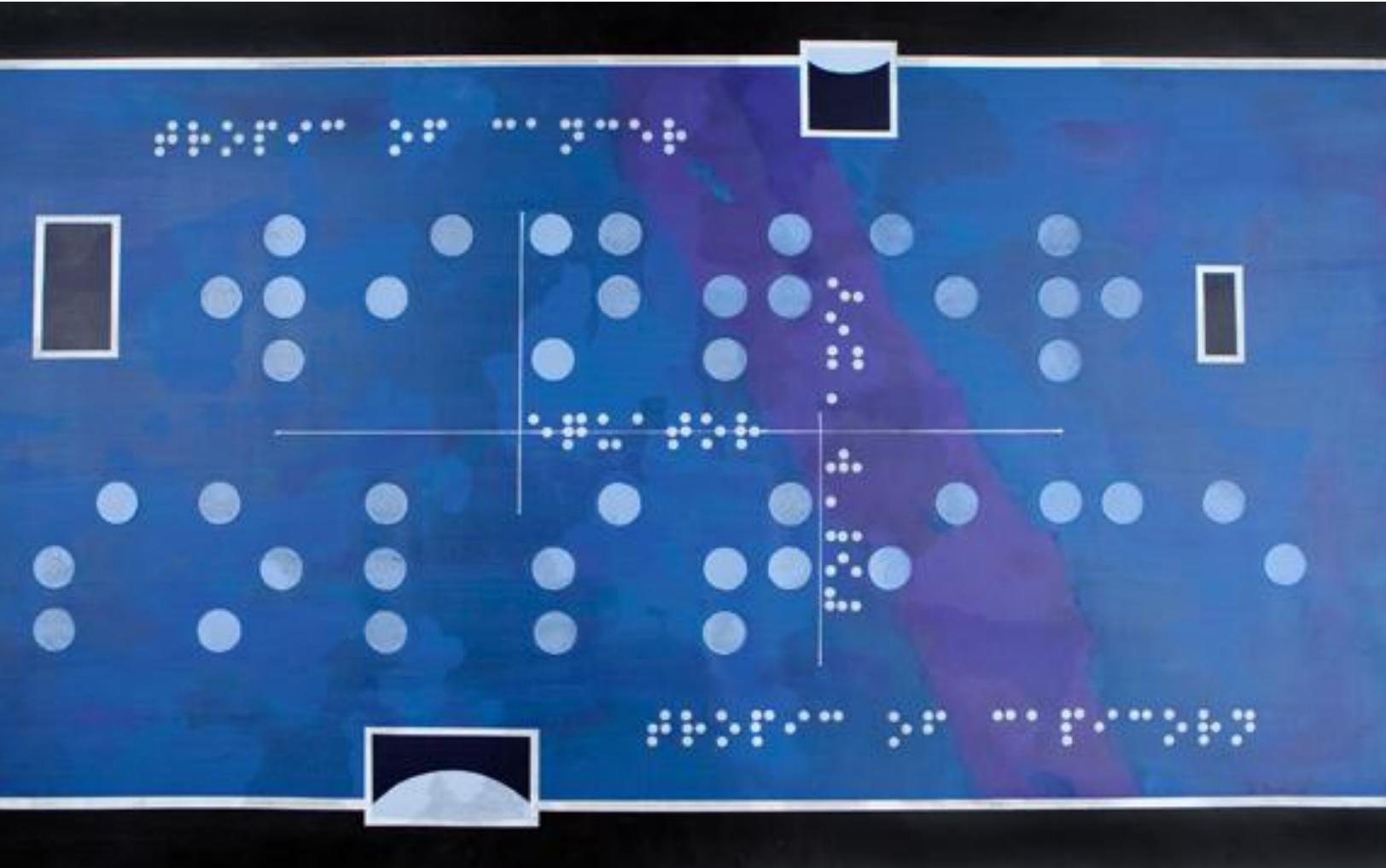


Modern Languages



Fernando Pezzino. *Winter Solstice*.
2010. Acrylic on canvas 52" x 32".

Bienvenue, Bienvenido, Willkommen!

By Carol Vogel German Instructor



Jump back to January, 1969 for a minute! The “Beatles” were singing “Komm, gib mir deine Hand” (“I Want to Hold Your Hand”), the war in Vietnam was in full swing, Washburn was well on its way to recovering from the 1966 tornado and I began my teaching career at the University. The Modern Language Department was equipped with two large audio laboratories where students spent 2 hours per week behind reel-to-reel tape decks practicing the spoken language with their instructors listening in. This was in addition to spending an hour every day in the classroom! Along with the rest of the world, language instruction has changed dramatically since 1969, and today we employ the Internet, YouTube, computer assisted instruction and other technologies to make language learning interesting, fun, and meaningful to students! However, I remain firmly convinced the interpersonal connection between students and faculty members remains the most valuable and effective approach to learning a language.

In my forty-one years of teaching, literally thousands of students have tackled “Gesundheit”, “Danke”, “Bitte” and “Wie geht’s?” and have achieved at least a passable ability to communicate in the language and also gained an appreciation for German---and some have gone on to achieve phenomenal success and fluency in the language. I am proud of them all. The rewards of teaching are many and varied, but perhaps the most exciting is to be a part, even a small part, of helping someone learn to express thoughts and to communicate in a second language. I have lived vicariously through my students as their language adventures took them to exciting experiences in German-speaking countries. The personal connections and friendships with my students and colleagues, as well as the fun of the classroom, have been highlights of my life.

It is with mixed emotions that I am embarking on a “phased retirement” during which I am no longer teaching but continuing with administrative responsibilities for a few years. It seemed very strange on the first day of classes this fall semester not to start a new group of German learners or to greet returning students in class! I owe a big “Danke schön” to Dr. Miguel Gonzalez-Abellas who did not compel me to leave my office in the area of the Modern Language Department, enabling me to maintain close contact with the faculty members and my students!

Time has truly flown by for me since I entered the first German class I instructed at Washburn. Forty-one years! That number is amazing to me, since the time seems to have passed so very quickly. The old adage that “Time flies when you are having fun!” certainly applies to my life. I deeply appreciate all the wonderful colleagues and students I have been privileged to work with over my teaching career and hope that you will remain in contact with me. I bid you a fond “Auf Wiedersehen” and wish you “Alles Gute”.



Our Cover Story:

Interview with Fernando Pezzino,
language teacher and painter.

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Winter in Peru

By Jessica Norton Program Participant

The winter 2009/2010 class in Peru was an amazing experience for many reasons, but these were my favorites! It was a fantastic learning opportunity to be able to experience the Peruvian culture firsthand. We were able to get out and really feel what it was like to live in this country. One thing that really helped us to learn about Peruvian culture was the trip we took to the local orphanage. The children there were so grateful and happy to see us! It was really interesting to **see how they reacted to North Americans**, and it was really a pleasure to be able to provide them with books, toys, and some good conversation!

Not only did we have chances like that to learn about their present day culture, but we were lucky enough to be able to visit several ancient Inca sites.

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These trips allowed us to learn about the **history and the importance of Andean cultures** such as the Inca, up close and personal.

These sites also helped us to draw connections between the history of this country and modern day life, which was really helpful when trying to learn a new culture. Overall, I took away a new and much more detailed understanding of Peruvians and other Andean societies, as well as an appreciation for the different ways that humanity has adapted over the years!



Georgina Tenny, Instructor of Spanish organized and led a Study Abroad Program in Peru.

See more pictures on page 6.



Fernando Pezzino: Teacher and Painter

Pezzino has been teaching Spanish at Washburn since 2008. He has kindly agreed to answer a few questions about his other passion.

Newsletter Editor: *How and when did you start painting? Are you self-taught or did you go to art school? Who is the artist you admire most?*

Fernando Pezzino: I began taking art classes when I was 6 years old at a private art institute. I continued to hone this craft until my early teenage years, when I began experimenting with different mediums. As a young artist I admired the greats and tried to replicate paintings in order to work on different techniques. As a teenager I began painting my own works based on my surroundings and perception. I worked frequently in oil paints as this is the medium to which I had become accustomed. When I started college, my painting was on hold while I focused on my academics. I used theater as my artistic outlet during those years.

After moving to the United States, my passion switched back from theater to painting. I continued to paint as much as possible around my schooling, having now changed my medium to acrylics.

*After moving to the United States,
my passion switched back
from theater to painting.*

After starting my career at Washburn, I was able to paint with more frequency. **In July 2009 I had a showing in Argentina.** At that time, I started working with Miguel Angel Giovanetti. This is the point I am at in my career.

Ed.: *Do you have a favorite medium: acrylic paint, oil, pencil, other? What is the reason for this preference, if any?*

Pezzino: My medium of choice is acrylic paint because it's most conducive to my needs. The characteristics of the paint itself, such as the expeditiousness of its drying, are a necessity.

Ed.: *When you look at your past work and compare it with your most recent productions, what would you say are the main differences? Your themes, techniques, sources of inspiration, time spent in front of the canvas, or else?*

Pezzino: The differences between my past original works and my current paintings are numerous. The aesthetics are different due to textures, composition and size. In addition to these, the content has completely changed. My prior works were more surreal in nature and what I am working on currently is tantamount to Piet Mondrian. This new period of art is closely tied to my teaching; it has been quite an inspiration. I feel as though **I have entered a new stage of my art** and am growing as a painter.

★

Ed.: *What is your state of mind when you paint? Do you follow a particular ritual associated with painting (music, etc)?*

Pezzino: When I can paint varies depending on my schedule. I prefer to sketch in the afternoon, as this is when I am most creative. I often put on my iPod and listen to classical or instrumental music. This clears my mind of other obligations and allows for the free flow of originality and inspiration.

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Ed.: Last semester, you designed the stage lighting for a university performance of *Medea*. Could you describe how you approached this assignment, and whether this type of artistic collaboration bears any link to your art?

Pezzino: Lighting design was part of my education and professional theater work. The approach to art and theater is completely different, but I believe they are related through my creative process. The difference between theater and visual art is that a theater production is a **collaborative process**, while painting is more of an individual act. When painting with light, a dynamic design, which moves in time and space, is created. However, when painting with pigments on a canvas the artwork is spacial but static.



Fernando Pezzino. *Crossword I*. 2010
Acrylic on canvas 51x35.

Upcoming Events

If this conversation on painting with Fernando Pezzino has whetted your appetite for art, don't miss the following exhibits:

*In Topeka, at the Mulvane Art Museum
(Washburn Campus)*

Dali's World. A selection of prints by Salvador Dali from the Museum's Permanent Collection. The exhibition features a set of illustrations for Dante's masterpiece, *La Commedia Divina* as well as illustrations for Cervantes' *Don Quijote de la Mancha*.

Ends September 26.

In Kansas City, at the Nelson Atkins Museum

Through African Eyes: The European in African Art, 1500–Present.

For more details, go to:

<http://www.nelson-atkins.org/art/Exhibitions/TAE/index.cfm>

Dates: September 25, 2010—January 9, 2011.

Winter in Peru

Continued from page 3

Perú: Past Present & Future
Winter 2009
Class of Georgina Tenny



Modern Language Department Website:

<http://www.washburn.edu/cas/is/>

Thank you to all of our contributors: students, alumni, faculty, staff and friends of the Department of Modern Languages.

With special thanks to Randall Scott, WEA.

This newsletter will be published every summer.
We look forward to your comments.

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The Department of Modern Languages.

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