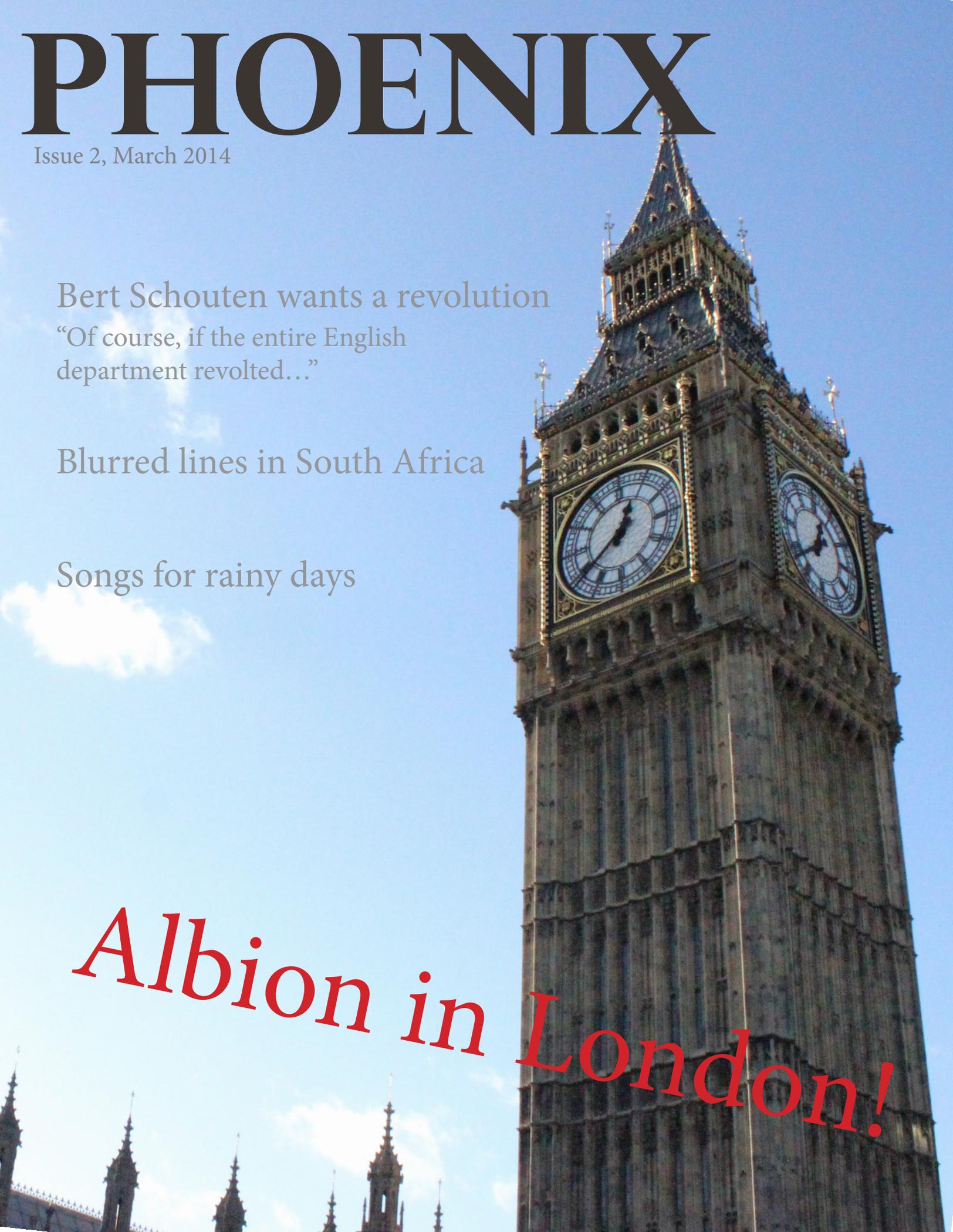


# PHOENIX



Issue 2, March 2014

Bert Schouten wants a revolution

“Of course, if the entire English department revolted...”

Blurred lines in South Africa

Songs for rainy days

*Albion in London!*

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# Here Comes the Sun

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A bit of sunshine, a lot of cold wind. The beginning of March has been, as usual, ambivalent in its meteorological decisions. By now, many people are fed up with winter and its lack of warmth. We are eager for afternoons in parks and evenings on balconies but February and March have been largely unaccommodating to our needs so far.

A similar sense of frustration and impatience reveals itself in and around class. The third block of the year is hardly one of reflection, as it mostly invites looking forward towards the final block. The first semester is behind us and, like summer, the end of the academic year already beckons. The contents and challenges of these final stages vary enormously for everyone. First- and second-years can look forward to in-depth courses of their own choosing, third-years to internships and BA theses, and many master students like myself try not to shiver in fear from the prospect of having to face the terrifying, gigantic academic beast that is an MA thesis in just a few weeks. Some are still desperately arranging stays abroad, others cannot wait to get this year over with and get on their planes. All in all, stressful times for many.

At first glance, this Phoenix issue seems to resemble such thoughts. A few anxious words from the board, a complaint about the course system, and a festival report pervaded with a desire for a real summer version paint somewhat of a bleak picture. It fits the vibe of gray skies, harsh winds, and a desperate need for sunshine.

However, not all hope for brighter days is lost. As if to contest my grave words at the very moment of their inception, the sun decides to peek through the curtains from a nearly cloudless blue sky. Like we let the sun lift our spirits, so allow the scorching flames of this Phoenix to bring warmth to your still-wintery soul! Bert Schouten's optimism and love for his profession are as contagious as they have ever been, while reports from sunny Cape Town and—less sunny but definitely lovely—London are sure to put a smile on your face as well.

After all, the weather really does not give a damn about whether or not we want to sun to shine or not. Spring will unfold the way it will and that means that some of us might have to power through a fickle, unpredictable March and block 3. Such is life. Buckle up.

In the meantime, enjoy this Phoenix and go for a walk. I hear the sun is coming out this week.

Lars Engels  
Editor in Chief

## Word from the Board

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*By Aster Dieleman*

Dear readers,

When I'm writing this it's Valentine's Day and just like last year and the year before that one (and the one before that, etc.), I'm very much alone. Luckily I've already made a deal with Astrid that when we're thirty and both still single we'll buy a big house, 10 cats and a Siberian Husky, and live happily ever after. It makes the future a little less daunting, knowing that I've at least secured my living arrangements. (You better stay single, Nieuwets.)

The future is something I've been thinking about a lot lately, since I'm in my last year of English now and starting a Master's programme in September. The thing is, I have absolutely no idea what I want to do when I'm done studying. And it positively frightens me that I'm supposed to be an Actual Adult with an Actual Job in about a year and a half. I've procrastinated on pretty much everything in my life so far, why can't I just procrastinate my life itself a little? Stay at university for a couple more years?

Anyhow, enough rambling about how I haven't got a clue what I'm doing with my life. Maybe this new issue of Phoenix will give me some ideas!

Hugs and kisses on behalf of the board,

Aster

# Tea Time With Bert

By Kiki Drost and Stanzy Kersten

We all know him as that teacher that was supposed to have gone into retirement two years ago, but decided to stay another year because he loves us so much. However, there is a lot more to Bert Schouten than just his never-ending love of teaching. That is why Kiki and Stanzy decided to have a cup of tea with this dedicated phonetics teacher.

After getting lost twice we finally found the right house with a van in front of the door. “I bought my first van 22 years ago because I thought a van was the most comfortable way to transport children. My children have now moved out, but I still use it to transport a group of handicapped people when they have to perform. My own daughter sings.” We continued into the kitchen where Bert put on the kettle. He does not believe in single cups of tea, so he made us an entire pot. We sat down around the table and started our interview.

## What did you study?

I studied English language and literature in Utrecht, which I started in 1964. I met my wife at the English department in 1966, when she came to study English. It was all a bit more relaxed back then, I was mostly interested in phonetics and did not want to take all courses; I even refused a Shakespeare course. I graduated in 1971.

## Are your children interested in English as well?

Two of my children, twin girls, studied language and culture studies; at some point they had to pick a modern language and they both picked English. They remember Roselinde Supheert’s lectures back in 98/99.

## Why did you become a teacher?

I never wanted to become a teacher, I never planned it, it just sort of happened. Teaching in the 70’s and 80’s was fun, because you would teach about your own research and you had a lot of spare time. I could spend half of my working days in the library, even in the sections on history or music, and that would all be okay.

**Favourite music:** Mahler, Mozart,  
Charles Ives, Chuck Berry, CCR, Status  
Quo (before they turned bad), Motör  
Head, Dandy Warhols, Metalcore, Nine  
Inch Nails

**Favourite book:** *History of Western Philosophy*  
by Bertrand Russell

**Favourite film:** *Death in Venice*, *Night of  
the Living Dead*

## Why are you still teaching even though you retired over two years ago?

I never wanted to quit working, but when I turned 65 there was no way to keep in employment. I was allowed to come back as a volunteer, which I have been for the last two years. I get a desk, email and computer, but it is all a bit unofficial. I just really like teaching here, especially remedial classes, helping students get from a 5 to a 6 or 7. However, the new director dislikes having retired people still working here, even if it is voluntarily, so next year I am not allowed to come back. I would love to do this until I drop dead on the job or until my colleagues have to tell me my dementia is growing too bad, but that will not be possible. Of course, if the entire English department revolted...

After our nice conversation it was time to say goodbye to Bert and try to find our way back to a bus stop. Thank you Bert for opening up your home to us and all our readers and we hope this school year will not be the last we see of you!



# The Most Boring Course

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*By Pascal Smit*

Dear everyone.

So far I've enjoyed every course I've taken, except for ALW (now known as Kracht van Literatuur). I've gained a reputation for enrolling in more courses than most normally do and finished my first year with way too many credits. That's the nice thing about being able to choose one's own courses. I know the system has changed for first-years so I hope that the issue I'm about to reveal has largely been solved.

On to the cynicism. Sociolinguistics is literally the most boring course I've ever been enrolled in. The only reason I go to classes is because they're a great cure for insomnia and from what I've heard many students agree with me. However, that is not the real problem I have with this course. Very simply put, after three weeks I have literally heard nothing I haven't heard before and after flipping through the book my jets about the course have become very cold.

It's not the first time a course has had similarities to another course. For example, Varieties of English and Language History and Language Change share their basic theories but quickly diverge into very different applications. LHLC is mostly theoretical to a level that VoE isn't. On the other hand, VoE looks at the practical side of the theories. These courses complemented each other quite well I'd say. Nevertheless, I could have saved some time if I knew that VoE followed LHLC on part of the theoretical part.

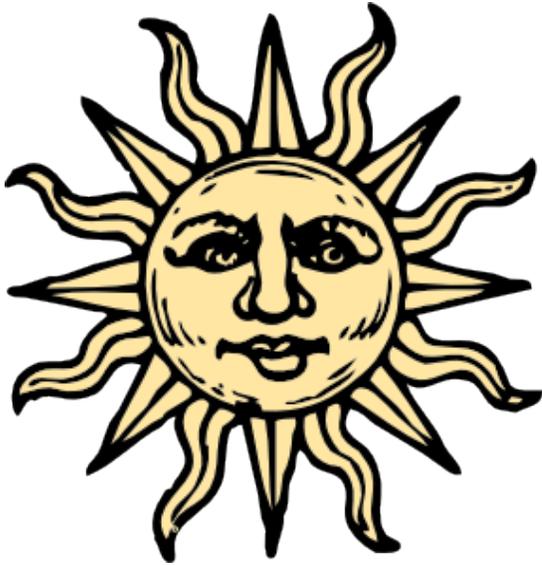
This is exactly the problem with choosing our courses. We don't really know what the course entails in advance and how much it's going to be a repetition. It would really be wonderful if the course descriptions in Osiris were a lot more clear. It would also be great if the main topics that were going to be discussed were listed as well as the titles of chapters and articles. Most courses have existed for many years in one way or another and with one title or another. From what I've heard, Kracht van Literatuur is virtually the same as ALW. In the case of entirely new courses I assume the teachers will have considered what to teach while designing the course. When we have more information about what the courses entail, it would help us greatly improve the quality of our education.

Happy Cynicism!

Hadrian Ma'at Ferran

# Grasnapolsky Festival

By Iris Nieuwenhuizen



## Sunny Songs for the Last Rainy Days

1. Jamiroquai - Seven Days in Sunny June
2. The Whitest Boy Alive - Burning
3. Sam Sparro - Happiness
4. Mark Ronson & The Business Intl - Bang Bang Bang (feat. Q-Tip & MNDR)
5. Eagles of Death Metal - Wannabe in LA
6. Florence + The Machine - Dog Days Are Over
7. Vampire Weekend - Cousins
8. Miike Snow - Paddling Out
9. Breakbot - Baby I'm Yours
10. The Black Keys - Lonely Boy

Packed in a woollen sweater, winter coat and warm shawl I arrived at the venue for this year's Grasnapolsky. A winter festival indeed. The massive granite Jugendstil building of Radio Kootwijk standing in the middle of the nature reserve of the Veluwe looked a bit daunting as I made my way to the entrance with tears in my eyes caused by the cold, harsh wind. But all of that changed once I got inside. This festival is held every year on a unique location to provide those who already yearn for summer festivals with that same type of feeling. The combination of a marvellous setting, the delicious scent of warm food and good coffee that flowed through the building, and the easy tunes that were played made the festival worth returning from hibernation.

Sure, it was a bit inconvenient for those who travelled by public transport that they could only come and leave the grounds at two specific times. And yes, the ambiguity of who would perform where and how you were to get there was annoying, but hey, you could forgive the organisation easily once you'd settled in a comfy chair with the gentle sound of sad men with guitars (a.k.a. singer-songwriters) in your ears. Definite highlights were Sunbow's first performance ever and the platitude of instruments of Wooden Saints. During breaks you could grind your own coffee, look ridiculous together in a gigantic hand-knitted sweater with two collars or try to answer DJ St. Paul's popquiz questions. For true daredevils there was the possibility to drink glühwein or hot chocolate outside on one of the solar-heated rocking chairs. The thoughts of another, new beautiful setting and the festival's ability to warm any winter heart are reasons to look forward to next year's edition of Grasnapolsky.



## King Krule - Six Feet Beneath the Moon

If you were to encounter this skinny red-headed nineteen-year-old on the streets you would not believe your ears. The raw voice of Archy Marshall in combination with the sound he produces makes him one of a kind. Growing up in the outskirts of London, he was influenced by a platitude of cultures that helped making his sound so unique. His dark voice melancholically sings of a break-up throughout the album with a girl who he explicitly names Blue. We see the process of grieving over him having lost her (*Has This Hit?* and *Baby Blue*) to coming close to accepting that they won't be together any more (*A Lizard State*). Refreshing after an over-abundance of cliché break-up songs, the poetic lines of King Krule are definitely worth a listen.



## Warpaint - Warpaint

The Los Angeles based all-girl indie band is back with its recognisable hypnotising sound. However, having said that, there is a new interesting twist audible. Especially on *Disco//very*, the choice to switch to rap is striking. The band says here that when they heard someone got nauseous at the sound of this song when they were practising they enthusiastically decided "it's going on the album!" They convincingly sing *We'll kill you/ Tear you up and rip you in two* which makes us believe in the girl power the band represents. While on subject of hip-hop, there are allusions in *Biggie* to, exactly who you'd think, Notorious B.I.G. The album seems to consist of anti-feel-good songs like the first single of the album *Love is to Die*. Despite the melancholic feeling to this album it's perfectly imaginable to put on this album during the last gloomy days of this semi-wintery season.



## Haim - Days Are Gone

To describe the energetic music of the three sisters Este, Alana and Danielle is a difficult task. Perhaps a combination of pop, rock and a dash of R'nB would be best to describe *Days Are Gone*. The long-haired sisters use their strong familial connection as a brand; their surname is the name of the band. It's been a long time waiting for the debut album to be launched, as the band was already signed in 2004. One thing is for sure: you can boogie your ass off to this album, or if you're not that much of a dancer, heavily bob your head and tap your feet to the catchy rhythm. The light lyrics emphasize the energizing beat that is the most prominent feature of the album. In contrast to Warpaint's *Warpaint*, this should be an album for those who are already looking forward to the sunny days on festivals that are yet to come.



# South African English is lekker

By Aisha Mansaray

Aisha Mansaray is currently interning at the Dutch consulate in South Africa and, somewhere between sitting in a heavily air-conditioned office and barbequing, found the time to give us all a short primer on South African English.

<b>Howzit?</b>	<b>How are you?</b>
<b>Ja/yebo</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Izzit</b>	<b>Really?</b>
<b>Bru/boet</b>	<b>Bro/brother</b>
<b>Babbelaas</b>	<b>Hangover</b>
<b>Jawelnofine</b>	<b>How about that</b>
<b>Hey</b>	<b>Right?</b>
<b>Dumpie</b>	<b>Beer served in a 340 ml bottle</b>



As someone who got her BA in English language & culture, I had expected to have more problems with Afrikaans than English before I went to Cape Town a little over a month ago. Eish, was I mistaken! Yes, South Africans speak English, as do I, but I could not even find the right bus into town at first. Bus drivers usually yell the destination, and while Kjaype Tjiown sounds somewhat like Cape Town, it took me a while to discover that Mjabo is in fact Muizenberg.

In our BA program, but also in media and entertainment, not much attention is given to South African English, which I think is a pity. The variety is very interesting and has its own flavor, and most of all, it just sounds cool.

Even though South African English is only one of eleven official languages in South Africa, it is universal throughout the country and dominates all others. Since not many people speak English as a first language, you can imagine how many varieties of it there are. In fact, the variety people speak usually depends on their race. You have, for example, white South African English, black South African English, Indian South African English and Cape colored South African English. The variety I usually hear around Cape Town is the latter, which uses a lot of Afrikaans words like 'lekker' and 'spookgerook'.

The greatest part of South African English is of course the pronunciation. Even though there are a lot of varieties, there are a couple of shared similarities.

Two salient features of South African English are in the kit and bath vowels. Like in New Zealand English, the [ɪ] is lowered, and becomes [i̠] (between an i and e). The [ɑ:] in bath is an open and back [ɑ:]. So, till becomes tull, and rat becomes raat. Furthermore, Cape colored English speakers in particular use a rhotic [r], which sometimes makes South African English sound very much like a weird variety of Dutch.

Although this would seem convenient for a Dutch speaker like myself, it really is not. General South African English uses a lot of words borrowed from not only Afrikaans, but also Xhosa, Zulu or one of the other seven indigenous languages. I think we, as Dutch people, have become so used to American or British accents our brain just can not compute when someone says: "Jislaaik, bru, I'm going to donner that skinnerbek for skinnering about me!" ("Wtf bro, I'm going to hit that dude for gossiping about me!").

What makes this variety of English so interesting to me, is the fact that it is unusual and unique because it is influenced by so many languages and cultures. The funniest thing is the huge variety of Dutch/Afrikaans used in daily conversation, so even when you can not get the hang of South African English, just try your best steenkolen Engels and who knows how far that will get you!

# Albion takes over London

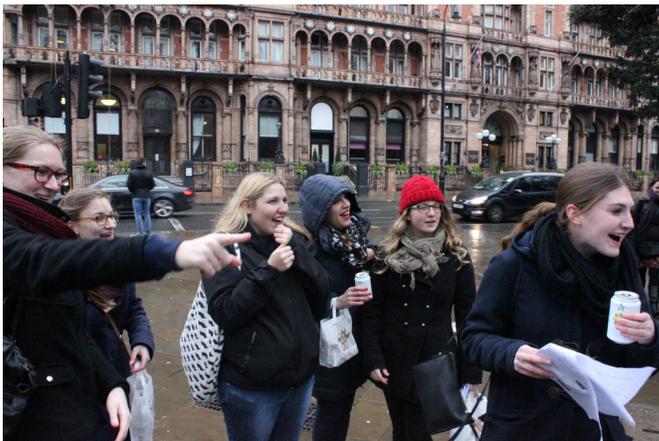
By Marijn Brok

The first week of February, the Small Travel Committee organised the weekend trip to London. Several Albioneers crossed the pond for some culture and mischief.

Sherlock Holmes is staring at me. I am confused. What's he doing here? The 6.5 feet tall bronze statue seems out of place on the busy traffic street. Street? Oh wait, Baker Street. Figures.

It was still early when we left for the Albion weekend trip to London. After a short flight and long bus trip, we are making our way through the bustling city towards our hostel near Russell Square. Remarkable about our hostel are the rooms, which have three-storied bunk beds. Once settled down, we're treated to a sightseeing tour of the neighbourhood. Our hostel is located in Bloomsbury, known of course for the eponymous group of English writers, artists and philosophers. Nowadays, it is famous for the near-located British Museum and the University of London. Most of us travellers however are more concerned where the nearest pub and coffee place can be found. Luckily, our troubles are just around the corner.

The small travel committee has organised a special event for the whole group to attend that evening. We are brought to St Martin's Theatre in Covent Garden, where we'll attend the murder mystery play *The Mousetrap* by Agatha Christie. This is very exciting, as it is the longest running show of the modern era (since 1952). Like a true Agatha Christie story, the plot has a surprising twist ending. Too bad most of us pass out during the show because of fatigue, and afterwards many return to the hostel for a good night rest.



"SQUIRREL!!!"



The next morning, the Tower of London awaits. It is a clear day, so walking along the old walls and dungeons feels very relaxed. Some of us are bewitched by the sparkling royal crown jewels (diamonds as big as a plum!), others are drawn to the dungeon (an allusion to our soulless behaviour at parties in K-Sjot?). Everyone has the rest of the day of. Your writer is off to Harrod's to soak in some luxury, while others visit the one existing Twinings teashop in Temple. Some take a walk along the Thames, and many of the girls are of to Camden to visit the many vintage shops. Someone even spotted BBC Radio 1-presenter Nick Grimshaw (bestie to Harry Styles, squeal!).

Koko in Camden is the main place to be that evening, though some choose for the opposite pub for some beers. However, it proves a quiet night, as everyone is unexpectedly bright the next and last morning. Three choices of museums are on the program, with people spreading between the British Museum, Tate Modern and the Museum of Natural History. It is again proven how times fly when you're having fun. Soon we're off again to the airport for short flight back to hometown Utrecht. However, the trip proved again how much pleasure one can have in London.



NICK GRIMSHAW!!  
SQUEALL!!



# Books

*By Margit Wilke*

This time, Anneke gives us an insight in her reading habits. She tells us about what books get her going, or not at all.

## **What was your favourite book growing up?**

I do not remember much from the really early stuff, other something like Winnie the Pooh. I guess Harry Potter fills the ultimate role of “childhood books” for me. Not trying to sound soppy but I actually cannot imagine my childhood without it. The other day, I introduced one of my friends to the first couple of books and she was immediately hooked. That was so weird to me.

## **What is your favourite book now?**

I am really into the Game of Thrones book series right now! I watch the show as well, but I am glad I finally caught up with it on paper, since it is so much more detailed and vivid to me. Also, the book series by Michael Scott, starting with *The Alchemyst*, is one of my all-time favourites (*The Secrets of the Immortal Nicholas Flamel* red.) It may be a lot more satisfying to read those since you will not have to wait for George R.R. Martin to finish his books anymore.

## **What is the last book you read for ‘fun’?**

After I injured my shoulder I had a lot of time to do read, yet I still find it difficult to make time to actually do so. I also made a habit out of it to fall asleep after two pages, without the book even being boring. I just get drowsy after a while. Anyway, the Game of Thrones books, I guess. I just started reading the last one of the series so far and it is quite a brick, so we will see after that!

## **If you could recommend me one of your books, which one would it be?**

Probably Harry Potter. It is just so good! It is not for everyone, I admit, but to me they truly are the most recommendable.

## **What, for you, is the ultimate page limit of a book before you decide against reading it?**

It depends! I am already reading this brick of a Game of Thrones book but I am not sure I would if I was not into the series already. I am mostly into fantasy so I would probably rather read a 1000 pages of that genre than I would any other.

## **Which book are you most ashamed of reading?**

I think shame is a very subjective thing when it comes to books. Okay, I did read the entire Twilight Saga when I was younger, but then again, I enjoyed them at the time and I guess that is the most important part.

## **Which book are you most ashamed of for not reading it (yet)?**

With my shoulder injury, I spent a lot of time on the couch at home and my mom bought me a book series about Caesar which I was really excited about reading. It was so sweet of her. Such a shame though, with all the medication I was on at the time, it made me too drowsy to read anything.

If you were to write a book, what would it be about?

I am pretty sure never will, but, in an alternate universe, it would probably have something to do with animals and humans or something. Some sort of interaction thing between them, like in the Golden Compass. I loved that film. I have always wanted to get into veterinary medicine so that could be a good compromise maybe.

## **Which author have you read the most books by and why?**

JK Rowling for the win, again! I have not read any of her new stuff like *Cuckoo’s Calling* or anything, but still: I read seven of her books! Go me!

## **Are you team literature or team linguistics? (Team Lit or Team Ling?)**

I am neither, I think! I am not into literature at all and even though linguistics is a lot more universal and technical, I am still way more into business and organisational stuff. So Team Business all the way! I guess that is what is so awesome about universities; you can play your own team, choose your own courses.

# Books



“THE PURPOSE  
OF LITERATURE  
IS TO TURN  
BLOOD  
INTO  
INK.”

*T. S. Elliot*