’s 1957 *Romantic Image* offering one of the earliest examples—it is one that remains relatively underexplored, especially in comparison to the number of studies that examine music, the visual arts, or film in relation to literary modernism. Moreover, only recently have scholars thoroughly versed in both literary and dance studies, such as Amy Koritz, Julie Townsend, Carrie Preston, and of course Jones herself, begun to explore in depth the relationship of dance to literature in a way that treats dance as an autonomous art form with its own modernist innovations, rather than merely as a metaphor for the artistic process

or as a passing piece of poetic inspiration. *Literature, Modernism, and Dance* aims to rectify these oversights by placing the “reciprocal relationship” between dance and literary modernisms at the center of its argument, stressing the idea that the relationships between these modernisms were not singular, nor were they unidirectional, but rather, that during the modernist period “an unprecedented dialogue” occurred between the two art forms such that each actively grappled with the aesthetic innovations of the other (10).

Jones structures her text around these reciprocal exchanges, beginning most chapters with an analysis of dance’s impact on an individual or set of literary figures and then, in turn, those writers’ impacts on twentieth-century choreography. The book moves in loosely chronological order, with the first two chapters looking at the contrasting philosophies of dance crafted by Stéphane Mallarmé and Friedrich Nietzsche at the turn of the century; the third exploring the impact of German Ausdrucksstanz and of Dalcrozierian Eurhythmics on modernist literature; and the fourth, fifth, and sixth looking at the impact of the Ballets Russes on British modernism. Later chapters address convergences between Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* and the work of little known British choreographer Andrée Howard; choreographer Léonide Massine’s transformation of aesthetics taken from futurism, constructivism, and the high modernist poets; Ezra Pound’s “kinaesthetic impulse”; T. S. Eliot’s image of the modernist sublime as “the still point, [where] the dance is”; British modern dramatic dance as crafted by Ballet Rambert in the 1930s; and Samuel Beckett’s refiguring of images from early modernist dance works in his later plays.

Of especial interest to readers of *Time Present* is Jones’s chapter on Eliot, dance, and transnational poetics, an expansion of a previously published article in *Dance Research Journal*. In this reader’s opinion it is also one of the most compelling chapters in the book, adding substantially to existing scholarship by Amy Koritz and Nancy Hargrove on the influence of contemporary dance practices on Eliot’s aesthetics, while also clearly illuminating the reciprocal relationship between the two art forms by highlighting the importance of Eliot’s conception of “the still point” to modern dance innovation in the United States. Jones convincingly argues that Eliot’s representation of a modernist sublime in *Four Quartets* as the “still point [where] the dance is” is based upon a “good appreciation of the phenomenological experience of dance practice” and specifically upon the active stillness found in classical ballet technique (235). This nuanced understanding

of dance’s simultaneously corporeal nature and its capacity for transcendence, she claims, distinguishes Eliot from his contemporaries, who often used dance as a handy metaphor for poetry without much reflection on dance’s own material nature (224). In turn, innovators of choreographic modernism in the United States, and especially Martha Graham, found in Eliot’s image of the “still point” inspiration for their own investigations of impersonality, temporality, memory, and transcendence, bringing the interplay between dance and poetry full circle and Eliot’s images back across the Atlantic in altered form (239–41). Jones’s readings of Graham’s choreographic notebooks, full of quotations taken from Eliot’s oeuvre and particularly from *Four Quartets*, are a highlight of the study as they reveal Graham’s continued struggle to express choreographically the “evanescent moment,” that timeless sublime evoked in Eliot’s poetry.

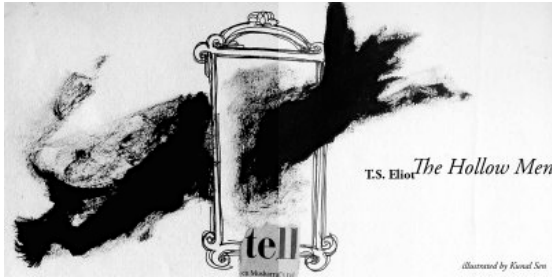
While *Literature, Modernism, and Dance* is a well-written and researched study of the relationship between dance and literature in the modernist period, one might wish that greater attention had been paid to the term “modernism,” both in general and in particular with regard to dance, especially given its prominent place in both title and text. What modernism means in dance studies is a particularly difficult question, with some scholars claiming that dance modernism only appeared following WWII and others finding it deeply embedded in late nineteenth-century practices. Jones does not take a stand either way, allowing very disparate choreographic works all to bear equally the mantle of “modernism,” a choice that diminishes the power of the term. That said, its flexibility allows her to bring into the scope of her project a large number of writers and choreographers and, while at various points the connections between these artists are tenuous, it is the revelation of the very quantity and variety of ways that literature and dance intersected in this period that makes Jones’s argument so compelling.

To end with one such example, while Jones stresses the impact of the Ballets Russes’ choreographer Léonide Massine on Eliot, she also uncovers a previously unexplored connection between *Four Quartets* and another dance artist, British choreographer Antony Tudor. According to Tudor’s rehearsal pianist, Tudor often quoted the first section of *Burnt Norton* in rehearsals for *Jardin aux Lilas*, a ballet that takes place in a garden and explores themes of memory and regret. Jones notes that *Jardin* likely was not directly inspired by *Burnt Norton*, as it premiered at the Mercury Theater in January of 1936, three months before the publication

*continued on p. 9*

Compiled by David Chinitz

**Final Jeopardy!** On an episode of *Jeopardy!* aired September 16, 2013, the Final Jeopardy question was “Funds provided by his widow were used to set up a literary fund called Old Possum’s Practical Trust.” The category was “Poets.”



**Hollow men in Hollywood.** Most of the references to Eliot that pervade *August: Osage County*, Tracy Letts’s Pulitzer-winning play, miraculously survive in the 2013 film version, which stars Meryl Streep, Julia Roberts, and Ewan McGregor, among others. The opening words, “Life is very long,” are quoted by an aging poet, Beverly, who then launches into a speech about Eliot as a “survivor”: being married to Vivien, he claims, would have killed Hart Crane or John Berryman in no time. Beverly, played in the film by Sam Shepard, says he “admires the hell out of Eliot the poet” but can’t identify with him as a person, in essence because Eliot was too tough. Beverly’s imminent suicide—by drowning, naturally—will set the plot in motion. His last words are “Here we go round the prickly pear,” spoken to the character Johnna as he gives her a book of Eliot’s poems to read. The play later ends with Johnna quoting “This is the way the world ends, this is the way the world ends, this is the way the world ends.” The film got mixed reviews.



Illustrations by kind permission of Kunal Sen, [kunalanimation.blogspot.co.uk](http://kunalanimation.blogspot.co.uk)

**Hollow men and their wives and girlfriends.** Lisa E. Scott’s *Surviving A Narcissist: The Path Forward* (2011), written for women whose partners have Narcissistic Personality Disorder, takes a dimmer view of Eliot’s poem. “My ex-husband’s favorite poem was ‘The Hollow Men’ by T. S. Eliot,” Scott writes, “and I think it tells us all we need to know about these personalities in order to stay away” (57). She then quotes the entire poem.

**Hollow men on TV.** In “The Werewolf Transformation,” an episode of the long-running sitcom *The Big Bang Theory* (air date February 23, 2012), Sheldon adduces the barber’s nephew as “an example of the kind of nepotism that runs rampant in the barbering industry.” He comments derisively: “To paraphrase T. S. Eliot, this is the way the world ends, not with a bang but with a nephew.”



**Hollow men rocking out.** CAPA, “a Philadelphia-based tragic black metal collective,” whose music “focuses conceptually on the topics of nihilism, greed, and the relationship between society and the natural world,” recently released a new album titled *This is the Dead Land This is Cactus Land*. A typical lyric—shouted in a hoarse voice, rather than sung:

The memories of  
Paralyzed forces  
And shapeless forms;  
Colorless shades and  
Gesture-less motions. . . .  
I pray to the broken stone  
But know, now, that my solitude  
Transcends  
Life and death.



review of Literature, Modernism, and Dance continued from p. 7

of *Burnt Norton*. But Eliot might have been inspired by the ballet, as *Murder in the Cathedral* was produced during the same season at the Mercury, making it possible for him to have seen the ballet in rehearsal or in performance (237).

Although the association between *Burnt Norton* and *Jardin* is conjectural—Jones has no firm evidence that Eliot saw the ballet—these anecdotal ways that poets and choreographers encountered one another while exploring the central questions raised by modernity lie at the core of her argument. Whether or not these writers and choreographers were always conscious of the impact that they had on one another, the paths of influence spun in both directions—Eliot finding inspiration in the quartet structure of Tudor’s ballet, Tudor later evoking Eliot’s poem as inspiration for his dancers—demonstrating the central place of dance in the broader modernist landscape and of literary aesthetics in the innovations of transatlantic dance modernism. *Literature, Modernism, and Dance* delineates an important emerging field in modernist studies, opening the door to future scholarly works that will continue to investigate this “reciprocal relationship” between literature and dance that, as Jones phrases it, often “constituted the very substance of discussion during the modernist period” (3).

## Thomas Boll, *Octavio Paz and T. S. Eliot: Modern Poetry and the Translation of Influence*. Legenda, 2012.

Reviewed by Whitney Williams  
Georgetown University

Along with the publication of Eliot’s letters and soon his complete prose, Eliot studies is also making exciting progress in understanding the poet’s impact outside the Anglo-American literary world. Tom Boll’s *Octavio Paz and T. S. Eliot* makes advances in an area of study recently opened up by Jahan Ramazani in his *Transnational Poetics* and Elisabeth Däumer and Shyamal Bagchee in *The International Reception of T. S. Eliot*. Mexican poet Octavio Paz represents an entire

generation of non-native English speakers who first encountered Eliot’s work in translation, and Boll extensively examines the meaning and milieu of this encounter.

In Part I, Boll focuses on the literary context in which the two poets met. In a chapter titled “Precursors and Contemporaries,” Boll explains that “Paz’s subsequent reading of modern poetic tradition, in which Eliot would enjoy a privileged place, was determined not only by the works of the Contemporáneos [a group of modernist poets who shared Eliot’s interest in French Symbolism] but by their reading of recent Mexican literary history and by the other writers who they imported through translation” (40). Boll rightly points out that Paz’s reading of Eliot was mediated not only by the literal process of translation, but also by this Mexican literary tradition, which necessarily conditioned Paz’s first encounter with the Anglo-American poet.

Boll also reminds readers that Paz’s aesthetic interests cannot be separated from his political views, providing an in-depth account of Paz’s move away from leftist politics. While this first part of Boll’s study usefully maps Paz’s wide range of influences, it regrettably comes at the cost of closely reading his poems alongside Eliot’s.

Part II follows the chronology of Paz’s poetic development and in turn his increasingly complex relationship with Eliot, who had “accompanied, intrigued, irritated, and moved the young poet” since the time of his first encounter with *The Waste Land*. Boll also highlights the importance of Eliot’s *Four Quartets* to Paz, despite the latter’s resolve against religious poetry. Here, Boll once again foregrounds Paz’s politics, arguing that his poetry had much more distinctly political aims than those of the poet he admired. Despite pointing out that *Four Quartets* represented “a combination of philosophical theme and autobiographical content” (203) for Paz, Boll loses sight of Eliot in this section, which is once again primarily interested in Paz and his contexts.

In his conclusion, Boll refers to Paz’s acceptance speech for the T. S. Eliot Prize in 1988, where he looked back to *The Waste Land* as a monumental influence on his own poetry. “That poem continues,” Paz remarked, “to be an obelisk covered in signs for me, invulnerable to the changes of taste and the vicissitudes of time” (quoted on 198). Boll complicates this poetic metaphor to investigate the ways in which the complexities of translation might impede the relationship between the two poets.

Drawing on Paz's personal papers, which feature his final remarks on Eliot, Boll concludes that the later poet's relationship to Eliot remained unresolved due in large part to their opposing religious positions.

As Boll's title suggests, his focus is on Paz, and readers interested in Eliot may find this absence disappointing. Boll accounts, especially in his introduction, for various theories of influence and translation, but he relies too infrequently on Eliot's own writings on these subjects, which eventually erodes his argument. Regardless, Boll contributes to a fascinating conversation about cross-cultural influence that will surely shape the future of Eliot Studies.

### John Worthen, *T. S. Eliot: A Short Biography*. Haus Publishing, 2009.

Reviewed by George Haynes  
University of Oxford

John Worthen is a well-respected D. H. Lawrence scholar. His previous works include *D. H. Lawrence and the Idea of the Novel* and three different biographies, the best arguably being *D. H. Lawrence: The Early Years*. To find this biography on Eliot by him is a refreshing change. On the back cover of this short biography, Worthen makes an arresting claim: "Writing about Eliot is in a more confused and contested state than is the case with any other major twentieth-century writer." The jacket review also explains how previous Eliot biographers "have attempted to turn . . . Emily Hale into the love of Eliot's middle years," that "Eliot has been blamed for the instability of his first wife," and that he has been "declared a closeted homosexual." On the contrary, Worthen's approach is "to reveal the disturbing and at times terrifying openness to moral, verbal, emotional and sexual 'actuality' which had for so long, made [Eliot] such a terribly unhappy and vulnerable individual, but which also helped him be such a very great poet" (234). Unlike Craig Raine's comparably short biography (2006), Worthen directly confronts and then dismisses assumptions about Eliot, all the while privileging the available evidence. Thus, he lines up the T. S. Eliots of previous biographers in order to shoot them down one by one, leaving his own Eliot the last man standing.

Worthen takes us from Eliot's boyhood in St. Louis, through his Harvard years, and to his decision to settle in England and the resulting rift with his father. He concentrates on Eliot's tragic first marriage to Vivien, and on his early development as poet, critic, and playwright. He argues that Vivien was crucial to Eliot's trajectory and to his poetry, allowing for the fracture between the prim young man he was trained to be and the poet of *The Waste Land*. Through a detached narrative style, and without suggesting blame, Worthen offers an impartial yet sympathetic view of Eliot's first marriage, and, at the same time, demonstrates how the darkest experiences of his life are reflected in his poetry.

If one were to take issue with any aspect of this fine book, it would be Worthen's approach to Eliot's alleged homosexuality and to charges of anti-Semitism. He says that he has no particular interest in proving whether Eliot is heterosexual, homosexual, or asexual, but his approach to the subject lacks conviction. He does have the good sense to say that, "At the heart of all the arguments I have seen for Eliot's homosexuality lies a series of fabrications, half-truths and suppositions. . . . But evidence for his homosexuality does not exist, whereas evidence for his being a troubled heterosexual exists in quantity" (140). Thus, Worthen adeptly rejects Carole Seymour-Jones's allegations of homosexuality in *Painted Shadow* (2001) simply by pointing out that "there is not actually a scrap of hard evidence for any such alliance" (138). However, the persuasiveness of style with which I associate Worthen's prose here lapses when, while putting forward other people's theories, his analysis of the subject has the ring of gossip. Worthen's attempts to mitigate Eliot's anti-Semitism likewise rebounds. It is a difficult subject to broach and needs to be dealt with sensitively. It is not enough to suggest that this accusation is merely an ugly blot on the character of an otherwise kindly and sensitive man.

The book's overall and lasting impression is that of Eliot as a man who, beneath his buttoned-up exterior, is vulnerable and, because of what he has experienced, in some ways, is a sympathetic character. The lesson that Worthen leaves us with in his biography is that whoever Eliot was remains—and will remain—a matter of opinion. But Eliot's next biographer will have the benefit of this book, where the underlying lesson is "do not speculate; keep to the evidence."

## Invitation to the T. S. Eliot International Summer School

The sixth annual Summer School will convene in Bloomsbury, at the Institute of English Studies, University of London, from 5 to 13 July 2014. Founded by Ron Schuchard, the school is now under the direction of Gail McDonald of Goldsmiths, University of London. Continuing the tradition of lectures, seminars, visits to Little Gidding, Burnt Norton, and East Coker, poetry readings, walking tours of London, and social events, the School welcomes people of all ages and nations who wish to immerse themselves in study of T. S. Eliot and his time.

The 2014 academic program features lectures and seminars by distinguished Eliot scholars from the US, Canada, and the UK, including Jewel Spears Brooker, David Chinitz, Tony Cuda, Frances Dickey, Mark Ford, Lyndall Gordon, Gail McDonald, Gabrielle McIntire, Jahan Ramazani, Tony Sharpe, Vincent Sherry, and Hannah Sullivan. Linda Gregerson, American poet and recipient of the Kingsley Tufts Award, will give a reading at a special evening event in the London Library. In addition to the academic program and trips to three locations of Eliot's *Four Quartets*, faculty and students have many opportunities for informal conversation and conviviality, at teas, lunches, and evening gatherings in the Lamb, a Bloomsbury pub.

Students of all educational and national backgrounds 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, visit the website at <http://ies.sas.ac.uk>

## Call for Papers

An international symposium on *Time and Place in T. S. Eliot and His Contemporaries* will be held from January 18 to 25, 2015, in Florence, Italy. The organizers invite proposals on T. S. Eliot and modernism including (but not limited to) the following topics:

- Evocations of time and place in Eliot's writing or that of his contemporaries
- Modernism and the uses of time, "time past," and timelessness; modernism and history

- Eliot, modernism and contemporary scientific and philosophical views on space and time
- Eliot's place in the tradition, the canon, modernism, and world literature
- Connections between England and Florence or England and Italy in the context of Eliot and his contemporaries

Proposals of 100 to 250 words or completed papers may be sent as email attachments to any of the three co-organizers: Prof. Temur Kobakhidze ([temur.kobakhidze@cantab.net](mailto:temur.kobakhidze@cantab.net)); Dr. Wim Van Mierlo ([Wim.Van-Mierlo@sas.ac.uk](mailto:Wim.Van-Mierlo@sas.ac.uk)); Dr. Stefano Maria Casella ([stefanomaria.casella@alice.it](mailto:stefanomaria.casella@alice.it)).

## Eliot Society Panels at the American Literature Association

Washington, D.C., May 22–25, 2014

### Eliot, Economics, and the Great War

Chair: Nancy K. Gish, University of Southern Maine

- "An Economic Waste Land: T. S. Eliot and John Maynard Keynes," Michael Tratner, Bryn Mawr College
- "The False Pretense of Being a Linguist: Eliot's Economy and the Poetics of Corporate Banking," Mathew Seybold, University of Alabama
- "T. S. Eliot's Great War of Inflection," Kathryn Van Wert, University of Minnesota Duluth

### Visual and Verbal: Eliot's Aesthetics

Chair: Nancy K. Gish, University of Southern Maine

- "T. S. Eliot and the Poetics of Ekphrasis: A Mis/Representation of the Other," Carol L. Yang, National Chengchi University, Taipei
- "Playing with Masks: Eliot beyond Primitivism," Michael Opest, University of Wisconsin Madison
- "T. S. Eliot and Lyric Answerability," Kinereth Meyer, Bar-Ilan University, Israel

## Publications by Members

Ronald Schuchard's *The Online Complete Prose of T. S. Eliot* will make its long-anticipated arrival this summer, beginning with Volume 1: 1906–1918, co-edited by Jewel Spears Brooker, and Volume 2: 1919–1926, co-edited by Anthony Cuda. Johns Hopkins UP expects these volumes to go live on their Project Muse website on July 1.

An article version of Ron Bush's 2009 Memorial Lecture has just been published in the November 2013 issue of *Modernism/Modernity* as "Intensity by association': T. S. Eliot's Passionate Allusions." The first end note offers "thanks to all involved on that occasion (especially David Chinitz and Vincent Sherry)."

Ian Probstein has just published a Russian translation of the *Complete Poems of T. S. Eliot*, with introduction and annotations, extending from "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" to *Four Quartets*, *Murder in the Cathedral* and Choruses from *The Rock*, with additional translations of major works by Andrei Sergeyev (1933–1998) and Victor Toporov (1946–2013).

Under the pseudonym Sehzad Ayse Uslu, Beth Ann Sweens a.k.a. Hooper has published *The Roots That Clutch*, a novel about T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, and William Carlos Williams that explores themes such as family secrets and literary scandals, as well as betrayal and poetic justice, while also questioning a number of well-known assumptions about nineteenth-century and modernist poetry.

Nancy Hargrove's essay "T. S. Eliot's Italian Trip, Summer 1911: Museums, Cathedrals, Palaces, and Landscapes" and Ron Schuchard's "T. S. Eliot and Ted Hughes: Shamanic Possession," both previously presented at the Eliot Society, were published in an Eliot cluster in the *South Atlantic Review* (76.3), which appeared in Fall 2013.

## Books of interest recommended by members

Dempsey, James. *The Tortured Life of Scofield Thayer*. Gainesville: UP of Florida, 2014.

Smart, John. *Tarantula's Web: John Hayward, T. S. Eliot, and Their Circle*. Wilby, Norwich: Russell, 2013.

## Society Notes: Congratulations

Jewel Spears Brooker will be a Senior Research Fellow at Merton College, Oxford, for Michaelmas Term, Fall 2014.

The Association for Scottish Literary Studies (ASLS) has made Nancy Gish an Honorary Fellow for her work on Hugh MacDiarmid and other Scottish poets.

Roderick B. Overaa, currently of East Tennessee State University, has accepted a position as Assistant Professor at the University of Tampa.



Copy of a drawing of Eliot from around 1938, made by Theresa Garrett Eliot, wife of his brother Henry Ware, Jr. She left the copy to Bill Harmon in her will when she died in 1981. Thanks for sharing this with us, Bill.

American Literature Association  
Boston, May 23–26, 2013

**T. S. Eliot's *Sweeney Agonistes* and Walter Benjamin's Baroque Drama**

Like most modernists, Eliot is not interested in the classics as part of an unchangeable heritage, but rather as something that needs to be reinterpreted and rewritten. He may be seen as an “unclassical” classicist (Sullivan, “Classics,” in Harding, *T. S. Eliot in Context*). I consider one instance of Eliot’s using the classics in an unclassical way: his attempts at creating a poetic drama in *Sweeney Agonistes*, in which various classical texts (Seneca, Aristophanes, Aeschylus) have a defamiliarizing function when coming into contact or clashing with the popular culture of music hall and cabaret. Eliot creates a modern tragedy through farce, parody, and the “absolute comic” (Schuchard, *Eliot's Dark Angel*), which he had caught in Léonide Massine’s “inhuman” art, relating it to Elizabethan dark humor.

Eliot’s experiment in Aristophanic melodrama may be seen as paralleling Benjamin’s theory of Baroque drama (1926), which the latter sees not as a flawed version of classical tragedy but as a different kind of drama, a *Trauerspiel*, a play of mourning, in which the tragic hero’s active role is turned into the martyr’s suffering and where action is replaced by self-reflection. Albeit with different aims, both Benjamin and Eliot focus on Hamlet; what Eliot diagnoses as a lack of “objective correlative,” Benjamin sees as an anticipation of modern allegory.

As Eliot abandoned *Sweeney Agonistes*, the classics gradually lost their defamiliarizing function, but popular art remained in the forms of limmerick, nonsense and pure sound in “Landscapes” and “Five Finger Exercises.” His experimenting with various forms of sense takes him now wholeheartedly in the direction of nonsense: Old Possum replaces Sweeney. However, Pereira, the absent-absentee landlord in *Sweeney Agonistes*, may have had a better fate than Sweeney, for he may have been taken up as an equally absent Lord in *Waiting for Godot*.

Giuliana Ferreccio  
University of Turin

Modern Language Association  
Chicago, January 9–12, 2014

**Synchronizing the Arts: T. S. Eliot and Henri Matisse**

In a letter to Herbert Read dated April 9, 1926, Eliot remarked that he was “in many ways deeply indebted” to the English art theorist Matthew Stewart Prichard, whose “sensibility to art,” he added, was “greater than that of anyone [he had] ever met.” Eliot was acquainted with Prichard from the time of his student year in France (1910–11) and, as a letter drawn from the Matisse archive in Paris confirms, it was under the auspices of Prichard that he and Jean Verdenal visited Matisse’s art studio in March 1911. Throughout this period, and in collaboration with Matisse, Prichard formulated a theory of aesthetics based on Henri Bergson’s metaphysics, which privileged Eastern art over Western representation. Measured in three dimensions and ordered by proportional geometry, Western painting was considered by Prichard and Matisse to be static and frozen in time; Byzantine decorative arts, by contrast, activated the intuitive faculties of the spectator to transcend these spatial and temporal limitations. With the unveiling of his 8 ½-foot by 12 ¾-foot decorative panels *Dance* and *Music* at the 1910 Salon d’Autome, Matisse put this theory in praxis to synchronize painting with art forms that were conventionally understood to be temporally and/or spatially progressive. Drawing extensively on Prichard’s unpublished papers, this paper begins by reconstructing his aesthetic theory, which Eliot praised in the aforementioned letter to Read as having “independent value.” It will then examine Eliot’s application of this theory in the notebook that he kept while touring through Italy in the summer of 1911 and explore the implications of this connection for his own efforts to synchronize poetry and the extraliterary arts.

John Morgenstern  
Clemson University

## Eliot, Stravinsky, and the *Rite*

Calling Stravinsky “the greatest success since Picasso,” Eliot admired the “quality of modernity” within “a pageant of primitive culture” in the composer’s celebrated ballet of 1913. Eliot wrote that Stravinsky had discovered a way to collapse historical time, “to transform the rhythm of the steppes into the scream of the motor horn, the rattle of machinery, the grind of wheels, the beating of iron and steel, the roar of the underground railway, and the other barbaric cries of modern life; and to transform these despairing noises into music.” Scholars have long recognized connections between the *Rite* and various aspects of Eliot’s writing, most especially his theorization of a “mythical method” in fiction and his blending of modernity and antiquity in *The Waste Land*. But they have seldom attempted to understand the nature of this influence in the terms that Eliot himself conceived—in sound rather than in language, in the experience of audible time rather than in the unfolding of a narrative plot. The difficulties of doing so are obvious, and it should be no surprise that musically inclined literary scholars have generally been more comfortable demonstrating Eliot’s debt to Wagnerian opera, which at least has the benefit of being quotable. Graham, however, performs a “sound studies” analysis of Eliot’s Stravinskyisms, listening closely as the *Rite* reaches the poet, informs his historical sensibility, and, thanks to Eliot’s vast influence on other writers of his generation, resounds throughout literary modernism (and antimodernism).

T. Austin Graham  
Columbia University

## Print and Performance in Eliot’s Inventions

In the title Eliot provisionally gave to his poetry notebook, *Inventions of the March Hare*, “Inventions” names the kind of work contained within . . . but what is an “invention”? Along with the sense of “original creation,” which Eliot no doubt intended, “invention” refers to a step in classical rhetoric and, in descent from this meaning, a kind of musical composition. Thinking of Eliot’s early notebook

poems as “inventions” in the rhetorical and especially the musical senses helps clarify his poetic project at the outset of his career. Eliot began writing by drawing on musical analogies to short keyboard pieces with an improvisatory aspect: not only “inventions,” but several poems in the notebook, such as the two “Interludes,” the “Preludes,” and the “Rhapsody” fit this description. This musical analogy may have enabled Eliot’s initial creative burst. A poet troubled all his life by writer’s block and a sense of belatedness, Eliot had to work against the same forces that silence the young poet in Rudyard Kipling’s “The Finest Story in the World,” which may have also contributed to Eliot’s choice of title (a line in the story gives the name to the volume where it appears, *Many Inventions*). Eliot may have temporarily avoided his disabling anxieties about originality through the use of musical strategies of invention (beginning with a simple theme and developing it through inversion and repetition in different registers and keys). The early notebook builds an aesthetic closely allied with music, especially informal, impromptu composition, as a counter to the weight of printed poetic tradition.

Frances Dickey  
University of Missouri

## Louisville Conference on Literature after 1900 Louisville, February 20–22, 2014

### “Visions and Revisions”: From Facsimile to *Four Quartets*

This paper considers how excised scenes from *The Waste Land* facsimile reappear with renewed significance in *Four Quartets* with the broader aim of analyzing Eliot’s practice of self-editing. It will argue that Eliot’s later use of these discarded references reflects a shift in his view of nature in light of his turn toward Anglo-Catholicism. For instance, the Dry Salvages first appears in the “The Fire Sermon,” as the site of a crash due to unheeding the warnings from nature. Here, nature’s function is to show a relationship between the quotidian London cityscape and the mundane routine that daily life imposes upon

## ABSTRACTS

the environment as the poet moves us from the “electric summons of the busy bell” in the morning to the “triton [that rings] the final warning bell” at night. Eliot edited these references for inclusion in *The Dry Salvages* to give greater import and recognition to the union between the natural and the spiritual. Ultimately, this paper contends that an understanding of Eliot’s practice of self-editing from *The Waste Land* to *Four Quartets* is to understand how he finally rests upon “the life of significant soil,” where he has effectively transformed his personal view of the modern world’s quotidian landscape into universal symbolism.

Jonathan Patterson  
University of Kansas

### Eliot’s Typewriter: A Study of Modern Media’s Impact on the Composition of *The Waste Land*

Did T. S. Eliot’s use of the typewriter affect his composition? Could materials such as carbon paper, file folders, and binders have had an impact on the final form of his poems? I argue that they did and that understanding this is crucial to our appreciation of both Eliot and modernism. Focusing on *The Waste*

*Land*, I show that typing serves Eliot as a distinct moment of aesthetic creation, separate from the act of manuscripting. The material rhythms of the typewriter, which Eliot describes as its “staccato” movement, actually set his writing into a different mode from that of handwriting. By contrasting handwritten works with typed ones, as well as the holographic drafts with their typewritten successors, I draw out this difference. Overall, I demonstrate a notable shift toward a more fragmentary and detached style of writing for Eliot effected through his typewriting. I extend these findings to an examination of related media, such as file folders, loose-leaf paper, and binders that accompany Eliot’s typing. These media, I show, have a similar impact on the poet’s work that involves a less linear and more deconstructed compositional process that encourages pastiche. Ultimately, my study offers important insights for the genetic criticism of Eliot’s poetry in particular and the emergence of modernist style more generally. Typewriting represents a major technological transformation in the history of writing that coincides precisely with a major upheaval in literary aesthetics represented by modernism. My study illustrates how these two (writing machine and modernism) were integrally connected.

Matthew Schilleman  
Clemson University

## ELIOT CENTENNIALS

In our chronicle of Eliot’s life 100 years ago, begun in the Summer 2013 issue, we left him vacationing in Maine. From the little we know, the rest of 1913 was relatively uneventful (he took dancing lessons in December), but in spring 1914, Eliot’s last semester at Harvard, two events occurred that were to shape his life forever.

In March and April, Bertrand Russell delivered the Lowell Lectures and conducted a seminar for graduate students including Eliot. The two impressed each other. Russell wrote to Ottoline Morrell about an annoying weekend party at the country house of Professor Benjamin Fuller and his mother, remarking that the only civilized person there was “my pupil Eliot” (*Ottoline: The Early Memoirs*, 257). For his part, Eliot described the occasion in “Mr. Apollinax.” Six months later, Eliot ran into Russell on the street in London and entered into a fateful friendship with the philosopher.

At the end of March, Eliot also was awarded a Sheldon Fellowship, consisting of \$1,000 in travel money that he planned to use for study in Marburg and Merton College, Oxford. In late June or early July, Eliot bade goodbye to his family and sailed to London, amusing himself along the way with dancing, singing, shuffleboard, ringtoss, bridge, checkers, limericks, and a pillow fight, as he chronicled to his cousin Eleanor Hinkley (*Letters I*, 43). When he arrived in London, Eliot must have quickly picked up a copy of *BLAST*, whose “bless” and “blast” commentary he imitated in a letter to Conrad Aiken. From there he traveled to Marburg via the museums of Belgium, where in Brussels he particularly appreciated Memling’s *St. Sebastian*. By July 25 he was able to send Aiken a draft of “The Love Song of St. Sebastian” (wondering if his friend found it “morbid, or forced?”) as well as some Bolo verses, concluding the letter: “We rejoice that the war danger is over” (48-49).

## ELIOT SOCIETY ELECTIONS

Anita Patterson was duly nominated for the open seat on the Eliot Society's Board of Directors, and (in the absence of other candidates) will serve a three-year term from July 1, 2014, to June 30, 2017. Congratulations and welcome to Anita!

### **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*, to pay dues, inquire about membership, or report a change of address please contact the Vice President.

To inquire about reviewing a book or having a book reviewed, please contact Society Historian and Book Review Editor John Morgenstern (jdmorgens@gmail.com).

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