



SUMMER 2021

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DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Dear ESC colleagues, students, and friends,

I hope you have enjoyed our “Year of Creating Europe” as much as I have. We have explored a diversity of topics relating to what Europe is, what Europe can be, and how Europeaness and European identity are created. ESC Associate Director, Allyson Delnore, and I recently sat down with our newsletter editor, Emilee Ruhland, to reflect more on this past year’s activities. You can read more about our discussion on pg. 11. Over the past two months, we’ve held Conversations on Europe on creating Europe through multilingualism and the Creative Europe program and cultural policy. These roundtables brought together both academics and policy-makers to discuss these important topics. If you didn’t have the opportunity to join us for these, recordings and further resources are available on [our website](#).

In addition to these events, our affiliated faculty member Randall Halle (Klaus W. Jonas Professor of German Film and Cultural Studies) held a workshop on cultural policy in March with support from our Jean Monnet Center of Excellence Grant which is funded by the European Commission through the Erasmus + Programme. The morning session was open to all who were interested in the topic, including faculty, graduate students, practitioners, and policy-makers and focused on professional development and the state of the field. The afternoon session was limited to U.S.-based graduate students and junior faculty and focused on the nuts-and-bolts of the field. 65 individuals attended some part of the workshop.

Stay tuned for more events and activities focused on ‘creating’ through our MEET EU grant with UNC-Chapel Hill and Florida International University (sponsored by the EU Delegation to the U.S.), including a virtual residency for an EU-based filmmaker, who will jury a short film competition and provide the keynote for an EU film festival, and the development of extended reality (ER) educational resources. In addition, through a Jean Monnet Project Grant, and in collaboration with the Department of History and other colleagues throughout the Dietrich School, we expect to host the “Creating Europe” Speaker Series that was postponed last fall due to the pandemic.

Director's Message, cont.

As we look towards the coming fall, we look forward to being able to engage with students, faculty, and the larger community more in person, while keeping in mind all that we have learned about virtual programming and engagement over the past year. We hope to bring the best of our experiences back to the in-person world and envision carrying over some virtual aspects to continue making our programs open and accessible to a wider audience.

We are excited to announce that the **2021-22 theme is "Year of Recovering Europe."** This theme is the result of discussions and consultation with our affiliated faculty. Over the summer, we will be developing programming that addresses ways in which Europe is recovering from and reckoning with COVID, Brexit, social injustice, legacies of decolonialization, trauma and wars, and damage to the environment, among others. See our [website](#) for how to get involved and stay tuned for another thought-provoking and exciting year of events.

Finally, I want to wish all of our graduates and award winners a hearty congratulations. You can find a list of our graduates and award recipients on pg. 13.

As we all begin to re-emerge from this past year, I hope you have a relaxing and productive summer.

Jae-Jae Spoon
Director, European Studies Center

Save the Date!

Pitt's Children's Lit Program, in collaboration with European Studies and Global Studies, aims to create an international community of scholars investigating the global spread of children's literature in European languages from the eighteenth through the early twentieth centuries. An initial team has received a Year of Engagement Grant to begin work on a digital map project tracing this movement, called *Round the Globe: Travel Routes of Children's Literature*. Graduate student Sreemoyee Dasgupta (working on Bengal, India), incoming graduate student Gabriela Lee (the Philippines), and Associate Professor Courtney Weikle-Mills (the Anglophone Caribbean) will present the project at a showcase in late May, date to be determined, with responses by Allyson Delnore (ESC) and Maja Konitzer (GSC).

Join our international community and learn how you can contribute to this work. The Conversation begins 27 May 2021 at 9:30 EST. [Register here.](#)

ESC NEWSLETTER

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Undergraduate Research Group “Interrupts” Columbus

by Lina Insana

On October 9, 2020, Pittsburgh Mayor Bill Peduto published an open letter to the Pittsburgh Art Commission in response to their earlier recommendation that the city's Columbus statue—which had been dedicated on October 12, 1958—should be “returned to the Italian American community.” Admitting that he was of two minds regarding his decision, Peduto shared that his Italian American heritage had shaped his ancestors' vision of Columbus as a navigator, a discoverer, a figure that legitimized Italian immigrants' “right to be here”; further, he seemed to be moved by the narrative of “generations of Italian-Americans raising nickels and dimes, passing plates after Mass and community picnics” to collect money for the statue's construction. On the other hand, his letter calls out Columbus' divisiveness in today's America, and underscores the “reckoning” that our society has begun to make with his legacy of cruelty and oppression of indigenous groups.

As Peduto points out, the 1958 dedication was almost fifty years in the making: Pittsburgh Italian Americans had first proposed the statue in 1909, when a small sum of money was set aside as seed funding. But fundraising fits and starts and two world wars, as well as disagreements between the Italian American community and

the City of Pittsburgh over where the statue should be placed, led to long delays and then finally complicated negotiations throughout the early 1950s. Proponents of the statue and its iconography have long filled this almost fifty-year gap with a narrative of “generations of Italian Americans raising nickels and dimes,” and fundraising through “small donations from working-class Italian-Americans,” as ISDA President Basil Russo claimed in a recent WESA piece on the controversy. But recent scholarship on Columbus statues and the origins of their Italian American support suggests the possibility of a different narrative: that funds for Columbus statues were more typically raised by wealthy community leaders, *prominenti* (the Italian term for wealthy, influential Italian immigrant community leaders) at the helm of newspapers; regional and beneficial associations; and thriving local businesses.

This semester, with the generous support of student research stipends provided by the European Studies Center (as well as from the Palamidessi-Bagedonow fund for Undergraduate Research in Italian Studies), a group of seven undergraduates has combed digital newspaper archives—in English and Italian—from 1909 until the late 1920s, with the aim of conducting some foundational research. Was Columbus commemoration a significant (and clearly stated) goal of the Italian immigrant community in Pittsburgh? What kinds of Columbus-related fundraising were being conducted in Pittsburgh at this time, and to what ends? What was the relationship between Columbus Day celebrations and the eventual coalescing of efforts to pay for, commission, and dedicate the Columbus memorial at the entrance to Schenley Park? Who were the figures most closely associated with these initiatives, and could they be called “*prominenti*”?



Columbus Statue, photo credit Alexandra Derubeis

continues on page 9

Heath Cabot Wins Chancellor's Distinguished Research Award

Heath Cabot, associate professor of Anthropology at Pitt and ESC faculty affiliate, has been awarded the Chancellor's Distinguished Research Award for her contributions to the field of Anthropology. Her peers wrote that "Dr. Cabot is one of the most active and important young voices in anthropology today, with an impressive body of work on asylum, solidarity, and crisis that is also informed by a thoughtful program of advocacy and activism."



Cabot's research looks at grassroots healthcare activism in Greece that emerged during the Greek economic crisis and the fourteen austerity packages that followed between 2010 and 2017. Austerity policies implemented at the EU level (political-economic policies that aim to reduce governmental budget deficits) had catastrophic impacts on the Greek social state, including pension cuts (30-50%), privatization of public services, and shortages in medical supplies and personnel. Even as Greece has moved to a "post-austerity" period, the effects of these policies persist (and likely will for years to come).

As Cabot has argued, austerity policies demanded that "Greeks pay the debt with not just their economic well-being, but also, in many cases, their physical health." The social clinics and pharmacies seek to address these health inequities from the ground up by providing health services at no cost. These initiatives are comprised entirely of volunteer labor, and they redistribute medicines collected from private citizens, pharmaceutical drives, private pharmacies, and healthcare professionals in Greece and throughout Europe. There are dozens of solidarity initiatives throughout Greece focused on addressing basic needs (including not just clinics and pharmacies, but kitchens and groceries).

Cabot is currently a fellow at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology's Anthropology of Economic Experimentation: Frontiers of Transformation. There she is working on a book project based on this research that explores how citizens and non-citizens alike in Greece are increasingly dependent on both formal and informal modes of extra-state service provision (which throws into question the capacity of state and supranational governments to safeguard access to rights on the margins of Europe).

Her earlier research was focused on the political asylum process in Greece, following asylum seekers, bureaucrats, and service providers in their navigation of the legal process. Her book, *On the Doorstep of Europe: Asylum and Citizenship in Greece* (2014), centers on an asylum advocacy NGO in Athens, considering the structural violence that European governance, rights frameworks, and humanitarian intervention enacts and highlighting how workers and clients grapple with these predicaments.

Each award recipient is awarded a \$2,000 cash prize and a grant of \$3,000 to support their research. Cabot plans to donate the entirety of the cash award to the initiatives where she based her earlier and current research: an asylum advocacy NGO and several healthcare activist groups in Athens.

Student Spotlight: Daniel Turillo

In my two years here at Pitt, interdisciplinarity has been central to my academic and extracurricular experience. I came to college without a very clear idea of what I wanted to study, but by looking for ways to combine my seemingly disparate interests, I have been able to pursue incredible opportunities for growth both in and out of the classroom, all culminating in my involvement in the ESC this year.

When I arrived at Pitt, all I knew was that I wanted to major in Political Science. On a whim, I decided to enroll in an Italian course for my first semester; after all, I had enjoyed my Italian classes in high school, but I couldn't have imagined my love for the language and culture blossoming so much that Italy would soon become the primary focus of my studies. Since then, I have come to appreciate the parallel cultural and political trajectories that Italy and America have found themselves on, especially as both nations face encroachments of far-right nationalist groups into mainstream politics. I have sought to explore these dynamics through coursework in foreign policy, regionalism, film, international trade, public opinion, and much more, leading to my declaration of an additional Economics major and Italian minor. And outside of the classroom, I have furthered these interests by studying Italian migration policy at GSPIA and American racial justice organizing through the UHC. And while my summer plans are still taking shape, I will either be completing a Brackenridge Fellowship to study the Italian neofascist music subculture or interning at the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Eurasian Affairs to work on bureau-wide diversity initiatives, both of which align precisely with my professional ambitions at the intersection of culture and transatlantic diplomacy.

Naturally, my interests attracted me to the ESC, through which I declared a Transatlantic Studies Certificate earlier this semester. In my short time working with the Center, I have found all of its students and staff to be incredibly welcoming and knowledgeable. Despite just now making my official entrance into the ESC, I already feel at home among so many passionate individuals, and I hope to be able to work with the Center even more closely from here on out. Luckily, I will be able to do just that as an incoming FLAS Fellow for the 2021-22 school year. With the help of the ESC, I now have the time and flexibility I need to complete my certificate while still pursuing other coursework and extracurricular activities relevant to my area of focus. Indeed, I have already been able to enroll in a transatlantic policy analysis course and a graduate seminar on the history of the Italian language for the fall. This fellowship will also allow me to eventually take my first trip across the Atlantic, which I could not be more excited about. As I look to investigate the sociocultural dynamics underpinning Italian-American relations, I feel confident knowing just how much support I have from the ESC, and I will surely turn to this vibrant community and its remarkable network of scholars and leaders as I seek to forge a new way forward in transatlantic diplomacy.

Daniel Turillo is an incoming third-year student completing majors in Political Science and Economics, a minor in Italian, and a certificate in Transatlantic Studies. He also works as a Resident Assistant on campus and is involved in Quiz Bowl, Jazz Ensemble, Symphony Orchestra, and College Democrats. After graduation, he hopes to pursue further work or studies in transatlantic affairs and policy.





This marks the first in a regular series of features in which the ESC Newsletter Editor sits down with an international visitor or student from Europe to discuss life in Pittsburgh and at Pitt.

This issue, we sat down with Cristina Blanco Sío-López, Marie Skłodowska-Curie Senior Global Fellow and Principal Investigator of the research project "Navigating Schengen: Historical Challenges and Potentialities of the EU's Free Movement of Persons, 1985-2015" ([NAVSCHEN](#)) at the Ca' Foscari University of Venice. As part of the MSCA Global Fellowship,

she has spent two years in residency at Pitt (2019-2021) working at the ESC and with ESC affiliated faculty member Professor John Lyon (Department of German). These are the pandemic years, but as Dr. Blanco Sío-López herself explains brightly over her beautiful English coffee cup (a souvenir of her pre-pandemic time at Cambridge), "nothing can stop a passionate historian." Her research and publications focus on European Integration History—with an accent on enlargement policy temporalities and Schengen area fundamental rights.

Coffee preference: a double *espresso* from her Italian moka coffee maker, a holdover from her time in Florence.

ER: It's nice to sit down with you. I hope you have been enjoying your time in Pittsburgh. Had you been here before you started your residency in 2019?

CBSL: Yes! I visited Pittsburgh in 2004 for my first-ever conference during my PhD. It was the first time I spoke publicly about my research in an academic conference so that adds an extra layer of magic to Pittsburgh. I would then return to the same annual conference at Pitt in 2005 and many years would pass in between but I would keep the Cathedral of Learning as a symbol of cosmopolitan dialogues in my mind. I am a Pittsburgh advocate in Europe, as nobody knows about its amazing beauty and coolness! My third re-enchantment came in the summer of 2017, when I was a Summer Research Scholar at Pitt's European Studies Center at the University Library System.

ER: How did you get interested in Pitt's Barbara Sloan European Union Documentary Collection? What has been most surprising or enjoyable about the archive?

CBSL: I was a Summer Research Scholar at the European Studies Center of the University of Pittsburgh and at Pitt's

Barbara Sloan European Union Documentary Collection in 2017. It was a bright time full of enriching meetings, unexpected discoveries and serendipitous archival findings, especially thanks to Phil Wilkin, then the Collection's Director. The most helpful point is the thematic indexing of the collection, the possibility of flying through interconnected topics and sub-topics from one folder to another...This is so different, from the fundamentally challenging Historical Archives of the EU in Florence, which are arranged by donor. Here, I could jump from one domain to another in a rather intuitive way. It is, at once, a decentralized and a distributed network with clearly drawn avenues to travel through nodes...this is a rarity and we owe this Ariadne's thread to Phil Wilkin, even if he will say that "he was standing on the shoulders of giants." Yeah, right...don't listen to that...he did a lot.

ER: What is it like to do archival research, especially at Pitt, during the pandemic?

CBSL: In that respect, I am lucky to be a historian because we start by gathering a lot of sources to then analyze a lot of documents to finally try to write a lot of contributions. So, the source gathering process was

largely complete by the end of 2019. However, something is clearly missing in this restrictive pandemic equation: serendipity. To give you an example: You look for specific folders but next to them or 'in relation to' them you find a fountain of unexpected knowledge and rich new sources. This is also the case when meeting experts in your field: One key thing that is missing in the pandemic era is the casual encounters by chance, which normally happen in a coffee break at a conference or after a lecture, when conversations are not focused or directed and, precisely for that reason, they lead to unimaginable and fruitful points of convergence.

ER: Can you tell us a little about the Schengen area, and what got you thinking about the Free Movement of Persons?

CBSL: I worked on dimensions and perception of 'time' for years. More specifically, I worked on inducing a-contextual time perceptions in political communication regarding the EU's Eastward enlargement by the European Commission. Nonetheless, something was lacking. Time could not stand still by itself without a spatial axis and this spatial axis was very much connected to human mobility as a largely neglected fundamental right. Then the Schengen area and the concept of "space as vehicle of possibility" started to emerge through archival documents and interviews and I saw it clearly. My slogan as a passionate historian is "looking back to see beyond," so I decided to explore the origins and development of the EU's Free Movement of Persons and its connection to the right to mobility as a fundamental right and freedom. Most importantly, I was very concerned about the fact that this fundamental right is often denied nowadays, since mobility, migration, and asylum-seeking are analyzed under a security lens, while neglecting all their interconnected human rights dimensions. I then started to study the work of the European Parliament in this direction, given its differential stance in fighting against the commoditization of human mobility and emerging security-based business models. So it feels like I have come full circle: time and space, the European Commission and the European Parliament, EU's enlargement and free movement in the EU as a way to enjoy your right of fully belonging to space within a given

lapse of time...I hope it will inspire others to use their diverse voices to foster an integration process which could never exist without an explicit human dimension.

ER: Pittsburgh has a lot to offer, including one of my favorite oddities, the Saint Anthony Chapel, which houses the second-largest collection of relics in the world, behind only the Vatican. What have you had a chance to do, and what would you like to make sure to do before you leave at the end of the summer?

CBSL: I've been there too! I also discovered the wonder of Maxo Vanka's murals in Millvale: A historian's treasure trove and a graphic critique of social inequality and migrant workers' hope for a fairer tomorrow. However, in 2017, I was able to fulfill one of my bucket list dreams: When I was in high school in Spain I had this wonderful Art History text book with a full section dedicated to Frank Lloyd Wright and 'Organic Architecture'. It was crowned by the classic view of Fallingwater. Thanks to good friends, I finally was able to jump into that image. I'd also love to explore Kentuck Knob, to see my first raccoon ever, and I would love to revisit Randyland: explosive color and joy...what else do we need?! I've done a lot of exploring the Victorian mansions and street art around the city on my bike, which I've affectionately nicknamed 'Monongahela'!



Pause-Café cont.

During the pandemic's most isolating moments, I have been engaging with poetry performance communities and I even received a poetry award, but the best life lesson from these experiences is that you should always feel invited to exist and 'talk' in all these other alternative languages. I think that Pittsburgh offers a good current of consciousness for these kinds of chances. For instance, I could have never imagined that I would have participated in an art show during the pandemic, but it happened in the concept store 'Sanctuary', in Lawrenceville. Pittsburgh lends a hand beyond constraints...you just need to watch out for the luminous signs.

ER: What do you plan to do after finishing your fellowship, and, hopefully, once the pandemic is under control?

CBSL: The next stop is Venice, where I will be focusing on finalizing my book and on communicating my research findings through different media, including, hopefully, poetic and artistic channels in order to break the rigidity of scholarly dissemination and outreach! In a post-pandemic setting, I would love to bridge Pitt and Venice towards a closer transatlantic conversation and collaboration in the field of European Studies where we can continue depicting innovative horizons of critical research analysis together. So, let's just say our next coffee will have a view over the Grand Canal...



Pitt's Model EU Team Competes in Midwest Simulation



In early April, our Model EU (MEU) team attended the Midwest Model EU simulation, hosted by the Institute of European Studies at Indiana University. This unique simulation format allowed Pitt's MEU team to work together to represent Croatia across several EU institutions, including the European Council, Commission, several EU Council Configurations (foreign affairs, finance, environment, justice and home affairs), and the Director General. The students prepared policy briefs based on their understanding of Croatian interests across several issue areas. Our team was most excited about their contributions on justice and home affairs, which was on the topic of justice for children.

Ally Fedor, Barrie Wiener, Regis Curtis, Benjamin Page, Vivian Zauhar While some students debated on policies on behalf of Croatia, such as the ministers, others embraced a more EU-centric lens in their debates, such as the Commissioner and the Director General. Regis Curtis, a member of the Pitt MEU, won an award for his role as Director General. In his role, he assisted in reviewing and refining policy proposals submitted by country representatives to ensure they were suitable for debate across the other institutions. Curtis writes that "participating in the Midwest Model EU was a privilege and I was so glad to share the experience with my team here at Pitt." He enjoyed his role as Director-General and was able to engage with "a smaller group where the debate and contention was good-natured. I learned a lot through the simulation, working to help draft legislation that could be sent to further committees."

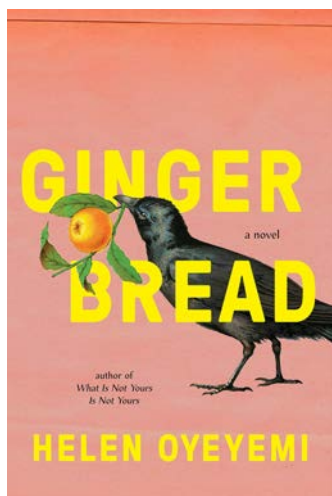
To celebrate the end of the year, the team picked up and enjoyed some Balkan/Croatian food from a [local deli](#)! While Pitt's MEU team enjoyed the virtual simulations they attended this year, they hope to participate in-person at simulations in Europe next fall! The Model EU circuit is co-funded by a grant from the European Union.

ESCAPE into a Book with ESC Book Group

by Samantha Moik

When the ESC transitioned to remote work as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, we started to explore ways we could further connect with our community through more relaxed programming during a universally stressful time. This led to the launch of the ESCAPE book group last fall. Open to all, our “ESCAPERS” read a common book and gather for an informal discussion every few months. Our book selections focus on contemporary European literature, including translated works.

Our first book was *Go, Went, Gone* by Jenny Erpenbeck, a novel about African migrants in Germany and their journeys. This novel was well-received by the ESCAPE group and provided us with a lot of fantastic discussion topics.



It was followed by Helen Oyeyemi’s *Gingerbread*, which had mixed reviews from our readers yet still gave us loads to talk about. This novel follows the Lee family, taking us from Druhástrana, the mysterious country whose very existence is questioned by much of the world, to London, with gingerbread playing a role throughout. The one constant with the ESCAPE book group is that we build community through lively discussions.

ESCAPERS include Pitt students, faculty, and staff; colleagues from other universities; K-12 educators; and community members. If you haven’t already, consider joining us! Our third book selection and discussion dates will be announced soon. This program is supported by our National Resource Center grant from the U.S. Department of Education.

Samantha Moik is the Engagement Coordinator for the European Studies Center. If you are interested in learning more about the ESCAPE book group – and hopefully joining us – you can email her at smm302@pitt.edu to be added to the ESCAPE mailing list and be one of the first to know about the next book.

Columbus, cont.

continued from page 3

In our work thus far, we’ve confirmed the strong involvement of *prominenti* in Columbus commemoration efforts. But we’ve also unearthed interesting new connections and conflicts between national groups like the Knights of Columbus and regional organizations like the Order Sons of Italy and the Italian Consolidated Press, on one hand, and Pittsburgh Italians, on the other. We’re tracking the ways that Columbus was--and wasn’t--prioritized as a symbol of the Italian immigrant community in the years before WWII. Finally, we’ve identified some important actors in these early years and will now turn our attention to finding traces of their philanthropic activity--both in the Columbus context and in other Pittsburgh-based initiatives promoting the community’s *italianità*, including Pitt’s very own Italian Nationality Room.

The “Columbus, interrupted” research group consists of James Carnevale, Alexandra Derubeis, Samuel Esser, Giuliana Galati, Ghalia Malki, Claire Pilcher, and Nate Spence. Faculty-directed student research projects are co-funded by the ESC’s National Resource Center grant from the U.S. Department of Education.

Thank You to Our Student Ambassadors

This year, the European Studies Center was represented by three undergraduate student ambassadors with different backgrounds and interests. We'd like to thank them for their hard work this year as we all adapted to remote learning, teaching, and engagement!

Danielle Obisie-Orlu is a sophomore from Maryland who spent her formative and high school years in Johannesburg, South Africa. Danielle is pursuing a Bachelor of Philosophy Degree through a dual major in Political Science and International and Area Studies, and minors in History and French. At Pitt, Danielle serves as the President for the Resident Student Association (RSA) and a Global Ties Mentor, in addition to her work as an ESC Student Ambassador. Danielle has special interests International Affairs, migration, and the issue of xenophobia. Danielle hopes to attend law school after graduating from Pitt and specialize in Public International Law. One of the ways Danielle serves the ESC is by visiting classes to talk about ESC certificates and study abroad programs. She enjoys those visits, because the professors are always so welcoming and she learns something new from the classes she attends! Danielle also helps with social media planning to encourage student engagement alongside Sophie Tayade and Communications GSA Emilee Ruhland, which has been an exciting way to work together as a team to be innovative and create social media that exemplifies the Center's missions and goals.



Robert Lynn is a senior from Allentown, PA graduating in Spring '21 with a Bachelor's in Political Science, a minor in Italian, and a European Union Studies Certificate. As a Student Ambassador, he made class visits around campus to promote the Center's programs both online and in-person throughout his junior and senior years. He also contributed to finding international scholarship opportunities for undergrads and founded the Europe Club, an extracurricular opportunity for students with an interest in European studies. Robert will be pursuing a Master's in Public and International Affairs at the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public & International Affairs. He hopes to do research on technology policy, international cooperation, and corporate responsibility in the space sector.

Sophie Tayade is a senior from Columbus, Ohio, pursuing a Bachelor of Philosophy Degree in Rehabilitation Sciences, minor in Chemistry, and certificates in Transatlantic Studies (ESC) and Global Studies. Sophie has served as Campus Director for the first Millennium Fellowship cohort at Pitt (2019), studied the Starzl Papers through the Archival Scholars Research Award, and been a Creative Arts Fellow through funding from the Year of Creativity Grant. Sophie hopes to attend medical school and specialize in pediatric and emergency medicine. This year, she served as a European Studies and Blue & Gold Society Ambassador, placed first on a team at the Pitt Global Health Case Competition, and received the University Honors College Racism Pandemic Project grant to fund a summer art enrichment program for the Bhutanese Community of Pittsburgh. This year she worked on social media design and initiatives while visiting classes and answering student questions. She looks forward to engaging with students virtually, and perhaps in-person in the fall.



Recap: Year of Creating Europe



Three years ago, ESC Director Jae-Jae Spoon and Associate Director Allyson Delnore laid out a three-year plan for the Jean Monnet Center of Excellence grant, proposing subsequent "Years of...": Global Europe, Memory and Politics, and Creating Europe. This final year now over, Spoon, Delnore, and Newsletter Editor Emilee Ruhland sat down to discuss what the Year of Creating Europe meant for the ESC and to look back on some of its highlights. With the pandemic ever-present, a year focused on creativity, production, imagination, and innovation was well-timed.

In a year like no other, ESC staff was forced to get creative with Creating Europe promotional items. To increase visibility of the initiative, the ESC distributed custom Zoom backgrounds for affiliated faculty and logo-emblazoned touch tool keychains for contactless handle pulling and elevator button pushing. Thanks to our Graphics Designer, Tricia McGough, for the designs.

The Year of Creating Europe coincided with the 70th anniversary of the Schuman Declaration, which proposed the creation of the precursor of the European Union. The year's programming, then, was inspired by and interested in the ever-shifting geographic, intellectual, ideological, and discursive borders of Europe. The theme also was partly driven by the launch of the new [Critical European Culture Studies Ph.D. Program](#), which just welcomed its first student this year. In support of the initiative, the final year of the grant seeks to reflect "the scholarship and teaching that is part of that PhD program," said Delnore. Spoon added that the "Year Of" programming also adds more cohesiveness, an "overarching theme" to the Center's events and conversations.

EUROPE WILL NOT BE MADE ALL AT ONCE, OR ACCORDING TO A SINGLE PLAN. IT WILL BE BUILT THROUGH CONCRETE ACHIEVEMENTS WHICH FIRST CREATE A DE FACTO SOLIDARITY.

The Schuman Declaration

WE WERE VIRTUAL BEFORE IT WAS COOL

Jae-Jae Spoon

The Year of Creating Europe lined up with Pitt's [Year of Engagement](#), which faced some interesting challenges during the pandemic. But the Center was "virtual before it was cool," Spoon said. Pre-pandemic *Conversations on Europe* took place on campus with both in-person and virtual panelists. They were recorded and posted on the ESC website since 2012. The majority of ESC engagement before March 2020, however, was in person. But since the pandemic, said Spoon, "from an engagement perspective...the audiences for most of our virtual events have been off the charts." As organizations and institutions move forward into a more hybrid, post-pandemic world, Spoon and Delnore see virtual and in-person engagement as both essential in realizing the Center's mission.

One of the ways the ESC considered engagement and creativity this year was through the creation of a book group, organized by Engagement Coordinator Samantha Moik, discussing European novels that have a connection to current European events (see more on page 9). The ESCape book group engages the larger Pittsburgh (and beyond) community and considers creation from a literary perspective. The group has met to discuss two different books so far and plans to continue past the 2020-2021 Year of Engagement.

The Center has also funded several projects and events that intersected with the Year of Creating Europe and the Year of Engagement. In late February, the Department of French and Italian hosted Professor Annette Joseph-Gabriel to talk about her book, [Reimagining Liberation: How Black Women Transformed Citizenship in the French Empire](#). In addition to its emphasis on engagement through innovative scholarship, the discussion was moderated by graduate students.

Recap: Year of Creating Europe

English Professor Courtney Weikle-Mills and graduate student Sreemoyee Dasgupta are digitally mapping the spread of children's literature written in European languages to the global South (18th-20th century) and received matching funds from both the ESC and the Year of Engagement. See page 2 for more on the first event organized as part of that project. The Center also funded honoraria for various European filmmakers to speak to Pitt audiences about women's horror cinema. Visiting lecturer Sonia Luper organized various events, including a conversation with UK director Lesley Manning, whose film *Ghostwatch* caused one million panicked phone calls into the BBC. Manning and her fellow panelists discussed the creation and programming of women's horror cinema.

The Center's *Conversations on Europe* were well attended this year; at the January "[Creating Europe Through Crisis](#)" event, for example, there were over 100 attendees. A "surprise hit" of the year was the "EU Cultural Policy How To..." workshop, led by affiliated faculty member Randall Halle in early March. Delnore noted that while you never know how many people will turn up for workshops, "within hours [of advertising the event] we had so many people [that] we ended registration and were turning people away. It was a nice problem to have." Delnore was crucial to one of the ESC's most

successful events of the year, when European Commission Vice President Frans Timmermans spoke for the March event "[Europe's Green Recovery](#)." Delnore suggested inviting Timmermans in August 2020; she said that Timmermans not only does extremely important work, but he's also "kind of a rock star." The event required a lot of behind-the-scenes work, logistical planning, and the politics of inviting and informing university officials, and almost 300 people attended! Timmermans, Spoon added, "was really thoughtful and clearly wanted to engage with students." Students were able to ask Timmermans questions and the discussion was incredibly dynamic and productive.

IN THIS YEAR OF MAKING DO, THERE WERE SOME THINGS THAT I FELT LIKE MAYBE WE MISSED OUT ON, SO HOPEFULLY WE WILL BE ABLE TO GET BACK TO THEM IN THE FUTURE.

Allyson Delnore

"And so we had envisioned," Delnore said, "bringing in artists and poets [to create] opportunities for sustained, in-person engagement." She added, "in this year of making do, there were some things that I felt like maybe we missed out on, so hopefully we will be able to get back to them in the future." The Center has received a one-year extension for its Jean Monnet Center of Excellence grant and so you can look forward to seeing some of these events in the coming year.

FOR A VIRTUAL EVENT, IT REALLY ALLOWED FOR A LOT OF ENGAGEMENT.

Allyson Delnore

Despite the major successes of the year, there were of course some things the Center wasn't able to do because of the pandemic. For example, Delnore was disappointed that "we weren't able to run the EU Film Festival that we had hoped to do, which was going to be one of the centerpieces of the Year of Creating Europe." Originally the festival had been planned with a partnership with Row House Cinema, but with the requirement of virtual screenings came the problems of distribution, copyright, and platform capabilities, so the event had to be tabled for a future year. In addition to considering how Europe is shaped, formed, and created, it was also important to the ESC to highlight the people doing the creating.



Visit <https://www.ucis.pitt.edu/esc/events/year-of-creating-europe> to view recordings of our past events.

Congratulations 2021 Graduates and Award Winners!

European Studies Center Class of 2021

West European Studies Certificate

Thyra-Lilja Aleksandra Altunin
Zachary S. Braddock
Lucia Huerga
Max Joseph Nowalk
Eric Salomons
Liam Josef Morrissey Sims
Esteban Vazquez Freire
Anne Marie Yurik
Evelyn Zamora-Vargas

Related Concentration in European and Eurasian Studies

Thyra-Lilja Aleksandra Altunin
Mackenzie Dowd
Emily E. Pinigis
Liam Josef Morrissey Sims
Jenna R. Teplitzky

Transatlantic Studies Certificate

Nic Barilar (Graduate)
Caden Breze
Daphne Conroy
Paul Donnelly (Graduate)
Michelle Morris
Max Joseph Nowalk
Sara P. Ropeta
Esteban Vazquez Freire
Anne Marie Yurik
Evelyn Zamora-Vargas

European Union Certificate

Robert Lynn (Ambassador)

Mediterranean Studies Certificate

Tyler Olin

European Studies Center Grant Awardees 2020-2021

FLAS AY 2021-2022

Madeline Blackburn, Portuguese
Gianna Donati, Arabic
Julia Ferri, Arabic
Ann Flemming, German
Jack Kinsey, German
Lizz Piccoli, Arabic
Laura Short, BCS
Dilek Tas, Turkish
Daniel Turillo, Italian
Falon Weidman, Arabic

FLAS Summer 2021

Caden Breze, Portuguese
Kathryn Carney, German
Julia Ferri, Arabic
Casey Montgomery, Arabic

Our FLAS grants are funded through Title VI of the Higher Education Act and administered through the U.S. Department of Education.

Harris N. Miller and Deborah A. Kahn Study Abroad in Europe Award

Benjamin Ascitutto
Clarisa Espinoza-Delgado
Benjamin Page
Daniel Turillo

Sbragia Fund for Graduate European Studies

Alex Honeker

Sciences-Po Exchange

Maxwell DeGregorio

Klinzing Grant

Dissertation
Ana Fumurescu
Anna Mousouli

Pre-Dissertation
Ann Flemming
Dinara Garifullina
Lazar Jovanovic
Zhan Zhang

Our Klinzing Grants are funded by ESC, UCIS, the Office of the Provost, and the Office of the senior Vice Chancellor for Research.

IN LIEU OF AN IN-PERSON CEREMONY, THE ESC'S GRADUATES WERE AMONG THOSE RECOGNIZED IN THE 2021 UCIS GRADUATION VIDEO.

Watch it [here!](#)