

Activities of the English Literature Association 2019-20.

Certificate Course



- 30 hour course on Gender Studies (July – September 2019). Included a collaboration with Sophia College on ‘Gender and Fandom’ with Dr. Rukmini Pande, Associate Professor, O.P. Jindal University, author of *Squee From the Margins* (2019).

Guest Lectures

- **13 June 2019, SYBA and TYBA:** ‘Applying for a B.Ed’, Olivia Lobo and Carren Lopes
- **2 August 2020, TYBA:** Screening of *The Battle of Bhima Koregaon* (2017) and talk with filmmaker Somnath Waghmare, TISS.
- **5 August 2019, SYBA:** ‘Curating History and Institutional Power,’ Janine Coelho, Department of History.



- **20 August 2019, TYBA:** Author talk with Dr. Suraj Yengde, postdoctoral fellow at the Initiative for Institutional Anti-racism and Accountability, Shorenstein Center on Media, Politics and Public Policy at the Harvard Kennedy School on *Caste Matters* (2019)
- **29 August 2019, SYBA:** ‘An introduction to American History and Literature through an Economic lens’, Dr. Kashmira Mody, Department of Economics
- **19 November 2019, FYBA:** ‘Communicating through Rap’ by Brandon Ferreira
- **12 December 2019, TYBA:** ‘History of The Dalit Panthers’ by Shrujana Niranjani Sridhar, archivist of the Dalit Panthers Project
- **20 December 2019, TYBA:** ‘Munda Adivasi Literatures and Cultures’ by Christopher Nag, TISS.
- **13 January 2020, FYBA A:** Author talk with Shals Mahajan on Contemporary Children’s Literature [co-organised with the Library Department]
- **17 January 2020, FYBA B:** Author talk with St. Andrew’s Alumnus Akash Rathod, *Ice Town* (2019)
- **21 January 2020, FYBCOM:** ‘Business Ethics’ by Dr. Tarun Agarwal, Professor at Parasarampuria School of Business Management, Pune.

- **22 January 2020, FYBA:** ‘Writing and Publishing Poetry’, TYBA Eng-Psy student Ashmi Sheth, *Silence Echoed: Poetries That Heal* (2019).

English Literature Week



- Debate (12 December 2019)
- Spellbee (13 December 2019)
- Creative Writing (16 December 2019)
- Slam Poetry and Cosplay (17 December 2019)
- Film Week with the theme ‘Horror as Social Commentary’: *The Devil’s Backbone* (3 December 2019), *Get Out* (4 December 2019), and *Stree* (5 December 2019)

Additional Activities

- **Book Club Readings and Discussions:** *Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe* by Benjamin Alire Saénz,

Maybe Someday by Colleen Hoover, *Saving Zoe* by Alyson Noel, *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee, and various short stories.

- **Film Club Screenings and Discussions:** *Ginger Snaps* (27 July 2019), *My Neighbour Totoro* (15 January 2020)

Activities of the English Literature Association 2018-19.

Syllabus Revision Workshop

The Department along with the Board of Studies in English, organized a workshop on the revision of the TYBA English Syllabus on 26 June 2018, which was inaugurated by Dr. Shivaji Sargar, the Head of the English Department at the University of Mumbai.

Guest Lectures

- Dr Shirly George from the Sociology Department gave a lecture on collective action and social protest (27 June 2018).
- Documentary filmmaker Somnath Waghmare returned this year to screen *The Battle of Bhima Koregaon* (2017) and led a discussion of film, contemporary political protest through celebration, and resistance for TYBA (single major) students (31 July 2018).
- Sunil Yadav (BMC and TISS) and Vishal Thakore (TISS) delivered two guest lectures on 'Manual Scavenging, Labour Hierarchies, and Caste;' the same research will be part of a presentation they have been invited to give at the United Nations Conference on Human Rights (4 & 10 August 2018).
- Professor Bodhi from TISS provided a broad introduction to Tribal cultures to the TYBA (single major) students (29 September 2018), providing contextual background to non-caste societies within India.
- Rachelle Bharati Chandran engaged the students with issues of 'Mental Health and Marginalised Communities' for the SYBA and TYBA (single major) English and Psychology students (10 October 2018), discussing non-binary identities, caste, and mental health issues.
- Leena Bhattacharya's, a doctoral student at IGIDR, lecture was on 'Seasonal Migration and Child Rights' for TYBA (single major) English and Sociology students (8 February 2019).
- Actress and stand-up comic Pooja Ruparel's presentation was confidence, audio books, and the Indian media industry for FYBA English and Sociology students (16 February 2019).
- Ex-students Olivia Lobo and Eldrita Godinho provided the English and History students of the FYBA, SYBA, and TYBA classes information on 'Applying for a B.Ed degree' (21 February 2019).

Research and Field Trips

- Two students were part of a trip to TISS, Mumbai for research discussions on 'Discrimination, Gender, and Sexuality' (27-29 June 2018).
- A trip was conducted for TYBA English and Sociology single majors to Pune's Kelkar and Tribal Museums, with a discussion on nationalisms, museum curation, and history.
- Three SYBA students attended the seminar of the Tribal/ Adivasi Women's Collective at TISS, Mumbai as part of the department's activities.
- Nine TYBA single majors attended a seminar titled 'So Many Feminisms' at Godrej Culture Lab (16 February 2019) and held a class discussion and review regarding their experience of the event.

Film Screening

- The TYBA single major students attended an early screening of Pa Ranjith's *Kaala* (2018) at Gem Cinema, and then had a discussion on caste, film, and Indian socioeconomic infrastructure (24 June 2018).
- A combined screening of *Nanette* (2018) was held with the Sociology students, which was followed by a discussion on intersectional and queer-friendly feminism as protest for the TYBA (single major) students (29 June 2018).
- A trip was organized for the SYBA and TYBA English and History students to Dosti House at The American Centre for a screening of the documentaries 'Emancipation Road(2014)' and 'Fly Girls' (1999), followed by discussion (with American Diplomat, CAO James Fennel) on 'Black Feminism and Civil Rights Activism' (28 August 2018).
- A recording of the stage musical, *Piya Behrupiya* (2017), a Hindi adaptation of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, was screened for FYBA English students (17 December 2018).

Film Week

The theme for this year's film week was '(Re)Considering Superheroes'.

The following films were screened:

- The South Korean film, *The Silenced* (2015),
 - The mockumentary *Big Man Japan* (2007),
 - The recent African- American blockbuster *Black Panther* (2018),
- These were followed by student discussions (11-15 December 2018).

Film Club

The English Department launched a Film Club this year with 15 regular members. Screenings have included:

- The U.S. pop-medieval film, *A Knight's Tale* (2001) for discussions on

constructions of history, cross-cultural adaptations, and soundtrack (20 February 2018);

- The Saudi Arabian drama *Wadjda* (2012) for discussions of neorealism, gender, and cinematography (25 February 2018);
- The German silent film *Hamlet* (1921) with a female Hamlet, allowing for a discussion of tinted film, queer theory, and adaptation studies (28 February 2018).

Literary Week began on 18th February 2019

- Flash Fiction being its first event.
- Slam Poetry which was held on 18th February in the A.V room had a total of 5 participants who performed their personal pieces highlighting their lives or social situations they face. This gave us a broad understanding of their individual perspective.
- Day three of Lit week, through Cosplay LitCon breathed life into characters of fiction. We had three rounds, each flaunting a side of the participants and their ability to stay in character. The event's first round, with 4 participants, was 'Guess What' followed by the monologue round and finally improv games. Armed with wit and quick thinking they battled it out till it came down to the winner, Pranita Sawant from FYBA, answering the question "Sabse Lit Con".
- JAM - Just A Minute - took off on 20th February in the A.V. Room. The game had three rounds with 16 in-house participants. The intensity had everyone on their toes and the adlibs brought on loads of laughter.

Andrean Book Club

Reading books is a hobby that is done in solitude. This is why this club was founded for complete bookworms to socialize and talk about what they love doing...that is, Reading books. The Andrean book club of this academic year began during the pleasant weather of August, and the first session was attended by about 20 first-year students from different streams of our college. Every week, a new book was decided that members all would read and discuss in the next session. Several books were explored in the span of 12 sessions such as classics like

- "Little Women" by Louisa May Alcott
- "Around the World in Eighty Days," by Jules Verne
- Modern-day favorites like "Let it Snow" by John Green, Lauren Myracle, and Maureen Johnson and
- "To all the Boys I've Loved Before," by Jenny Han
- "Othello" by Shakespeare and

- A book on the lives of black domestics, “The Help” by Kathryn Stockett.

ELAN Department Newsletter

It was published in April. It had a good collection of book reviews and creative writing contributed by Literature students of all the three years.

Activities of the English Literature Association 2017-18

Guest Lectures:

- Dr. E. Charlotte Stevens, (PhD, University of Warwick), Lecturer at Birmingham City University, delivered a lecture on 'German Expressionism' on 31 August 2017.
- Tanzanian novelist and Booker Prize short-listed author of *Paradise*, from the University of Kent, Prof. Abdulrazak Gurnah, spoke to our third year students on Travel Narratives: *Indian Ocean Journeys, Europe's Encounter with the World and the Need to Describe it* on 21 November 2017.
- Author Nim Gholkar, who had visited us two years ago to talk about her debut novel, *The Diary of an Immigrant Bride*, introduced students to the secrets of success in her talk about her second book '*Unlock the Real You*' on 11 January 2018.
- Ms. Mona Mohan, IL&FS, furnished the FYB.Com students with the nuances of 'Corporate Communication' on 16 January 2018.

Historical Walk:

- The third year literature students participated in a historical walk around the Fort region of Mumbai, titled 'Mumbai in Fact and Fiction*'. The walk, conducted on 28 February 2018 by Alisha Sadikot (owner and facilitator of the *In Heritage Project*), gave students a chance to learn more about the historical and sociopolitical development of the city and its consequent effects on literature, both local and international.

Film Screening and Theatre

- Second and third year literature students attended a screening of *Hidden Figures* at the American Centre, after which a discussion was conducted about African- American history and its presence in the media on 26 February 2018.
- First year literature students also attended a Theatre Evening' at St. Andrew's auditorium on 3 February, and watched 'Woman on Trial'.

Film Week

The theme chosen was 'Live-Action and Animation as Creation and Interruption of Realism' (11 - 13 January 2018).

The films screened were

- *Waltz With Bashir* (2008),
- *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?* (1998), and
- *The Legend of Tarzan*, (2016).

Literature Week (15-20 January 2018)

- Spell Bee,
- Taboo,
- Scrabble,
- Turncoat,
- Flash Fiction,
- Slam Poetry- The contest that was initiated this year was particularly heartening for the refreshingly honest, potent, and moving pieces performed by our students.
- JAM, and
- Treasure Hunt.

ELAN Department Newsletter

The newsletter ELAN, which was released in March 2018.

Activities of the English Literature Association 2016-17

Guest Lectures:

- Dr. Shefali Shah, (ex-HOD, Department of English, St. Xavier's College), addressed the students on 'Conflict Writing' (3 August) under the aegis of Tata Literature Live. Dr. Shah introduced our students to various writers, from India and across the world, who had used literature as a means of drawing attention to the wide range of conflicts that had afflicted their lives and adversely affected the world at large.
- F.Y.B.A. students got an opportunity to interact with Amin Sheikh, author of 'Bombay Mumbai Life is Life: I am because of You' on 11 August. Sheikh captivated the class with his heart-wrenching but inspirational story about his rise from a run-away street child to a writer, a motivational speaker, and owner of the unique library café, 'From Bombay to Barcelona' which was inaugurated on 15 August 2016. He urged the students to remain humble and grounded, and never to take their privileges and comforts for granted.

- On 18 August, students got another opportunity to motivate themselves to aim high when ex-student Leandro Dysilva made time to visit his alma mater and deliver a talk on 'Leadership'. He enlightened students on the traits that made for successful leaders, and also shared his own struggle in the years after graduation until his successful stint at Harvard a few years later. Earlier in the month, students also attended a poetry reading by diasporic poet Darius Cooper at National College, Bandra West (5 August).

Film Week

The films selected were based on the lives of the writers and for their potential to enable students to realize how writers who suffered intensely not only struggled to deal with their pain but succeeded in converting their frustration and angst into great writing.

- *Capote*, was based on the real-life story of journalist Truman Capote's complex relationship with a murderer he befriended in order to write a book he later called 'In Cold Blood'.
- *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly*, was a moving film about the real-life story of the French editor of Elle magazine, Jean-Dominique Bauby, depicting his agony after he was left completely immobile after a stroke. Able only to move his left eye, he still managed to communicate his thoughts and feelings, and publish his memoir.
- *Sylvia*, was based on the tragic life of renowned American confessional poet Sylvia Plath who succumbed to her depression, and frustration with her marriage to the famous poet Ted Hughes, finally ending her life by gassing herself in the kitchen.

Literature Week

The enthusiasm of our students, particularly those from the first year, saw a successful week of exciting events.

Drama

F.Y.B.A. students put up a short performance of Shakespeare's **Twelfth Night** on the first day of the Literature Week.

Other events included:

- Treasure Hunt
- Scrabble,
- Turncoat,
- Taboo and
- Lampoon

ELAN Department Newsletter

Our newsletter ELAN also saw the light of day in February. From short stories to poems to short articles on writers, the newsletter had it all.

The English Literary Association Activities 2015-16

Our activities for the year kick-started with a workshop on Flash Fiction conducted by Dr. Shefali Shah (Retd HOD, Dept, of English, St. Xavier's College, Mumbai) on 2nd July. The workshop, organised under the aegis of Literature Live, introduced students to the little-known genre of 'Flash Fiction' and helped them understand the importance of economy of expression and brevity as desirable traits in fiction. Later in the month, TYBA students attended a guest lecture at Rizvi College on 'American Formalism' conducted by Ms. Priya Joseph (Dept, of English, Mithibai College) on 27 July. On 9 August, our students attended a performance of 'Merchant of Venice' staged at St. Andrew's auditorium.

We were extremely fortunate to have Sampurna Chatterjee, poet and translator, read out her poems and share experiences related to those poems on 29 August. It's always a wonderful experience for students to get an opportunity to interact with a 'real', 'live' poet, and find out more about what it takes to be a professional, full-time poet in India. Another golden opportunity to meet an author came our way through Ms. Reena Agarwal of Literature Live, and on 8 September we were able to host debut novelist Nim Gholkar, author of ^M'The Diary of an Immigrant Bride'. Born in a Maharashtrian community in Mumbai and currently settled in Australia, Nim Gholkar shared her struggle to manage three children, and a full-time job in the marketing department of a pharmaceutical company with the daunting task of writing a full-length novel. The vivacious author kept a room full of students engaged with her witty anecdotes about Australia, and a reading of excerpts from her novel, and even succeeded in selling a good number of copies of her novel, which she patiently signed while chatting with students who wanted to know more about her life and her book.

Our endeavour to widen the scope of learning beyond the confines of the classroom continued in the subsequent months. On 12 December, Sooraj Bishnoi, a postgraduate student, blessed with abundant talent in music and the art of storytelling, conducted an exciting, interactive workshop with student participants, making them construct a story by contributing bits and pieces related to pictures each of them had been given. He then read out the hilarious and whacky story in his inimitable style to a highly amused audience!

The annual film week, based on the theme of children's cinema in India was

conducted in December and screened iconic films like 'Makdee' and 'I am Kalam'. Yet another annual event, our eagerly-awaited Literary Fest, was conducted in January. Thanks to a dedicated organising team, particularly to students like Shalini Mitra, Kelly Waller, Kristianne Mascarenhas and Manuella De Rosario, all our events saw enthusiastic participation in events like the Spell Bee (25 January), the Literature Quiz (29 January), Twisted Tales (28 January), and last but not the least, the Treasure Hunt (5 January).

Our students attended a number of workshops in the months of January and February. A workshop on 'News Media' at St. Paul's Institute of Media Studies, Bandra, and a workshop on 'Corporate Social Responsibility' was attended in January 2016. TYBA students also attended a panel discussion on 'The Case for Reparations' by Tia Nehisi Coates at the US Consulate on 26 February 2016. The panel discussed racism in contemporary America, and drew parallels with the issue of reservation in India, in the light of which, the participants deliberated on the need for reparations with regard to these issues. Activities for the year concluded with a guest lecture (in association with K.C. College) by Dr. Shefali Shah, and a guest lecture (in association with Wilson College) by Dr. Sheerin Vakil on 'Film and Literature', for TYBA students in February 2016.