



Graduation 2020

Comparative Literature Graduation Program 2020

Bachelor of Arts degree

Gilad Barach



Primary literature: Yiddish; secondary literature: Spanish. Double major with Near Eastern Languages & Literatures (Hebrew), minor in Jewish Studies. His thesis is titled “Yielding and Wielding Vernacular: The Reposition and Examination of Power in Mati Shemoelof’s “To the Son of a Whore” with Faculty Advisor Professor Chana Kronfeld. High distinction in general scholarship.

Faculty Comments:

Dear Gilad,

Working with you over these past few years has been a real joy. Your Honors Thesis is a remarkable contribution to the study of radical politics and poetics in contemporary Hebrew literature, as well as to translation studies. You've never taken any shortcuts, double-majoring in Comparative Literature and Near Eastern Studies and minoring in Jewish Studies. Not only have you developed a remarkable fluency in Hebrew but you've acquired a good command of Yiddish and film studies. Your intellectual and creative talents are boundless, matched only by your energy. Power to you!

Chana Kronfeld

Dear Gilad, Congratulations on earning your BA in Comparative Literature. When I think of you, I recall your excellent work on the midterm and final exam essays in my “Comparative Mythology: Celtic, Norse, and Greek” course in spring 2018. I also appreciated your thoughtful comments in class. I wish you much success in your future academic endeavors. Annalee Rejoin

Gilad, you impressed me in two courses with his genuine desire to ask tough questions and never accept trendy solutions. You were as talented analyzing the philosophy of Peruvian punk as he was the anti-racist arguments of Ta-Nehisi Coates, and your creative work, in sound and on film, stunned me with its sensitive understanding of memory’s impact on the present. Tom McEnaney

Jessica Burr



Primary literature: English; secondary literature: Japanese.
Double major with English.

Faculty Comments:

Jessica, it was a pleasure having you in CL 155 last year. I really enjoyed chatting with you about literary impressionism and reading your thoughtful essays over the course of the semester. Wishing you all the best in the years ahead! Karl Britto

Jessica, you are a sensitive and insightful reader, attentive to the subtleties of form. I was impressed by your fine paper on Valeria Luiselli's *Lost Children Archive*, a complex novel that she discussed with interpretive flair and a deeply personal touch. Mario Telo

Humberto Castorena



Primary Literature: English; secondary literature: Spanish.
Double major with History. Highest distinction in general scholarship.

Faculty Comments:

Humberto, it was great having you in not one but two classes. I'm sure that your Comp Lit- developed skills in writing and critical analysis will serve you well as you begin your studies in Law. Wishing you all the best in the years ahead! Karl Britto

Humberto, it's spring 2017 and, as per the indexicality of subject positions in narrative language that you so brilliantly analyzed, the now of what is now a then is still unfolding and in it you are reading a story whose end you'll never reach composed of a "...senseless...[and] indeterminate heap of contradictory drafts"--among them your own fabulous Barthes-inspired starring of this little encomium to a truly amazing student who taught me to read "Right now (what a dumb word, now, what a dumb lie). . ." --something to remember x years from now when now will be then. . .
Anne-Lise Francois

Bella Chavez



Primary literature: Spanish; secondary literature: Portuguese. Double major with Spanish & Portuguese, minor in Education. Served as Peer Representative and studied abroad in Lisbon, Portugal, Azore Islands, and Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Faculty Comments:

Congratulations on your exceptional work, Bella. Your curiosity and broad knowledge of literatures and cultures exemplifies the discipline of Comparative Literature. Best of luck in the future! - Tim Hampton

Bella, thanks for your participation in CL 100 last semester. Your enthusiasm and insights really helped to make teaching that class a special experience. Wishing you all the best in the years ahead! Karl Britto

Mixty Espinoza



Primary literature: Spanish; secondary literature: English. Served on the Spring Research Symposium Committee. Writer for the Daily Cal.

Faculty Comments:

Mixty, you have been, as much as any single person could be, the heart and soul of Comp Lit's relatively new group "El Grupo," to which you've brought incredibly thoughtful ideas, commitment, and amazing organizational skills. From reading groups you've organized, to film nights, to discussions of both the cultural and political resonances of Spanish-language literature and art in the past and today, you have constantly sparked us--and, we soon discovered, you were exerting that kind of force not only within El Grupo, but also in various other groups and committees around the Department, as well as in your work for the Daily Cal. We've been so lucky to have you with us, and we know that you've got a terrific future ahead of you. Robert Kaufman

Mixty, it a pleasure having you in CL 155 last year. I am always in awe of students who happily volunteer to do the very first presentation! Thanks for all that you brought to that class. Wishing you all the best in the years ahead! Karl Britto

Elizabeth Gobbo



Primary literature: English; secondary literature: Urdu. Double major with South and Southeast Asian Studies. Her thesis is titled “Unveiling the Invaluable: Female Voices, Affective Labor, and Intimate Play in Rekḥtī Poetry.” with Faculty Advisor Professor Gregory Bruce. High distinction in general scholarship.

Faculty Comments:

Liz, your work is a sublime combination of scholarship and multimedia expression, encompassing photography, poetry, and songs. You transfigure your personal experience into archival compositions that remind me of Maggie Nelson, Julietta Singh, and Valeria Luiselli. Your interventions in class were always probing and challenging, modeling, for the other students, ways to put even the most influential theoretical paradigms under pressure. Mario Tell

Liz, you challenged herself and our class with passion and courage. Your deep care for art's capacity to turn the most difficult moments into compassionate knowledge allows you to discover connections in threads most of us lose or fail to see. Tom McEnaney

Christina Hui



Primary literature: English; secondary literature: Chinese. Double major with Linguistics.

Faculty Comments:

Christina, you took the unreliability of memory and knowledge as your central theme in our seminar and produced a series of sharp, ambitious papers exploring these ideas in Proust and Woolf. You homed in on small details that others might easily overlook, balancing close textual analysis with an admirable capacity for synthesis. Your clarity of thought and willingness to engage with difficult, abstract concepts were impressive (and all the more so given that you were working in a non-native language!). Dora Zhang

Christina, I very much enjoyed being at the intersection of your two majors, as you applied cognitive linguistic models to Othello in Ling 128 - challenging models which you applied to a challenging text. I hope those Shakespearean mental space analyses remain with you as you graduate - and I know your versatile undergrad training at Berkeley will serve you well! You then hung in through the toughest spring Berkeley semester I've known - and now you've made it, you have every reason to be proud. CONGRATULATIONS!! Eve Sweetser

Molly Kearnan



Primary literature: English; secondary literature: French. Double major in French. Studied abroad in Lyon, France in Spring of 2019. Served as Peer Representative and Co-editor in Chief of the Comparative Literature Undergraduate Journal (CLUJ). Her thesis is titled "Piercing through White Noise: Assertion of the Poetic Voice in Rita Bouvier and Marilyn Dumont's Poetry" with Faculty Advisor Professor Karl Britto. High distinction in general scholarship. Recipient of the Theresa Hak-Kyung Cha Fellowship.

Faculty Comments:

Molly, it has been a great pleasure teaching you (in three different classes, no less), and working with you on your Senior Honors Essay. Thank you for introducing me to the poetry of Rita Bouvier and Marilyn Dumont. Wishing you all the best in the years ahead!
Karl Britto

Dear Molly: I still recall your boldly comparative juxtaposition of French and Russian material in your final essay for my class. I want to wish you every success in the future!
Harsha Ram

Luna Khalil



Primary literature: Arabic; secondary literature: Spanish. Served as Peer Representative and on the Spring Research Symposium Committee. Distinction in general scholarship.

Faculty Comments:

Congratulations Luna! Your work in Comp Lit 190 was important in opening new perspectives for all of us in the class. Your ability to move between cultures, language, and media is remarkable. And you have the rarest of talents, the ability to listen and engage thoughtfully with your colleagues. Good luck! - Tim Hampton

Luna, thanks for your participation in CL 155 last year. I still recall your thoughtful presentation on Duras –

you really captured the interplay between money, fantasy, and despair in *Un barrage contre le Pacifique*. Wishing you all the best in the years ahead! Karl Britto

Arianne Marcellin-Little



Primary literature: English; secondary literature: French. Co-editor in Chief of the Comparative Literature Undergraduate Journal (CLUJ). Highest distinction in general scholarship. Recipient of the Departmental Citation.

Faculty Comments:

Dear Arianne: You are a born literary scholar, with a fine ear for language, a knack for precise formulation, and a capacity for real synthesis. It was a pleasure to have you in class and I look forward to hearing of your future successes! Harsha Ram.

Arianne, your careful attunement to literary language broke new ground in the study of how the 1960s New Journalists punctured the myths of American freedom, even while propagating myths about themselves, as they reworked the codes of journalism and realist fiction. And in a revelatory mixed media midterm project, you became a journalist herself, exposing how new media platforms like Facebook can exploit the fading divisions between private and public life. Tom McEnaney

Emily McKinney



Primary literature: English; secondary literature: French.

Faculty Comments:

Dear Emily, warm congratulations to you on earning your Comparative Literature BA. I remember you from our “Comparative Mythology: Celtic, Norse, and Greek” course in spring 2018 as being clear thinking and insightful on your midterm and final exam essays. With your knowledge of French and Arabic I hope you will be

able to continue your future academic studies on the post-graduate level. Annalee Rejhon

Emily, thanks for all your contributions to our class this semester. And thanks especially for your sharing your beautiful, moving reflection on reading *To the Lighthouse* after moving back home. Your commitment to the capacity of art to help us make sense of the world is clear, and I think it will serve you well. I wish you the very best in your next chapter. Dora Zhang

Brian McKnight



Primary literature: English; secondary literature: French. Double major in English. He studied abroad in Paris, France.

Faculty Comments:

Loved your thoughtfulness in class--the muted desert tones of your quiet mode of critique--and the way your written work brought to life poetry's capacity to duplicate on the page a musician's breath patterns. But what remain with me most vividly are the words you invented for our California-specific class glossary: if Cal is now your scandon may its breesh follow you at

nastoo through the coolden:

Nastoo: when the mourning dove coos at dusk.

Breesh: the scent produced by the creosote bush after it rains.

Coolden: the space between a grouping of tall creosote bushes.

Scandon: an abandoned coyote den. Anne-Lise Francois

Dear Brian: I enjoyed your contribution to my class and still recall your paper on Babel's "Pan Apolek." Best wishes for the future! Harsha Ram

Brian, I didn't teach you in Comp Lit, but it was great having you in French 142AC. Thanks for sharing your thoughtful reflections at the end of that semester—that day was a real highlight. Wishing you all the best in the years ahead Karl Britto

Iris Morrell



Primary literature: German; secondary literature: English. Her thesis is titled "Gender, Animality, and Violence: Disfiguring Patriarchy in Kleist's Penthesilea" with Faculty Advisor Professor Winfried Kudszus. High distinction in general scholarship.

Faculty Comments:

Iris, you are one of the most engaged and engaging undergraduates I have met in my career. Your observations, complex yet clear, counter-intuitive yet rigorously thought out, helped move class discussions in surprising directions. In office hours, I also learned about the ethical depth of your political activism. Mario Telo

Congratulations, Iris. I love your passion for the readings of German poetry and of Kleist, your intellectual curiosity, and your dedication to the politics of scholarly work. Every single discussion we have had about—mostly—Kleist's "Penthesilea" and the possible interpretations of this text was rich and often surprising. I thoroughly enjoyed the way your readings developed, meandering at moments, but wonderfully focused and deeply engaged. I will you all the best! Niklaus Largier

Iris, though I didn't get to know you as well as I would have liked in Comp Lit 151, I could see that you were thoroughly engaged in class and thinking hard. It was also a thrill to hear about your honor's thesis work in office hours, and to see all the cool connections you were making between your topic and the class materials. Leslie Kurke

Paola Padilla



Primary literature: Spanish; secondary literature: English.

Faculty Comments:

Paola, you have a kind of literary sensibility, intelligence, and insight that's made us terrifically grateful to have you among us. It's almost impossible not to learn from what you offer, from the ways you see into literary "experiments" that cross various kinds of what had seemed to be hard lines of sociopolitical and cultural demarcation, separation, hierarchy. You have, in her time with us, evidenced a very rare gift for elaborating the ways that literary works tell us more about how and why those demarcations took shape; more of what they mean; and why our knowing more

about them, through literary experience, can give us the sense that we might have something to say about their present and their future. You have a very bright future ahead of her, a future that will, no doubt, make a difference to those around you.

Robert Kaufman

Congratulations to you, Paola, on earning your BA in Comparative Literature. I remember you from our "Comparative Mythology: Celtic, Norse, and Greek" course last spring. I recall that you were conscientious about always coming to class and that you did especially well on the essay midterm. I wish you all success in your future career.

Annalee Rejhon

Hyeona Park



Primary literature: Korean; secondary literature: English. Double major in English. Her thesis is titled "Understanding the Self for Women in Naebangkasa From Joseon Dynasty Period to the Present" with Faculty Advisor Professor Youngmin Kwon. High distinction in general scholarship.

Faculty Comments:

Congratulations on graduation Hyeona! It was great to have you in Comp Lit 190. Your thoughtful work in the class, and your insightful approach to all of your studies set a high standard for all of us. Good luck! Tim Hampton

Dear Hyeona, congratulations on graduation! I vividly remember your contributions in my class on “Luther, the Bible, and the Reformation,” your passion for the readings, and your intellectual curiosity when we discussed the texts in class and in office hours. I wish you success in your future career. Stay in touch. Niklaus Largier

Kara Poon



Primary literature: English; secondary literature: Chinese. Double major in Theater and Dance Performance Studies. She studied abroad in Cambridge, England in summer of 2018.

Faculty Comments:

Congratulations Kara! It has been great to have you as a student in Comp. Lit. 190. Your curious and probing comments, your remarkable knowledge of a wide range of musical and literary traditions, and your excellent writing, have all helped make this a rewarding class for your teachers and classmates. Good luck! Tim Hampton

Dear Kara, warm congratulations to you on earning your BA in Comparative Literature. Your work in my “Comparative Mythology: Celtic, Norse, and Greek” course during this current semester has been very good indeed to date (especially the short essay on themidterm!) and I have enjoyed having you in class and hearing your questions and comments, even under these unusual online Zoom conditions. Take care, and best wishes for your future career. Annalee Rejhon

Kara Poon: was Spring 2017’s CL 100 your gateway to the major? already in your first year an incredibly incisive and insightful feminist reader, you lingered with Yu Tsun in the Garden of the Forking Paths, pondering the “ins” and “outs” of the sham inclusivity of Western universalism, later turning to film’s power to visualize what patriarchy might but does not hear, and vocalize what it might but does not see, a chiasmus that kept you from plunging head on and mistaking art for life as Scottie and Harry did. Here you are on the other side--congratulations! Anne-Lise Francois

Haley Rome



Primary literature: English; secondary literature: French.

Faculty Comments:

Haley, it was a pleasure having you in CL 155 last year. Your presentation on *L'aventure ambiguë* was a real highlight, and I thank you for all of your enthusiasm and thoughtful comments. Wishing you all the best in the years ahead! Karl Britto

Haley, with your actor's sensibility to turn "interpretation" into performance as analysis, you produced a phenomenal audio essay that could have been Sherwood Andersen's *Winesburg, Ohio* updated for the present. Skillfully edited, you let the subtleties of tone, accent, and timbre turn family squabbles into a study of how we make meaning through the stories we tell ourselves in order to live. Tom McEnaney

Cole Smith



Primary literature: English; secondary literature: French. Double major in Computer Science, minor in French. Studied abroad in Lyon, France. Distinction in general scholarship.

Faculty Comments:

Dear Cole: I vividly recall your presentation on Isaac Babel and your marvelous final paper for my class. I want to wish you the very best as you move into the wider world! Harsha Ram

Possessed of both a keen sensitivity to literary effects and a disarming sense of humor, you had an uncanny ability to respond to your peers and open up whole new conceptual terrains during class discussions. You were a terrific reader of Proust, and your thoughtful, moving meditation on reading the "Time Passes" section of *To the Lighthouse* during the pandemic led me to see a familiar text anew. Dora Zhang

Cole Smith--with Humberto and Kara you came down the garden of the forking paths. did you end up climbing over its fractal walls as you encouraged the reader to in your first essay? Even then you were keeping faith with Borges's secret desire for an active

reader by refusing to take his text at face value. At the reception i'd want to ask you about the affective attachments that have since taken hold. In the absence of champagne you'll have to take Sedgwick's reparative hand; early on you'd caught on that one secret may hide another and intrigue between characters was only there to distract you from what was happening between author and reader. Anne-Lise Francois

Sean Stover



Primary literature: English; secondary literature: Spanish. His thesis is titled "Tradition and Innovation in Jazz and Hip-Hop Improvisation" with Faculty Advisor Professor Tim Hampton. Distinction in general scholarship.

Faculty Comments:

Congratulations Sean! It's been a true pleasure working with you in Comp Lit 190, and on your senior thesis, which has taught me a lot about how music and improvisation work. I'm even starting to understand Hip Hop! You are an original reader of both music and

literature and an accomplished essayist. Good luck in the future! Tim Hampton

Dear Sean: Congratulations on completing your studies at Berkeley. I still remember your great presentation in my class on Eisenstein's montage and your final paper on instinctual drive and its relationship to revolution. Wishing you the very best for your future! Harsha Ram.

Chase Wilmot



Primary literature: English; secondary literature: Scandinavian. Minor in Creative Writing.

Faculty Comments:

Chase, it was great having you in CL 155 last year. I hope that you will have the chance to read more of Djébar's work – I really appreciated your thoughtful engagement with

Les enfants du nouveau monde. Wishing you all the best in the years ahead! Karl Britto

Your podcast project for COML 190's "Against Fiction" was inspiring in the ways you investigated your mother's personal history with a steady style that transformed familial experience into a broader examination of how belief can fracture and heal depending on how it's used. You have a keen ear for the politics of prose. Tom McEnaney

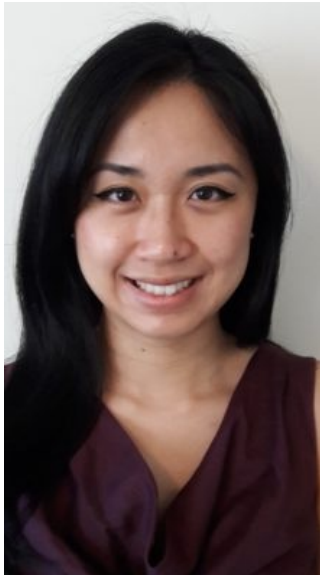
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree

Nicole Adair



Under the direction of Professors Tim Hampton (Chair), Vicky Kahn, and Diego Pirillo, she has written a dissertation entitled “The Hermeneutics of the Veil: Reading Faith in Early Modern Poetry”. She has also completed the Designated Emphasis in Renaissance and Early Modern Studies. She will be pursuing creative writing in New York City.

Keru Cai



Under the direction of Professors Andrew Jones (Chair), Sophie Volpp, Harsha Ram, and Edward Tyerman, she has written a dissertation entitled “Poverty and Squalor in Modern Chinese Realism”. In the fall she will be starting a Junior Research Fellowship (Fellowship by Examination) at the University of Oxford (Magdalen College), and has accepted a job offer to start at the Pennsylvania State University in Fall 2022 as Assistant Professor of Asian Studies and Comparative Literature.

Bristin Jones



Under the direction of Professors Anne-Lise Francois and Barbara Spackman (Co-chairs), Albert Ascoli, and Francine Masiello, she has written a dissertation entitled “First Person Animals: Interspecific Communication in the Anthropocene”. After graduation, Bristin will continue to teach environmental humanities courses at UC Merced as she works towards publishing her first novel.

Maya Kronfeld



Under the direction of Professors Judith Butler (Chair), Robert Kaufman, C.D. Blanton, and Stephen Best, she completed her dissertation entitled “Spontaneous Form: Four Studies in Consciousness and Philosophical Fiction.” She will be joining the Princeton Society of Fellows in the fall.

Danny Luzon



Under the direction of Professors Chana Kronfeld (Chair), Dorothy Hale, Niklaus Largier, and Julian Levinson of the University of Michigan, he has written a dissertation entitled “Translational Encounters: Modernism, Jewishness and Translation in Literatures of the Mass Migration Period.” He has also completed the Designated Emphasis in Jewish studies. He has accepted a position as Assistant Professor of English at the University of Haifa.

Jocelyn Saidenberg



Under the direction of Professors Nelly Oliensis (Chair), Kathleen McCarthy, and Anne-Lise Francois, she has written a dissertation entitled "Echo Otherwise". This fall, she will be a Visiting Assistant Professor at Deep Springs College.

Simone Stirner



Under the direction of Professors Judith Butler (Chair), Chana Kronfeld, Niklaus Largier, and Debarati Sanyal, she has written a dissertation entitled "Ethical Tendencies: Forms of Attention in Poetry after the Holocaust." She has also completed the Designated Emphases in Jewish Studies and Critical Theory. She will be an Assistant Professor of German Studies in the Department of German, Russian, and East European Studies at Vanderbilt University.

Diana Thow



Under the direction of Professors Professors Barbara Spackman (Chair), Lyn Hejinian, Chana Kronfeld, and Mairi McLaughlin, she has written a dissertation entitled "Original Echoes: Poetic Subjectivity and Translation between Italy, France, and the US."

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

Graduation Ceremony

- ★ In recognition of your participation in your graduation ceremony.
- ★ Congratulations on your outstanding achievement. May your graduation from the University of California, Berkeley inspire a lifetime of new endeavors and accomplishments.


JANET NAPOLITANO
PRESIDENT, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA




CAROL T. CHRIST
CHANCELLOR, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY