



THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION OF THE UNITED STATES

Creating Global Understanding Through English

NATION'S CAPITAL AREA BRANCH

SEPTEMBER 2006

News & Announcements

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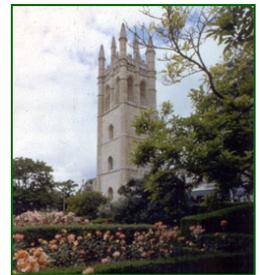
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MEET THE CHOIR OF MAGDALEN COLLEGE, OXFORD *An Evening of Music and Refreshments to Launch ESU's 2006-7 Season*

Under the direction of **BILL IVES**, who bears the ancient title **Informator Choristarum**, Oxford's venerable **MAGDALEN COLLEGE CHAPEL CHOIR** retains essentially the same character it had when it was founded in 1480, with sixteen boy **Choristers** (pupils at **MAGDALEN COLLEGE SCHOOL**) and twelve **Gentlemen** or **Academical Clerks** (undergraduates at one of the university's most prestigious colleges). They have appeared frequently on television and on radio, as well as in



SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 9
Buffet Reception, 6:30 p.m.
Program, 7:30 p.m.
4000 CATHEDRAL AVENUE, 152B
Reception and Program, \$50

Shadowlands, a celebrated film in which Sir Anthony Hopkins portrayed C. S. Lewis. They've sung all over the world, and one of their recent recordings was nominated for a Grammy Award. We're privileged to welcome the twelve Gentlemen from this year's Choir, and we invite you to a special evening at which they'll provide a light program with selections that range from the distant past to the present. This concert will occur in the **WESTCHESTER** residence of **Graham Down** (in the main building, with the porte-cochere). Space is limited, so you should reserve for it as quickly as possible.

A LUNCHEON CONVERSATION WITH WRITER MICHAEL DIRDA *A Book-Signing Occasion for Those Who Missed our May Event at Borders*



MICHAEL DIRDA received the Pulitzer Prize for Distinguished Criticism in 1993, the same year another native of his Ohio hometown, Toni Morrison, captured the Nobel Prize in Literature. A infectious bibliophile, Mr. Dirda has enriched our libraries with *Caring for Your Books* (1990), *Readings: Essays and Literary Entertainments* (2000), and *Bound to Please* (2004), not to mention all the reviews he has written as one of the mainstays of *WASHINGTON POST BOOK WORLD*. Mr.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19
Cash-Bar Reception, 11:30
Lunch, 12:30 Program, 1:00
1526 NEW HAMPSHIRE AVENUE
Lunch and Program, \$25

Dirda has now completed *Book by Book*, a new collection with what *Publishers Weekly* calls "a guide to reading and its life lessons. . . . Dirda's message is simple: if reading is to be life-enhancing, we need to focus our attention on books that are rewarding." He "draws on a notebook in which he has recorded striking quotations and passages, and his volume has the agreeable feel of a commonplace book. Highly cultured yet never pretentious, Dirda's survey convincingly demonstrates what a wealth of life lessons – moral, emotional, and aesthetic – a good library can contain."

Join Us on October 10 for "The Shakespeare Wars"

For details on that and on other *COMING ATTRACTIONS*, among them a visit to **LINCOLN'S OTHER WHITE HOUSE**, see the pages that follow.

A FOLGER CONSORT PRESENTATION DRAWING ON *TALES FROM CANTERBURY*

As the opening installment of a sparkling five-concert season to be focused upon *THIS ENGLAND*, the FOLGER CONSORT will be performing *Tales from Canterbury* during the first weekend of

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7

Seminar, 4:00 p.m. Concert, 5:00

FOLGER SHAKESPEARE LIBRARY
201 East Capitol Street SE

Call (202) 675-9367 for \$30 Tickets

October. We're pleased to report that one of the group's four presentations is to be preceded by an informative and entertaining seminar for ESU constituents and their guests. This special session, to include servings of sherry and tea, will be conducted by **ROBERT EISENSTEIN**, a gifted viol player who co-founded the CONSORT three decades ago and who continues to share its artistic directorship with **CHRISTOPHER KENDALL**. Noting that "the music of medieval England is as boisterous and beautiful as Chaucer's immortal tales of pilgrimage," Mr. Eisenstein observes that it is "full of cheerful disregard for the strict conventions of Continental composition." The 11th- and 12th-century masterworks to be resurrected for this occasion include "the sweet and sublime *Angelus ad Virginem*, music honoring St. Thomas of Canterbury, and other medieval marvels." Tickets ordered from the Folger are available at \$30 for those who specify the ESU event code; those purchased through the ESU itself will include a \$3 handling fee to cover the office's administrative expenses.



NEW YORK JOURNALIST RON ROSENBAUM REPORTS ON *THE SHAKESPEARE WARS*

On theater vs. film, he is startling. On Shylock, he is fierce. On Harold Bloom, he is pugnacious. Anyone who read the *New Yorker* article he published two years ago about the scholarly issues that now divide editors of *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, and other classics will know that **RON ROSENBAUM** takes Shakespeare personally and offers an unforgettable way of rethinking the greatest works

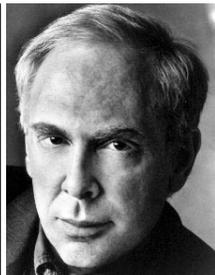
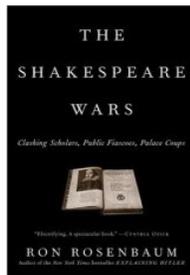
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 10

7:00 p.m.

CORCORAN GALLERY OF ART
500 17th Street NW

Members, \$15 Others, \$20

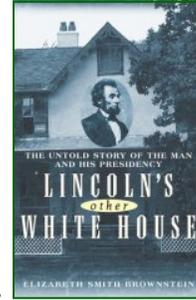
of the human imagination. Focusing on cutting-edge controversies about the source of the poet's enchantment, his astonishing use of a language he made uniquely his own, Mr. Rosenbaum spent seven years pursuing key partisans in today's debates, from the high tables at Oxford to a Krispy Kreme doughnut shop in a Deep South strip mall. Witty and provocative, Mr. Rosenbaum "comes to us in new waves of revelation," according to Billy Collins, former U.S. Poet Laureate. His best-selling *Explaining Hitler* has been translated into ten languages. He writes a column for the *New York Observer*,



and his articles have appeared in the *New York Times*, *Harper's*, and the *Atlantic Monthly*. In a dialogue that will serve as a prelude to *SHAKESPEARE IN WASHINGTON 2007*, a city-wide festival that is being coordinated by the **KENNEDY CENTER**, Mr. Rosenbaum will talk with **JOHN F. ANDREWS**, Executive Director of **ESU WASHINGTON** and President of the **SHAKESPEARE GUILD**.

AN ON-SITE CHAT WITH THE AUTHOR OF *LINCOLN'S OTHER WHITE HOUSE*

In collaboration with the **NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION**, which administers the **SOLDIER'S HOME** (a retreat to which **President Lincoln** and his family resorted for relief from the oppressive burden of Washington summers in the 1860s), we're delighted to co-host an event at which historian **ELIZABETH SMITH BROWNSTEIN** explains the significance of this bucolic setting. In her influential book on *LINCOLN'S OTHER*



WHITE HOUSE, Ms. Brownstein observes that our 16th chief executive sorely needed the peace he found in this quiet dwelling. After all, it was here that he wrote the **Emancipation Proclamation**. Our gathering will occur, not in the Presidential cottage itself, which is undergoing restoration, but in nearby **STANLEY CHAPEL**. Light refreshments will be served. And after her remarks Ms. Brownstein will be happy to sign copies of her book, which will be available for purchase by virtue of an arrangement with **Olsson's Books & Records**. A site map and directions to the Chapel are available upon request. (This presentation was originally scheduled to occur on June 28; it had to be postponed because of an unanticipated conflict.)

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 11

10:00 a.m.

UPSUDR ST. AT ROCK CREEK RD. NW

Admission \$10

NASHVILLE PLAYS HOST FOR THE 86TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE ESUUS

MUSIC CITY USA will be the site for this year's 86th **ANNUAL CONFERENCE** of the **ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION OF THE UNITED STATES**. For those who associate Tennessee's capital only with the **GRAND OLE OPRY** and with the recording and entertainment industry that radio's most atmospheric broadcast has spawned, the **NASHVILLE BRANCH** of the ESU has a number of surprises in store. Among the options available to delegates at the 2006 convention will be a **NASHVILLE OPERA** production of Verdi's *Aida*, a close look at **SYMPHONY HALL**, and a Sunday church service with liturgy from the 1559 *Book of Common Prayer*. Those who wish to see the **COUNTRY MUSIC HALL OF FAME** will have ample means to do so, and one of the speakers will be **BILL IVEY**, a **VANDER-**

OCTOBER 12-15

Thursday through Sunday

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE
Hosted by the NASHVILLE BRANCH
of the ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION
Visit www.esuus.org

BILT professor who oversaw that institution before he came to Washington in the early 1990s as Chairman of the **NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS**. Other attractions will include a speech by **JOHN SEIGENTHALER SR.**, founding editor of *USA Today* and father of a prominent **NBC NEWS** anchor. To find out more about what promises to be an unusually varied weekend, log onto www.esuus.org, where you'll discover links to relevant Web sites and to order forms for downloading and submission.



A LUNCHEON WITH DEBORAH HOWELL, THE WASHINGTON POST OMBUDSMAN

In February 2005 **DEBORAH HOWELL**, the Washington bureau chief and editor of **Newhouse News Service**, was named to one of the most demanding positions in the publishing industry.



As the new ombudsman for *THE WASHINGTON POST*, it would be her job "to serve as independent critic of the newspaper on behalf of its readers." How Ms. Howell has fared in this sensitive role is a question that will be answered differently by different observers. But a majority of *Post* subscribers will probably agree that she has lived up to her self-description as a journalist who can be "feisty and

aggressive." Among other things she has commented upon the disparities that often exist between the online pages of the paper and those to be found in its various printed editions, and the *Post* has introduced modifications in response to her criticism. We're pleased that she has agreed to join us for a luncheon conversation about her work and about the responsibilities that today's media have both to the public they address and to the material they bring to that public's attention in one format or another.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 19

Cash-Bar Reception, 11:30

Lunch, 12:30 Program, 1:00

1526 NEW HAMPSHIRE AVENUE

Lunch and Program, \$25

LOOKING AHEAD TO THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF A NEW SEASON

As we open another round of activities for **ESU WASHINGTON**, we're keenly aware of how important it is to have strong support from a diverse and active membership. In our July 2006 issue of *ESU NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS* we expressed gratitude to those who have assisted us financially in recent years. We're deeply indebted to those who contribute to our educational and cultural outreach, and particularly to those who do so at levels that permit us to offer programs and services that transcend those functions which are facilitated by basic operating funds.

Without the indispensable underwriting we've received from the **MORRIS AND GWENDOLYN CAFRITZ FOUNDATION**, for example, we'd be unable to continue our annual **SHAKESPEARE**

COMPETITION FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION. Under this rubric we arrange several workshops each year for teachers and students in the metropolitan area. We bestow a fellowship for summer study in Great Britain upon one of the superb instructors who help prepare participants for the proceedings. We give monetary prizes to the three entrants who finish with the highest ratings. And we send the winner of our branch **COMPETITION** to **LINCOLN CENTER** in New York, where that student has a chance to take part in a national contest and compete for an intensive, expense-paid drama course in one of London's most prestigious academies for aspiring theatre professionals.

We're obliged in similar ways to the **MARPAT FOUNDATION**, which has granted seed money for a strengthening and restructuring of *ENGLISH IN ACTION*, a much-admired endeavor that provides tutoring in conversational English for those in our community who need help adapting to a language and a society that are unfamiliar to them. This program depends upon a dedicated corps of volunteers, each willing to donate an hour a week or more to informal sessions that enable newcomers to become better acquainted with the idioms and nuances of a discourse which can be difficult to master. For that reason we owe at least as much to our generous, civic-minded **ESU** tutors as we do to those who reinforce the framework for their ministrations.

It goes without saying that we're committed to the vitality of efforts such as these, which we regard as pivotal to our mission. At the same time, moreover, we're hoping to expand our influence through the flourishing of additional initiatives.

One has to do with an annual **ALISTAIR COOKE MEMORIAL LECTURE**, which we helped inaugurate in July 2005 with a **DARTMOUTH HOUSE** presentation by **Senator John McCain**. This event was broadcast over **BBC RADIO 4**, and it will be followed in November 2006 by a sequel in the same venue with **Garrison Keillor** as speaker. The idea for this event originated with our most philanthropic Vice-President, **Dr. Marjorie J. Williams**, and we're deeply gratified by the way it is evolving.

Another initiative relates to the Churchill memorial that **ESU WASHINGTON** placed in front of the **BRITISH EMBASSY** in 1966. In collaboration with the international **CHURCHILL CENTRE** and the **BRITISH-AMERICAN BUSINESS ASSOCIATION**, we hosted a lustrous 40th-anniversary dinner in April at the **WILLARD HOTEL**. We're now seeking to establish an ongoing **CHURCHILL FORUM** to ensure that Sir Winston's heritage remains vibrant.

Meanwhile, in tandem with the **SHAKESPEARE GUILD** and a wide spectrum of other institutions, we're assuming a significant role in a salute to *SHAKESPEARE IN WASHINGTON* that will dominate our region's cultural calendar in 2007. If all goes well, this festival will open up promising avenues for further exploration. In the interim it will afford the context for an extraordinary array of *SPEAKING OF SHAKESPEARE* engagements.

As we proceed, we fervently hope that you will be so kind as to share your thoughts about the **ESU** and its objectives. We'd love to hear about offerings that would be of particular interest to you, venues you'd find appealing, luminaries you'd enjoy hearing and meeting, and highlights you'd like to see on our roster of events. We're especially keen to hear any suggestions you may have about ways in which the **ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION** could be more effective. And we'd welcome anything you'd like to do to help us realize our full potential as a charitable organization.



THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION
OF THE UNITED STATES

Creating Global Understanding Through English
NATION'S CAPITAL AREA BRANCH

1604 New Hampshire Avenue NW Washington, DC 20009-2512

Since 1920, when it originated in response to a parallel organization that had been established two years earlier in Great Britain, the English-Speaking Union of the United States has sought to foster social and cultural cohesion through the resources and traditions of a language that has become increasingly indispensable as a means of international communication. Through a diverse array of offerings, some of which are shared with audiences around the world through radio and TV, the national capital's ESU endeavors to advance a noble mission.

English in Action

For more than four decades ESU WASHINGTON has offered informal instruction in English conversation to newcomers who need help with a language that is not native to them: a recent immigrant, for example, a student from abroad, or a professional who has been brought here by an embassy or by a multinational corporation. Those who provide this kind of assistance tend to be ordinary citizens with normal proficiency but with no special training beyond the orientation sessions that veterans in our **ENGLISH IN ACTION** service provide for those who enroll as volunteers. To learn more about this fulfilling program, please call its director, **Ruby Mathews**, at (703) 534-4228. You can also reach Mrs. Mathews by e-mailing rpmatthews@excite.com.

Thanks for Your Generosity

Everyone associated with the ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION is enormously grateful for your willingness to facilitate its offerings with your support. The ESU now girdles the planet, with a stately London address at DARTMOUTH HOUSE near Berkeley Square, and those who take part in any of its local, regional, and national communities are nourished by a vibrant global network.

In an effort to keep our members alert to the broader dimensions of the ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION, we now offer everyone who affiliates with the ESU at the **Contributor** level or above a colorful periodical, **ESU NEWS**, which comes out six times a year from our headquarters in Mayfair. If you're not yet receiving it, why not upgrade your membership with a call to (202) 234-4602?

Through an enticing assortment of edifying events, and through such enterprises as an annual **SHAKESPEARE COMPETITION** for secondary-school students, a variety of **FELLOWSHIP AWARDS** to encourage substantive exploration in academic and artistic settings, and a volunteer-based tutoring service, **ENGLISH IN ACTION**, for those who aspire to better command of a tongue that is not native to them, ESU WASHINGTON is dedicated to extending a precious legacy. To help sustain this legacy, all you need to do is supply the information requested in the form to the right and submit it by post, phone, fax, or e-mail. Below are the ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION's present membership categories.

ASSOCIATE (Individual \$45, Dual \$65)

*Event notices, local and national
ESU member publications*

SUBSCRIBER (Individual \$75, Dual \$100)

*All ASSOCIATE-level benefits plus 1 coupon
for a regular ESU event (that is, an
event priced at \$40 or less)*

CONTRIBUTOR (Individual \$125, Dual \$150)

*All SUBSCRIBER-level benefits plus 1 additional
coupon to be used at a regular ESU event
plus 6 issues a year of ESU NEWS*

DONOR (\$250)

*All CONTRIBUTOR-level benefits plus 2 additional coupons
to be used at regular events and 1 coupon for a special
occasion (that is, one priced at more than \$40)*

BENEFACTOR (\$500)

*All DONOR-level benefits plus 4 additional coupons to be used at
regular events, 1 additional coupon for a special occasion,
and recognition in selected print materials*

PATRON (\$1,000)

*Free admission for 2 persons to all regular events,
4 coupons for use at special occasions, and
recognition in selected printings*

SPONSOR (\$2,500)

*All PATRON-level benefits plus free admission for up
to 4 additional guests at all ESU gatherings*

Response Form

I wish to ___renew or ___enroll in the ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION at the \$___ level. I wish to make a tax-deductible donation to the ESU of \$___ to support its educational and cultural endeavors.

For **Sept. 9 (Magdalen Choir)**, please reserve ___ space(s) at \$50.

For **Sept. 19 (Dirda)**, please reserve ___ space(s) at \$25.

For **Oct. 7 (Folger Consort)**, please reserve ___ space(s) at \$33
(this price includes a \$3 handling fee that will not be charged to
those who order through the Folger, as suggested on page 2).

For **Oct. 10 (Rosenbaum)**, please reserve___ space(s) at \$15.

For **Oct. 11 (Brownstein)**, please reserve___ space(s) at \$10.

For **Oct. 19 (Howell)**, please reserve___ space(s) at \$25.

My check for \$_____ to The English-Speaking Union is enclosed.

Charge MC_Visa _____ (___ / ___).

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone, Fax _____

E-Mail _____

Member rates for ESU events are available to anyone affiliated with BABA, CantabDC, LSE Alumni, the Royal Society of Arts, the Shakespeare Guild, the Washington Society for Churchill, the Woman's National Democratic Club, and various other organizations that cooperate with the ESU.

Please visit us online, and check for calendar updates, at www.esurwdc.org.