

The International Merleau-Ponty Circle

December 2016 Newsletter

On September 22-24, 2016, the 41st Conference of the International Merleau-Ponty Circle was held at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ontario, CANADA. The conference theme was “Merleau-Ponty: Doing Philosophy from the Outside” and the Conference Director was Professor Rajiv Kaushik, Associate Professor of Philosophy, Brock University. Thirty presentations were delivered over the three days to an international audience of 52 registered participants hailing from Belgium, Canada, China, France, Italy, The Netherlands, Switzerland, and the United States. Keynote addresses were given by Rudolf Bernet, Husserl-Archives Center for Phenomenology and Continental Philosophy, University of Leuven, Belgium whose paper was entitled “A Portrait of the Writer as a Philosopher”; Véronique Fóti, Professor of Philosophy Emeritus, Pennsylvania State University who presented on “Strong Beauty: In Face of Structures of Exclusion”; and Edward S. Casey, Distinguished Professor of Philosophy, SUNY Stony Brook who gave a presentation entitled “Visibilizing the Invisible in Painting.” An art exhibit of Véronique Fóti’s and Ed Casey’s paintings was on display throughout the conference and provided an excellent accompaniment to their concluding Keynote Event, aptly entitled: “Between Philosophy and Painting.”

The 11th annual Martin C. Dillon Memorial Lecture, “On Being Outside the (Normate) Body: Merleau-Ponty’s Aveugle and Crip Phenomenology,” was given by Joel Michael Reynolds, Philosophy, Emory University. The M. C. Dillon lectureship is awarded annually to the best graduate student conference paper submission chosen by the conference director(s) together with the General Secretary, Associate General Secretary, and co-editors of *Chiasmi International: Trilingual Studies Concerning Merleau-Ponty's Thought*. The honorarium for the lecture is made possible through the generous contributions of Circle members to the M. C. Dillon Endowment Fund. The winning M. C. Dillon paper will be published in a forthcoming issue of *Chiasmi International*.

The conference program included a special panel on Mauro Carbone’s 2015 book: *The Flesh of Images: Merleau-Ponty Between Painting and Cinema* (SUNY Press) with presentations by Galen Johnson, University of Rhode Island; Duane H. Davis, University of North Carolina at Asheville; and Mauro Carbone (Université Jean-Moulin Lyon 3). We also held a special graduate student mentoring session focusing on the job market that was led by Don Landes, Faculté de philosophie, Université Laval; Jennifer M. McWeeny, Department of Humanities and Arts, Worcester Polytechnic Institute; David Morris, Department of Philosophy, Concordia University; and Ann Murphy, University of New Mexico. Based on the success of this inaugural event (there were over 30 participants), we anticipate that graduate student mentoring sessions will become a regular feature of our future Merleau-Ponty Circle conferences.

Rajiv Kaushik was an extremely attentive and gracious host who put together an outstanding program that was held in the new FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre in St. Catharines. His patience and kindness were much appreciated by all participants. He did a wonderful job of

guiding us through three stimulating days of conference presentations, fully embodying the genuine warmth and collegiality that has always distinguished each of the annual International Merleau-Ponty Circle conferences.

Conference participants enjoyed a lovely opening night reception at the FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre as well as a delicious final banquet at the Ravine Vineyards Estate Winery. A book display of recent Merleau-Ponty-related publications was included in the art exhibit, featuring the work of several conference participants.

On behalf of this year's participants, we would like to express our deepest gratitude to Prof. Kaushik, his colleagues, student volunteers, University administrators, and the following institutes, schools, departments and offices who made this year's conference possible: The Marilyn W. Walker School of Fine and Performing Arts, FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, SSRHC Institutional Grant, Brock Humanities Research Institute, the Brock U. Department of Philosophy, The Office of the Vice-President of Research at Brock, the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies at Brock, and the Faculty of Humanities at Brock.

At the business luncheon, Ann Murphy presented important information regarding the 42nd conference to be held at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque on November 2-4, 2017. The theme of the conference will be "The Significance of Place," taking its inspiration from both Merleau-Ponty's own work and the magnificent Southwestern setting for the conference. Keynote speakers will be: Rosalyn Diprose, University of New South Wales, Australia and Gayle Salamon, Princeton University, USA. Paper submissions directly pertinent to the conference theme are particularly encouraged, but papers on any area of current research in Merleau-Ponty studies will be considered for inclusion on the program. Completed papers will be given strong priority. The deadline for paper and panel submissions is June 15, 2017. Paper submissions are limited to a maximum of 4,500 words/30 minutes reading time. Please format papers for anonymous review and send with a cover letter to conference director Ann Murphy, at mpcircle2017@gmail.com. Additional inquiries regarding the 2017 conference should be directed to Ann at this same address.

The membership also voted to accept a pending invitation from Talia Welsh to host the 43rd conference of the Circle in September 2018 at the University of Tennessee, Chattanooga. A formal letter of invitation from the Vice-Provost for Research is on its way and we will share more details about the 2018 conference as soon as they become available. Several of our members have indicated strong interest in hosting future conferences and we encourage potential conference organizers to contact the General Secretary, Gail Weiss (gweiss@gwu.edu), or Associate General Secretary, David Morris (David.Morris@concordia.ca), as soon as possible to solidify their plans.

NEW INTERNATIONAL MERLEAU-PONTY CIRCLE WEBSITE AND FACEBOOK PAGE TO BE LAUNCHED IN EARLY 2017: One of the most important developments at our fall business meeting was the membership's approval to move our official website from its longtime home at the University of Rhode Island, under the able stewardship of former General Secretary Galen Johnson, to a new WordPress site that is being set up by our newly elected IMPC

Webmaster, Rawb Leon-Carlyle of Penn State U. We are very grateful to Galen for hosting the Circle website for the past decade and to Rawb for volunteering to migrate the site to WordPress. The new site should be up and running by February 1, 2017 and will most likely be located under the url: **merleauponty.org** (we will update you via email if the address turns out to be different). The new website will offer a permanent home for Circle members to receive Merleau-Ponty-related news and announcements and it will provide an easy way to donate to the M.C. Dillon Fund online. We are also indebted to Timothy Isley who has agreed to set up an official **International Merleau-Ponty Circle Facebook** page which he is hoping to launch by January 1, 2017. Please visit both sites often once they are up and running. Since the International Merleau-Ponty Circle Facebook page will be ready first, we encourage you to join the group (and like our posts!) starting in early January. An announcement about when the WordPress site is being launched will appear on our Facebook page along with links to the current URI site and to previous and future conference programs. If you have Merleau-Ponty photos, special quotes, or IMPC conference photos that you would like to see posted on either site, please contact Rawb at mrleoncarlyle@gmail.com or Tim at salzedofan@gmail.com with your suggestions.

As well, there was discussion of the Open Commons of Phenomenology, an online project that seeks to make primary texts and scholarship in phenomenology accessible worldwide, through an open access model. This project had contacted David Morris to ask whether the IMPC would be interested in becoming involved with the Merleau-Ponty pages on this site. After discussion the membership agreed that the IMPC should become involved, and Morris will get back to the OCP with this result to follow up.

We hope you are as excited about these new developments as we are! We also hope you consider submitting a paper (or volunteer to moderate a session) for the 2017 conference at the University of New Mexico and/or the 2018 conference at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga.

We owe a special debt of gratitude to Galen Johnson for his wise leadership and counsel as we transitioned to our new positions as General Secretary and Associate General Secretary over the past year. We couldn't have done it without him or without you!

Happy Holidays and Happy New Year,

Gail Weiss, General Secretary

David Morris, Associate General Secretary