Dear ESRT Members,

Thank you to all ESRT members who participated in our recent election. The results are in and I am happy to share them with you:

**Vice-President / President Elect:**
Izabela Bozek,  
Brooklyn Public Library

**Secretary:**
Louis Muñoz,  
Brooklyn Public Library

**Members at Large:**
Michael Brice,  
Queens Library

Susan Gitman,  
The New York Public Library

Irina Kuharets,  
The New York Public Library

The following members will continue in their roles for the 2008-2009 year:

**President**
Galina Chernykh,  
The New York Public Library

**Treasurer:**
Fred Gitner,  
Queens Library

On Thursday, November 6th at 6 pm, Galina Chernykh from The New York Public Library will become president and I will assume my new role as Immediate Past President.

In this issue, we have included information about all of ESRT’s NYLA Conference programs. I hope to see you at some or all of them.

All of the programs we present are supported by you, our members.

Finally, I would like to thank you for continuing to support Ethnic Services through your membership and time. We couldn’t do it without you!

Sincerely,
Alla Makeeva-Roylance  
*ESRT President*

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ESRT CONFERENCE PROGRAMS: A Handy Guide!

Thursday, November 6th
Libraries Pave the Road to Citizenship
Time Slot: 2:30-3:45 pm
Place: Courtyard by Marriott, Yaddo

Learn about innovative ways your library can help users become citizens and help them acculturate to life in the United States. Programs, services, collections, web content, outreach and networking all play a role in meeting the needs of this large user group, and in educating the recipient community about the new immigrant groups in the community. Learn about what has been done at the Hartford Public Library and other exemplary programs around the country. The new Civics and Citizenship Toolkit for Libraries will be demonstrated and practical uses of it discussed.

Speakers:
Homa Naficy, Hartford Public Library
Carlos Munoz-Acevedo, Office of Citizenship and Immigration
Norma V. Menard, Literacy Volunteers of Clinton County
Elaine Giardino, Literacy Volunteers of Westchester and Rockland Counties

ESRT Membership Meeting
Time Slot: 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM
Place: Saratoga Hilton, Travers

Both ESRT members and those who are interested in learning more about this roundtable are invited.

Friday, November 7th
NYLA’s 2nd Annual Diversity Fair
Sponsored by DEMCO
Time Slot: 9:30-10:30 am
Place: Exhibit Floor

This event is intended to spotlight services to diverse communities, multicultural and multilingual programs, activities and initiatives. Librarians and library staff will share their experiences and resources through poster presentations and informal conversations. Come to network with colleagues, share strategies for serving underserved populations and become inspired to create and sustain literacy and outreach services at your library. This event is made possible thanks to the generous sponsorship of DEMCO. Refreshments will be served, including donuts and teas from around the world (teas courtesy of NYLA ESRT).

Libraries in Developing Countries: The Challenge and Opportunities
Time Slot: 10:30-11:45 am
Place: Saratoga Hilton, Broadway 2

Libraries are an essential component of global democracy. Efforts to aid libraries abroad can benefit everyone. Topics of discussion will include: fostering literacy and democracy in the third world, financial and human resource needs, and the individual librarian’s role.

Speakers:
Jane Mirandette, The Hester J. Hodgdon Libraries for All Program
Louis Muñoz, Brooklyn Public Library

Who Are the Sikhs? Why Do We Need to Know?
Co-sponsored by ESRT and FILM
Time Slot: 2:30-4:30 pm
Place: Courtyard by Marriott, Schuyler

In the aftermath of the tragedies of 9/11, members of the Sikh community have been targeted for discrimination, hate, and violence. A basic understanding of culture and traditions may help prevent future misunderstandings and acts of intolerance. Watch a short documentary introduced by the filmmaker, Kevin Lee. Learn what libraries can do for proactive public education.

Speakers:
Kevin Lee, Independent Filmmaker
Manbeena Kaur, Sikh Coalition
150th anniversary of the birth of Joseph Conrad
By Izabela Bozek

Last year marked the 150 anniversary of the birth of Joseph Conrad (1857-1924), Polish born British writer. Indeed, UNESCO proclaimed 2007 as the Year of Conrad in a tribute to one of the greatest writers of English language.

Joseph Conrad, or Józef Teodor Konrad Korzeniowski, was born in Berdycziw (now Ukraine) to a Polish noble family. His parents, ardent Polish patriots, active in the 1863 insurrection against Russia, were sentenced to exile. Conrad’s mother soon died of illness inflicted by the hardships of an exiled life. His father, although granted permission to return to Poland, was not able to conquer his deep depression and died soon after he and his twelve year old son returned to Warsaw. Joseph’s maternal uncle, Tadeusz Bobrowski, became his legal guardian, supervised his education, and finally supported the young man’s dream to search for his fortune at sea. At the age of seventeen, Joseph Conrad left Warsaw and went to maritime school in Marseilles. After four years of study he became a sailor and in 1878 landed for the first time on English soil. He barely spoke English, but for the next fifteen years the service on English ships took him, “Polish Joe” as he was called, all over the world and filled him with unforgettable images and profound experiences that he later so skillfully used in his writings. In 1890 he took command of a steamboat on the river Congo, a job that led him up river to the rescue of a Belgian company agent and became a trip of mythic proportions so memorably recorded in one of the most famous Conrad’s works, Heart of Darkness.

After his draining African adventure, Conrad devoted himself to writing and settled in the southeast part of England. He published his first book, Almayer’s Folly, in 1895. With this first title he adopted the pen name of Joseph Conrad, realizing that his Polish name would be impossible to pronounce by his English readers. His health was deteriorating and his writings did not bring enough income to support his family of four, but by 1910, after he had written his best works, he was awarded a civil pension and his welfare became relatively secure. The list of his works can be found on the Joseph Conrad Society website: http://www.josephconradsociety.org/index.htm.

The whole body of his works includes 13 novels, volumes of memoirs, and twenty eight short stories. Many of them were adapted as plays or made into movies. In the first period of his literary career he freely drew rich and colorful material from his eventful life as a sailor. His most famous novel, Lord Jim, tells the story of a young officer of the ill fated Patna, a ship abandoned by its crew although the eight hundred pilgrims were left on board to drown. Jim has to deal with an enormous sense of guilt and justify his existence for the rest of his life. Probably the best known Conrad masterpiece, read in high schools across the country, is Heart of Darkness. It tells the story of Marlow, a river steamboat captain, who during his trip up the Congo discovers the horrors of brutal colonial exploitation at the turn of the century in Africa and mercilessly exposes the hypocrisy of European ideals of progress and morality. In Typhoon, Conrad examines in a profound way human attitudes in a face of natural disaster. Later in his life he turned to more political subjects with settings in London like in The Secret Agent, or Geneva like in Under Western Eyes or in imaginary towns like Sulaco somewhere in South Africa in the novel Nostromo. In these novels he considers the situation of individuals faced with difficult moral choices that cannot be avoided and that leave the protagonists unsatisfied and burdened. The themes of personal responsibility, duty, integrity, morality, heroism, courage, social justice, alienation, with all their complexity appear in every Conrad work. The close reading of his works leaves the reader richer, wiser and with a deeper understanding of the human condition.
Literary societies and libraries celebrated the anniversary with conferences devoted to Conrad’s writings and life, exhibits of his work and documents from his life, readings, films festivals (many of Conrad’s works were turned into movies), etc. Many of those events took place in Poland: still available on the web is an exhibit from The Adam Mickiewicz Museum of Literature: <http://www.culture.pl/en/culture/artykuly/wy_wy_conrad_literatury_warszawa>.

Germany Starts Here – a German Library in New York
By Brigitte Doellgast
Library Director / Regional Coordinator
Goethe-Institut

When we decided to print new brochures for our library in 2007, we looked for a phrase to sum it all up and decided on “Germany starts here”. This maybe a bit of an exaggeration, but the message is clear and simple: if you need any kind of information regarding Germany, the library of the Goethe-Institut is the perfect place to start!

In case you are not familiar with the Goethe-Institut, here are a few general facts: The Goethe-Institut is the Federal Republic of Germany’s cultural institution operational worldwide. We promote the study of German abroad and encourage international cultural exchange. We also foster knowledge about Germany by providing information on its culture, society and politics - a task for which our libraries are well equipped. There are 129 Goethe-Institutes in 82 countries, of which 93 have a library. Additionally, there are over 70 reading rooms that the Goethe-Institut runs in collaboration with local libraries. You can find all this information and much more on our central website: <www.goethe.de>.

In the United States, there are six Goethe-Instituts (Boston, New York, Washington, Chicago, San Francisco, Los Angeles). The Goethe-Institut New York <www.goethe.de/newyork> has been at its present location since 1960. We offer a broad variety of cultural events each year, such as films, lectures, and concerts. Contrary to most Goethe-Instituts, we do not conduct language courses on our premises, but refer people interested in learning German to the Deutsches Haus at New York University. Our colleagues from the language department are nevertheless busy supporting teachers of German with a variety of programs. The Goethe-Institut New York is the only Institut in the United States which still houses a library. For many years, our clientele consisted of emigrants who came here in the 1930s and found in our library their connection to German literature. Over the last years, this clientele slowly has passed away and we now also try to address a younger audience of Americans interested in German language and culture. We have developed initiatives to reach out to university and college students who study German. At the same time, we have expanded our art book collection and promote it to our colleagues on Museum Mile. We also started an initiative to work more closely with other European libraries in the city, resulting in the highly successful European Book Club <www.europeanbookclub.org>. Our library holds approximately 12,000 media with a strong focus on contemporary German literature, art and film (with an extensive collection of DVDs). We are open to the public, and for a reasonable $10 ($5 for students and seniors) membership fee you receive borrowing privileges for a year. Even if you do not live in NYC you can become a member and we will mail material to you. The holdings of the Goethe-Institut Library are incorporated in OCLC and we are a part of the METRO system. You can make information and reference inquiries via e-mail <library@newyork.goethe.org> or by calling our toll free number: 1-877-GOETHE1.

As do many other libraries, we organize literary events. We participate in the PEN World Voices Festival, which takes place each year in April, and each fall we organize an event called New Literature from Europe
with four other cultural institutes. Together with our colleagues from Austria and Switzerland we have begun a series of readings under the title “Between the Lines”. We also support the translation of German books into English and assist American libraries with recommendations of interesting new German titles via our web project, <www.goethe.de/showcase>. Want to know what’s going on in other parts of the US with regard to German literature? Check: <www.goethe.de/currentwriting>.

In addition to these activities, the library and information department of the Goethe-Institut has focused its work for the last ten to fifteen years on the field of professional exchange and international collaboration between libraries, librarians, library associations and other organizations related to libraries. We – as do most Goethe-Instituts worldwide – organize study tours to and from Germany and invite speakers to conferences and workshops. A fairly new initiative is our “Librarian in Residence” program. Twice a year we provide a German librarian with the opportunity to participate in an in-depth exchange with American colleagues. For the first year, together with the Queens Library, we focused on “services for a multicultural population”. To find out more about this initiative, please check our blog at: <http://blog.goethe.de/librarian/>. Regarding other websites of general interest, let me point out a couple of favourites:

<http://www.germanoriginality.org>
Here you will find interesting, amazing and amusing information on German American Heritage. You may have heard that Las Vegas long-time residents Siegfried and Roy are German. But did you know that Doris Day was born Doris Mary Ann von Kappelhoff?

<http://www.germanyinnyc.org>
For all (other) things German in NYC, check out this page from the German-American Community Project.

If you ask me about my personal German favourites in New York, I would start with Schaller and Weber (1654 Second Avenue @ 86th Street). In Germany this kind of small shop would be called a Tante Emma Laden (Aunt Emma’s shop). It is within walking distance from the Goethe-Institut and here you can get all the ingredients you need for typical German cuisine. Particularly at Christmas, when I start baking Christmas cookies, it is a great resource! In case you’re not a fan of bratwurst and sauerkraut, indulge yourself at Cafe Sabarsky in the Neue Galerie (1048 Fifth Ave., just three blocks from the Goethe-Institut). Strictly speaking, this is Austrian, not German cuisine - but it’s delicious from any angle!

What Germans miss most when they are away from home is the bread. The variety and quality of bread in Germany is just amazing. So if you ever come across homesick Germans, send them to the nearest branch of Le Pain Quotidien for their sourdough peasant rye bread. Tastes almost like being back home....

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Japanese culture in New York City
By Rie Smethurst
Head Librarian C.V. Starr Library
Toyota Language Center Assistant
Japan Society

EDITOR’S NOTE: In August, we held our periodic Membership Meeting at The Japan Society in Manhattan – a beautiful and restful place to meet in the height of summer. This article by TJS’s librarian extends that experience for those who would like to learn more about Japanese culture.

New York City is known for its colorful blend of different cultures from all over the world. As the holiday season is just around the corner, you may want to know places to find some unique gifts, or places to take your guests to experience something a little bit different in New York City. Exclusively for readers of the newsletter I will share my secret places to spice up your holidays in Japanese style. I will show you a few places
where you can experience Japan in New York City. From 5th Avenue to Downtown, you can find little pieces of Japan throughout New York City. I will put together the best places, and give you ideas to add some Japan to your holidays.

First of all, visit The Japan Society. The Japan Society is located at 333 East 47th Street between 1st and 2nd Avenues, neighboring the United Nations <http://www.japansociety.org/>. It is the premier institution in the U.S. for the presentation of Japanese art. From October 4th to January 11th, the Japan Society Gallery presents the exhibition, New Bamboo: Contemporary Japanese Masters. Also every season, the Society presents over 30 performances of Japan's traditional performing arts and cutting-edge contemporary dance, music and theater in its 262-seat auditorium. In addition, high-profile conferences, symposia and receptions offer unparalleled access to international business and policy leaders. Further educational programs include cultural lectures, student and teacher workshops, family programs that explore Japan's culture and customs, and language classes at the world-renowned Toyota Language Center. One of Japan Society's newest endeavors, the U.S.-Japan Innovators Network, identifies and connects leading social entrepreneurs from every sector to improve mutual understanding and the quality of life throughout the world. Check out the calendar of events and see if there are any movies, performance, business events, or lectures that interest you. The Japan Society Shop will offer variety of luxurious and high quality items directly form Japan.

While you are in Midtown, visit TAFU café, located at 569 Lexington Avenue at 51st Street <http://www.tafuny.com/>. Although the café is tiny (only 3 seats!), TAFU offers top quality premium green tea from Japan along with beautifully crafted Japanese style sweets. They have many tea gift packages available. Also take a look at what's in store at Takashimaya <http://www.takashimaya-ny.com/index.php> at 693 Fifth Avenue between 54th and 55th Street. Takashimaya is the one of the major department stores in Japan and made its debut in New York in 1993. The store is filled with luxurious items from both Japan and New York. Also on Fifth Avenue, check out the beautiful world of Japanese Wagashi (sweets) at Minamoto Kichoan <http://www.kitchoan.com/E/index_b_natsu2004_e.html> located at 608 Fifth Avenue at 49th Street. You will find hand crafted edible artistry. Some of them are almost too beautiful to eat. Across from Bryant Park on The Avenue of the Americas, there is the Japanese book store Kinokuniya. They relocated the store from Rockefeller Center to this location last year. The move and expansion allowed them to add huge Manga and DVD sections along with a café on the 2nd floor overlooking the Bryant Park. They occasionally have lectures and Japanese authors come to the store. Please see their website for updated information: http://bookweb.kinokuniya.co.jp/indexohb.cgi?AREA=03.

If those books are a little bit too expensive, try going to a second hand book store, BookOff, on 41st Street between 5th Avenue and Madison Avenue: http://www.bookoff.co.jp/en/info/kaigai02.html. You can also sell your books to them. You will find used and new Japanese magazines, books, CDs and DVDs at very reasonable prices. This small block, 41st street between 5th Avenue and Madison Avenue, has many Japanese stores. There is Café Zaïya, Chiyoda Sushi, and Yagura Japanese Market. They are small but they are different from each other and fun to check out each of them.

There is a similar street downtown where many Japanese shops are gathered: East 9th Street in the East Village. There is the Sunrise Mart on the corner of 3rd Avenue and Stuyvesant Street and the 2nd floor of St. Marks Books, where you will find everything from Hello Kitty candies to Japanese cosmetics. Two doors down the street from Sunrise Mart, there is Panya, a Japanese bakery, where you can get freshly baked Japanese baguette, buns, and cakes. On
East 9th Street between 2nd and 3rd Avenue there are many Japanese restaurants, but the most exotic one is Otafuku, a snack stand that sells Japanese street foods. Their main attractions are takoyaki and okonomiyaki. Takoyaki is fried dough with a piece of octopus in the middle, and okonomiyaki is a pancake with vegetables and pork. There are no tables, just a bench where you can sit and eat. If you prefer to have calm and traditional experience, try Cha-an <http://www.chaanteahouse.com/>. They have captured a real Japanese tea room and rebuilt it in their restaurant. They offer exceptional desserts as well as an excellent selection of teas. On the next block, 9th Street between 1st and 2nd Aves, is Sakaya <http://www.sakayanc.com/>, a premier Sake shop. This tiny store carries Japanese Sake, Japanese rice wine, only. You will be surprised how many different kinds and flavors there are. If you are not sure which one to buy, ask the owners. They are very knowledgeable, and they will find you a perfect bottle. Or just check out their tasting events. They occasionally have brewers come from Japan and offer a cup to taste!

There are many Japanese stores in the East Village, not only on 9th Street. There is another Japanese supermarket called JAS Mart on St. Marks Place between 2nd and 3rd Avenue. Recently, a few new Japanese hair salons have opened in the East Village as well. Salon Shizen, on 6th Street between Avenue B and C, Kino on 10th Street between 1st and 2nd Avenue, and Ueno Salon on 9th Street between 1st Avenue and Avenue A to name a few. Try a haircut to get ready for holiday parties!

If you have a day to spend outside of Manhattan, head over to Mitsuwa Supermarket in Edgewater, New Jersey. <http://www.mitsuwa.com/tenpo/newj/eindex.html>. This is the biggest Japanese supermarket in the metropolitan New York area, and you will forget that you are in America. Everything from groceries to Japanese electronics is available in this supermarket. They have shuttle buses from Port Authority in Manhattan directly to the supermarket for $3.00 each way.

I hope my advice will help ease your holiday shopping headaches. If you need more advice on Japanese culture in general, please contact C.V. Starr Library at Japan Society at rsmethurst@japansociety.org.

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Do you have an idea for an article or some special news to share with your fellow ESRT members? Send it to Elizabeth Olesh by Friday, December 5th for possible inclusion in the next ESRT newsletter. Contact Elizabeth <eolesh@nassaulibrary.org> or (516) 292-8920 x237.
Two Poems
By Liana Alaverdova / Translated from Russian into English by Lydia Razran Stone

The Shtetl
Oh, the shtetls gave birth to us all:
Milkman Tevye, Karl Marx, and me too.
They are part of us, body and soul.
Why deny what so clearly is true?
A programmer I know from my work
Speaks to me with my grandfather's voice,
And his thoughts take the same little quirks.
Exile's stamp or his genes? Take your choice.
While the man who just won Nobel's Prize
Has the face of my uncle from Riga,
Who said music brought tears to his eyes,
But Prokofiev's talents were meager.
I cite this in support of my claim
That the shtetls gave birth to us all.
It's a simple idea – all the same –
Though to some it's as bitter as gall.
They endured, then were gone in a flash.
Brutal hatred laid waste to our homes
And reduced them to rubble and ash.
Now those ashes give strength to our bones.
We bear Abraham's blood in our veins
Whether dressed in blue jeans or black coat
Within each one the Bible remains
Resting dormant, but waiting to sprout.
For the past is not lost, but still near
And its voices are borne in the air.
Simply listen, they're not hard to hear:
Tales of exile, of parting, despair
Tales of cruelty, hatred, and wars,
Of the tyrants who vowed they would break us
But despite all their power and force,
From our faith, our pride couldn't shake us;
Tales of tradesmen, of craftsmen, of schemers,
Of romantics and their endless yearning;
Chagall's roofs and wild tales told by dreamers
And the candles of Torah kept burning.
Who else but your folk had the wish
Or the wit to coin curses like yours:
"Oh, you cholera fit for a fish!
Oh, you wooden-brained castrated horse!"
All your buildings are lost now, I fear;
Though I search, all their traces are hidden.
But the lessons my children learn here
Contain so much that we were forbidden.
So I know that your words are not dead,
Though you've drowned in the centuries' waters.
They live on in my heart and my head
And, I hope, in our sons and our daughters.

St. Patrick's Day Parade
There is nothing like drums
To compel and persuade.
"Hurry up! Here it comes!
It's St. Patrick's parade!"
Brass bands catch the sunlight
And bedazzle the eye.
So forget being uptight,
And forget being shy!
The skyscrapers are huddled together in fright
Blasé New York is agape with delight.
The noise made by the bands is so raucous and loud,
That St. Patrick awakes, joining in with the crowd.
The whole world has put on
Brand-new emerald glasses.
Green babies, green grandpas,
Green lads, and green lasses.
Twenty thousand green banners
Have appeared on the scene
And some guy's had his hair
Dyed in six shades of green.
Green bandannas, green earrings,
Green blue jeans, green berets
Have got New York immersed
In a frantic green haze.
A green bacchanalia, an emerald spree,
"Over here for green hot dogs, buy one get one free!"
There's green all around us; there's no color relief
Out of envy the sun's turned the shade of a leaf!
A policeman's dressed up in a kilt of green plaid
A dashiki-clad man looks at him like he's mad.
The parade, a green wave,
Crashes past.
And our ears get a rest.
Ah, at last!

Liana Alaverdova was born in Baku, Azerbaijan. She graduated from Azerbaijan University. In 1997 she published a book of poetry *Rifmy* [*Rhymes*], which was presented on Russian TV and Radio, and in 2004 and 2007 she published her second and third books of poetry *Emigrantskaya Tetrad'* [*Immigrant's Notebook*] and *From Baku to Brooklyn*, which is a bilingual book. Liana is an author of 2 plays: *Idiot in America*, and *Vsye Smeshsalos' v Dome*. She lives in Brooklyn, works as a Librarian at the Brooklyn Public Library, and currently she is on the ESRT Board.

Lydia Razran Stone is a first generation American who makes her living as a technical translator from Russian and devotes a large portion of her spare time to translating poetry. Her educational and professional experience has included a Ph.D. in Cognitive Psychology and 10 years working for NASA.
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2007-08

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