

ATA Literary Division Annual Meeting
Denver, Colorado
Oct. 28, 2010
Minutes

About 25 of the division's 2,347 members attended the 2010 meeting, held during the ATA's 51st annual conference in Denver.

Division administrator Emilia Balke began the meeting with a recap of the division's activities in the past year, during which the primary focus has been on information and education:

- This year's ATA conference included the 12th annual Marilyn Gaddis Rose lecture, seven other sessions on literary translation and two special events showcasing literary translators' works, Book Splash and the After Hours Café.

The division newsletter, *The Source*, continues to be published quarterly. Michele Aynesworth, Tony Beckwith, Diane Goullard Parlante, Jamie Padula, Fernando Sorrentino, Bardig Kouyoumdjian, Christine Simeone, Casey Butterfield, Liliana Valenzuela, Rashid Hasan, Betty De Shong Meador, Ann Cefola, Nancy Arbuthnot, Clare Sullivan, Erik Camayd-Freixas were recognized for their work. Future contributions are welcome! To submit an article, contact editor Michele Aynesworth (michele@mckayaynesworth.com).

- In addition, a listserv has been set up to help division members communicate with one another. All members are encouraged to participate in discussions and share ideas with your fellow translators.

In November, members will be asked to complete a brief online survey designed to find out who we are and what our needs consist of. The results will help shape a number of networking initiatives planned for 2011.

These include:

- Continuing to develop the resources page on the division's website
- Creating a directory of literary translation groups on the local level
- Creating a calendar of events related to literary translation around the U.S. and the world
- Compiling a list of journals that publish literature in translation
- Setting up a mentoring program to connect emerging and experienced literary translators.

The division is also seeking volunteers for two committees, one to nominate a new division administrator, and one to select speakers and topics for next year's ATA conference. If you would like to serve on either of these committees, or if you have suggestions on either topic, please contact Emilia Balke (ebalke@language-web.net).

The second half of the meeting was devoted to a panel discussion featuring three translators of literature:

- Lois Feuerle (German-English)
- Margaret Sayers Peden (Spanish-English)
- Marian Schwartz (Russian-English)

Among the subjects covered were the roles of various professional organizations, awards and opportunities for publication, and the relationship between literary translators and agents:

In the U.S. at present there are three national associations for literary translators, which serve overlapping sectors of the profession.

- The PEN Translation Committee has drawn up a model contract for translators and successfully lobbied the Library of Congress to provide independent listings for translators. It sponsors World Voices, an annual festival of international literature, and publishes a directory of translators. Because

membership requires publication of at least two book-length translations, PEN members are very well established translators.

- The American Literary Translators Association (ALTA) holds numerous conferences, readings and other events, and counts passionate literary translators of all levels among its members. Most, but not all, are academics.
- Because ATA welcomes translators from all fields, Literary Division members are not only translators specializing in literary translation but also beginning literary translators and translators who do some literary work on the side.

There are also numerous state and local groups across the country, which vary widely in their structures, activities and membership. One of the most active is the Literary Special Interest Group (LitSIG) of the Austin Area Translators and Interpreters Association. LitSIG holds bimonthly translation labs for members to discuss their current projects, it has published an anthology of members' work, and it is currently planning a book release event to publicize a forthcoming translation.

The ATA offers two awards for literary translations. The Lewis Galantière Award, for a book-length translation into English from any language except German, is offered in even-numbered years. The Ungar German Translation Award, for book-length translations from German, is offered in odd-numbered years. To be eligible for either award, a book must have been published in the U.S. in the past two years; it must list the translator's name on the title page and cover, it must be nominated by the publisher, and the translator must be an American or have a "strong connection with the U.S." Each award consists of \$1,000, plus up to \$500 toward expenses for attending the next ATA conference. This year there were 40 nominations from 13 languages for the Galantière Award; the ATA's Honors & Awards Committee is currently seeking German readers to evaluate nominations for the Ungar Award.

Perhaps the best way for beginning literary translators to get published is to submit work to magazines, but which magazines to submit to? There are a number of journals dedicated to literary translation, such as *Metamorphoses*, *Two Lines* and the online journal *Words Without Borders*. However, literary journals—*Absinthe*, *The Iowa Review*, *The Literary Review*, *Subtropics* and many more—publish translations as well (and often pay more than translation journals do). A good way to find magazines is simply to go to your local library or bookstore and look for ones you like.

Only one of our three panelists, Marian Schwartz, has an agent, and she briefly described their informal arrangement for us: He makes connections with publishers for her, negotiates the contracts for all of her book-length works and makes sure she gets paid, and in return he takes 15 percent of her fee. However, the majority of literary translators do not work with agents, though some benefit from relationships with the agents of the authors they translate (who recommend them to publishers).

Meeting Secretary: Patrick Hubenthal.