

PHOENIX

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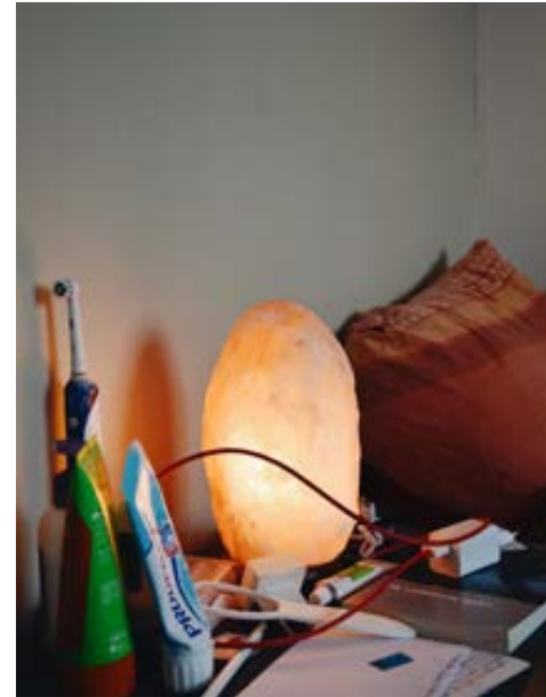


THE HOME AND INTERIOR ISSUE



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LETTER OF THE EDITOR

Dear readers,

What place do you call home? While the most basic definition to come up with would be something along the lines of “the place where you live”, things aren’t always that straightforward. For instance, I know a great deal of students who spend the majority of their time in their room or apartment in Utrecht, but who refer to visiting their parents in the weekend as “going home”.

For me personally, it seems to be quite straightforward: I still live in the same town as I was born in. In fact, I still live in the same house I’ve lived in for my entire life. However, as I spend more and more of my time in Utrecht going to classes, studying, hanging out at my friends’ places and going out, Utrecht is starting to feel like a second home to me. Currently, I’m looking for an apartment that can become my very own home – but we all know what that’s like in Utrecht.

If you’re like me, looking for your own place in Utrecht, this semester’s Phoenix has got you covered with “hospiteren 101”. For inspiration for your new-found residence, 5 of our very own Albion members were kind enough to provide us with a peek inside their rooms. Also, we’ve got two Albioneers who are currently away from home, telling us about feeling homesick and what it’s like studying abroad. Furthermore, dr. Mia You was kind enough to let us into her home to talk about her heritage and on top of that, Phoenix is here to save your day (and money) with some student-budget-friendly recipes.

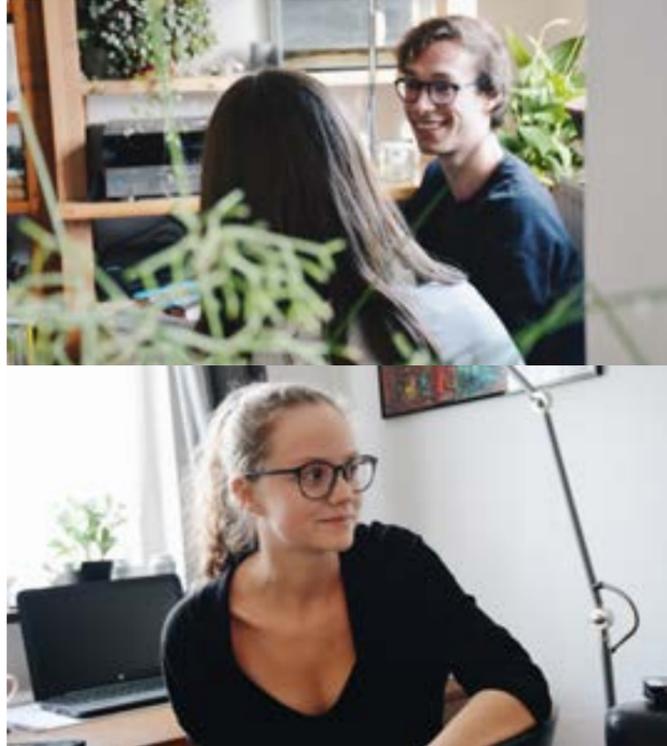
While flipping through the pages of this brand-new Phoenix, do feel at home and enjoy the read.

Love,

Lola van Scharrenburg
Editor in chief

MAKING YOUR SPACE

By Tess Masselink and Nina van der Voort
Photography: Laurel Sanders



Many of us students live far from the university and travel hours are long. To overcome unnecessary time lived in trains and buses, we move away from home. We go to live in the city where the university is, which is, in our case, the beautiful city of Utrecht. When you're in last year of high school and deciding which study you want to do and in which city, you have to start thinking about whether you need, or want, to move out as well. And so, the everlasting search for a room starts.

Well, it might not be everlasting, but it certainly takes a long time for most of us to find a room. For here, in Utrecht, there are a good deal more students than there are rooms available. There is this silent battle going on when applying for rooms on Facebook, Kamernet and SSH, hoping you will get invited to the 'hospiteeravond' and then hoping you will be the one, out of sometimes even thirty other 'hospiteerders', who gets chosen... In this article, we're taking you on a visit to the rooms of five lucky people who managed to find a room!

THE VISITS

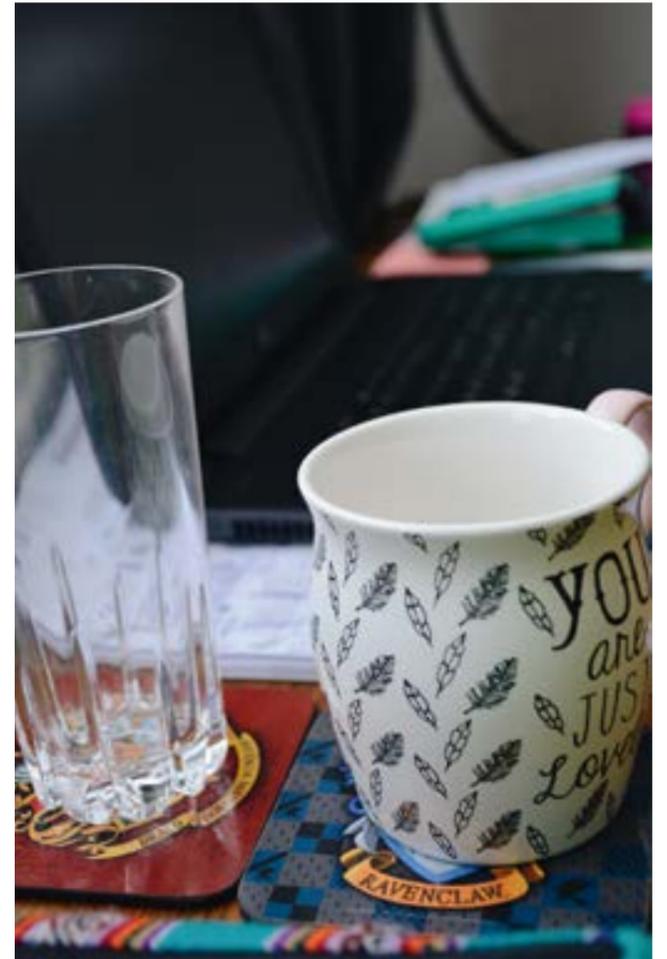
We visited five of our co-students: Pauw Vos, Isolde van Gog, Marlon Schotel, Lotte Murrath and Joppe Kips, and asked them some questions. These people all have different kinds of rooms in different areas of Utrecht. Pauw lives in an apartment in Tuinwijk, Isolde in a regular house with quite a few housemates in the centre, Marlon in an SSH student complex about 8 minutes from the centre by bike, Lotte in a house with one other person, and Joppe also lives in an SSH student complex. Each of these rooms are very different in size, price, decoration, identity and atmosphere.

What is very important for everyone who is looking for a room, is to know where to look. There are many social media platforms where available rooms are being advertised, but not all of them are as reliable as you'd like them to be. When you're invited to come to a hospitality evening, you should make sure that these people are actually offering you a room and don't have any other intentions.

Namely, there sometimes are con men who work on these sites as well. So, how did these co-students find their rooms?

Most people use Facebook. Why? It's a social media platform, right? Yes, but Facebook allows people to create community pages. So naturally, there are many of such community pages for people who are looking for a room to rent, or people who have a room available.

The latter post advertisements with information about the room and contact, and the people who are searching for a room can reply with a personal message and hope to get invited to the hospitality evening.



Now, only one of our five interviewees got their room through Facebook: Lotte. Lotte is a student from Belgium and was thus more in need of a room than anyone else. We asked her how she got her room, and she explained that she had tried to find a room through many platforms like Kamernet, Woningnet, SSH and eventually Facebook. She replied to an advertisement, got invited for the hospitality evening and got the room!

As mentioned before, Facebook is not at all the only way to find a nice room. Many students get their rooms via SSH, which is Stichting Studenten Huisvesting. This foundation buys houses and apartment buildings, and rents rooms and apartments in these flats and houses to students. You have to pay a one-time fee in order to create an account on their website and enter the waiting list. The longer you have your account, the higher you'll be on the waiting list and the higher your chances of getting invited to a hospitality evening.

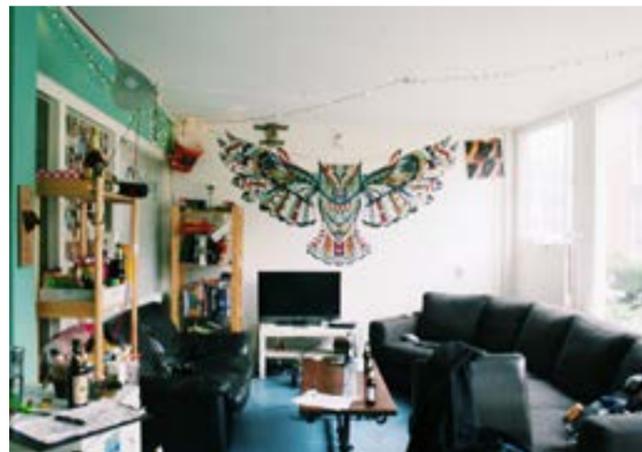
The good thing about SSH is that the rooms are not as expensive as they normally tend to be. These rooms range from 250 to 350 euros a month. When you reply to a room advertisement, the ten people highest on the waiting list will be invited for the hospitality evening, where your potential new housemates will choose who will get the room. All in all, a quite fair and easy process. The last two people we visited, Pauw and Isolde, got their rooms via people they know. They did not have to attend a hospitality evening! For them it was a different experience altogether. Before Pauw moved to his current room, he had a room in a student house. He says he was quite happy there. Still, he had asked a friend how they had got their room and if he could get on the list for rooms in that house as well.

This is how Joppe and Marlon came by their rooms. Marlon's experience with SSH was only of short duration. She heard via a friend of a friend that there was a room available and she responded to the advertisement on SSH. "And surprisingly then I was actually on the list of people who could come to the hospitality evening. I still don't really know how that happened. I guess I just got lucky," Marlon says.



SSH BUYS HOUSES AND APARTMENT BUILDINGS AND RENTS ROOMS IN THESE BUILDINGS TO STUDENTS.

Joppe was lucky as well. SSH has this policy that people who have to travel very far get priority on the waiting list. Joppe's parents live in Zeewu-Vlaanderen, so obviously this policy applied to Joppe. The very first hospitality evening he went to was a success: he got the room! Three months ago, he got a call that there was a room available and if he wanted it he could just say 'yes' and it would be his. If only it would always be this easy! When you first start searching for a room, it might seem impossible. But Isolde proves again that once you establish contacts and friendships with people who do have rooms, chances are that they will at one point offer you a room!



Another co-student, Vincent, had a room in a house at the centre of Utrecht. One of his housemates moved out and Vincent changed rooms: his room would now be available. He knew Isolde was still looking for a room and asked her if she wanted the room. They're housemates now.



Knowing where to find available rooms is the first step. What then, are the dos and don'ts when you actually have to go to a hospitality evening? We asked our co-students if they could give some tips. The most common, and best tip is of course: be yourself. Don't pretend to be someone you're not. This gives a wrong image of who you are. When your potential housemates choose you and you're not who you seemed to be, communication and trust may not go as smoothly as you would have hoped.

THE MOST COMMON, AND BEST, TIP IS OF COURSE: BE YOURSELF.



Marlon says that people had advised her to be spontaneous, make sure she's noticed. When she did that, way more than she normally would have, she did not get the room. She says that it is indeed the best thing to just be yourself, because "in the end you will get picked for the room that suits you best." Lotte's mum came with her, which is not something people would tell you is a good idea. Why not? Because the hosts might think that you're not independent or daring enough to undertake something important like this on your own. In Lotte's case, however, it did work out. "She asked a lot of questions and maybe that made my roommate decide that I could get the room because my parent was with me, so she knew that I was going to pay my bills and stuff," she says.

Eventually, when you have a room, you will have to decorate and set up furniture. If you're lucky enough to have a big room, it will be easy. You can buy a double bed, a big desk and wardrobe. Not everyone has that luck, however. Some people have rooms of about six or eight square metres. When that is the case, set up requires some more thought. Lotte's room is 10,5 square metres. She used tips and tricks from Ikea and other decoration shops. Try to use the walls to hang things from, like bookshelves and a clothing rack. (See our piece on decorating for more tips!)

Pauw has a collection of interesting artefacts in his room. The skull of a deer, among others. He and his family found it when they were on a hiking trip in Poland. He also has an ornament shaped like a monkey's face and other tribal, African artefacts. Pauw says he likes the atmosphere these sort of items bring into the room.



A prominent feature of Marlon's room is the collection of memorabilia from her trips and half a year studying in Ireland. She likes to collect these memorabilia because they're something special, like the flag she found and did not buy anywhere. Lotte has put a lot of her own personality in her room as well. She hung up her own paintings and tries to bring Harry Potter, a book series most of us know and love, into her room through mugs, coasters and a sweater.

As for Joppe, he plays guitar and loves music. He has his guitar and amplifier in his room as well as a vinyl player. The vibe these items bring with them is a very specific one and once again adds personality to the room.

Isolde's room is full of plants and books and even party vanes. The room is small, but nicely decorated and there are many interesting objects to look at. Every time you take a look at her room, you discover something new about it. She has a water cooker in her room as well - great tip for the tea-lovers out there! Isolde's room is not that big either; she is lucky enough that her room has a built-in bunk bed, which creates extra space.

Once you've decorated and move in, everything changes. **There are no longer parents to make you dinner, wash your clothes and make sure you get enough sleep.** They can still help you, of course, but most of the time you will have to figure out your life on your own. There are, however, still people you need to take into consideration: housemates. However scary that might sound, all five people we interviewed are coping just fine!

Lotte moved here all the way from Belgium. For her it is hardest to stay in touch with friends, for example. She wants to add more pictures of her friends to her walls. Still, Lotte goes home any weekend she can because she still works and has music lessons in Belgium.

Contrary to Lotte, who has only one housemate, Marlon has quite a few more. She lives in one house with fifteen people. "[It's] fun, crowded, busy. Like not really crowded just as long as you have your own space, your own room," she says. Everywhere in the house it's busy, a mess and a lot of people, except in your own room. Because she lives with so many people, there is always someone making noise, but she says you get used to it.

Joppe lives in a SSH building as well. He says that living with so many housemates is not a bother. There is a list of chores that everyone has to do every once in a while, and sometimes you eat together or go out to do something fun. So mostly housemates are not annoying, but fun.

"When you get chosen for the room, you can be certain there is some kind of bond between you and your new housemates. You will be okay," Joppe says.

Pauw has been living in student dorms for eight years now. So, for him, it is not a new phenomenon.

Isolde on the other hand, had had her room for only two weeks when we interviewed her. She says that it's nice to be able to decide for yourself when and what you eat and what time you go to bed. Even so, that is a downside as well. "It's hard to keep a rhythm in your days ... it's hard to know what and how to cook as well. Luckily, we have the internet," she says. In the end, you will figure everything out and life will be worth living again! ;)



All in all, finding a room, decorating it, and getting used to living on your own is a one of a kind adventure. There are many things to think of. Many new people, habits and skills will come into your life. Is it scary and intimidating? Yes. Is it worth it? Double yes.

We from Phoenix hope to have presented a fun article with useful information about moving out and living on your own. If you already have a room, hopefully it was fun to read about other people's experiences. If you don't yet have a room, maybe you will be able to use some tips from this article in your seemingly endless search.

Good luck, and most of all: have fun!

TEA TIME WITH... MIA YOU

After roaming the streets of Utrecht on a sombre afternoon, we were greeted with a loud, playful barking at the front door of the house of one of the university's new teachers, Mia You. Mia is a modern-day poet and a lecturer at Utrecht University. As we entered, a small passage-way turned into a beautiful spacious home, and we were welcomed by her dog, Gijs, who seemed eager to join the interview. We took our coats off, sat down at the table and got ready for the first interview of the year. After being served a slice of mouth-watering apple pie – of which we later shamelessly ate another slice – and a steaming cup of tea, we dove straight into the interview.

Where did you study?

"I went to college at Stanford, where I studied English literature, and then I did a Master's degree in East Asian studies at Harvard, because I decided I needed to learn more about Korean literature. Then I did my Ph.D. in English at UC Berkeley, because I missed Northern California a lot."

She then expands on why she decided to do a degree in East Asian studies.

"It took time - I think around college - for me to finally be like, okay, I really need to get to know my Korean side better and to really embrace that."

"One of the things that was really eye-opening for me was that I did study abroad in England when I was in college. So I was at Oxford, and there I just realized that I knew so much more about British literature than I knew about Korean literature."

I thought: it's so strange that I know all this stuff about Shakespeare, and I can't even name any twentieth-century Korean writers, whilst I am Korean, and I speak Korean."

Would you recommend doing a study to find out more about your heritage?

"I really enjoyed it and I think that it was really, really valuable. It's one of the things that I didn't think I would feel growing up, but now I am really proud of myself that I speak Korean and that I know about Korean literature and Korean history. At the same time, it also really made me realise why I wanted to go back to English literature: the way Korean literature, as I experienced, is studied in the US is still quite conservative, and there are things about Korean culture that are very conservative. Korean culture is hierarchal, it's still male dominated, it's a Confucian society so seniority is important, and younger people are not really free to question more experienced, older people, and that translates over to how studies are done as well. Even though it was in the US, I still felt this environment very pervasively at conferences and during other academic events, and so as a young woman doing Korean literature, I didn't really feel like my 'wackier' ideas about literature were appreciated. But I think, to study Korean literature for a couple of years, or East Asian studies for a couple of years, was definitely worth it. I just wouldn't have made it my life."

Is your heritage something that returns in your poetry?

"Yes. Because one of the things I wanted to do with my poetry collection [I, Too, Dislike It (1913 Press, 2016)] is to show how the 'I' is somebody that changes with every poem. I use a lot of different forms in this book, because in every different situation, I am composed of different things. It depends on who the people are that are around me, it depends on the space that I can inhabit, it depends on how comfortable I feel, or uncomfortable. I want to show how much the lyric 'I' is shaped by the social circumstances around the 'I' as opposed to just being a single solid thing that just has deep thoughts while looking into a forest or something."

After hearing this, we were intrigued and wanted to read her book. Unfortunately, she didn't have any extra copies lying around for us to take home, but she mentioned that I, Too, Dislike It is available in a couple of bookstores in Utrecht, such as Savannah Bay.

Is it weird for you to see your own book in bookstores?

"Yeah, a little bit. If you're somebody who loves to read and studies literature, bookstores



are special places. It's really cool to be in a bookstore and be like, wow my book is there, in this bookstore that I've gone to for years. And you also have this thing where you're like, should I tell them that that's my book? It feels really nice to know I made something, and now it's out there. It's so cool to have this little part of you in all these different places throughout the world."

Mia's poetry collection sports a bright green jacket. She hands over a copy for us to flick through during the interview. When we asked about the people who wrote blurbs for her book, she told us an interesting story about one of them.

"I thought even if he wrote back something like 'Screw you!', I could still use that as my blurb."

"I have this whole series of long poems about this guy Bob Perelman, who is a much older American poet. I didn't know him very well at all, although I admired his writing, but I had this thing where I kept encountering him in weird situations and I'd go home and write poems about it, because to me they encapsulated how I felt about the American poetry scene at that moment. So, after this book was done, I sent him a manuscript and said: 'Dear Bob Perelman, you may not know this, but I wrote a whole long series of poems about you, and I was wondering if you would write a blurb for my book.' I thought even if he wrote back something like 'Screw you!', I could still use that as my blurb, but then he actually wrote a really nice thing. I felt a little bit guilty about it."

Do you have an idol in poetry?

"When I was in elementary school I had a teacher that I really loved, she was really very supportive."

She signed me up for this one-day creative writing conference for kids, and there they made us each memorize one poem, so I memorized an Emily Dickinson poem. I actually still remember it. I feel really lucky that I had a good teacher that pushed me towards poetry. That will definitely stay with me."

The poem in question was 'I'm Nobody, Who are you?' and after reciting the poem, Mia continues.

"Of course there are poets that I really admire as writers, but all the poets that I immediately think of as my 'idols' are poets that I associate with those kind of teaching moments. Also, in high school, my father – who often travelled to Korea on business - brought me back a copy of The Wasteland by T.S. Eliot. It was the Korean translation, with the English translation next to it, and so I first read it as a bilingual poem in my own languages. Even though it's this great canonical work, I have a deeply personal attachment to it and to Eliot."

She then offers some valuable advice for aspiring poets: "Be selective about what you put out there, and be patient. When you put yourself out there, there will be a lot of things that you feel a bit insecure about. There has to be an inner core of confidence to be able to handle that. Don't publish anything just for the sake of getting a publication. The living poets that I tend to admire are those that can be kind of cranky actually. They know what they want, they know what they stand for and what they don't stand for."

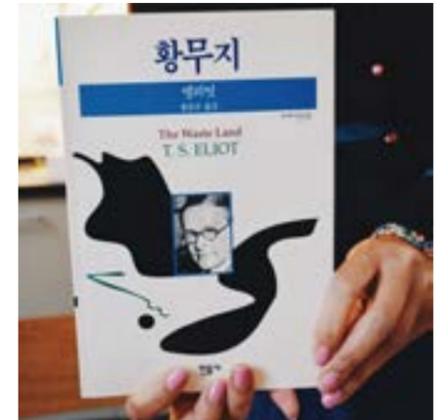
They're all extremely generous, open and interested in other people's work, but at the same time you know you can't make them do anything they don't want to do. I admire that. I'm learning to be more like that!"

On the topic of writing, she gives us another noteworthy insight.

"I think there's an idea that good writing comes out of interesting content, but of course that is not necessarily true. A good writer could make anything interesting, right? I really think you could write about a teacup and make that interesting if you're a good writer."

She mentions that she would love to read more in the Creative Writing course (which she'll co-teach in Block 4) about what it's like to grow up in a small Dutch town, as it is something she hasn't experienced.

"I'm totally fascinated by this town Abcoude, because it has like a, b, c, d, and e in the name of it, and it's just like a small village outside of Amsterdam, but I'm always like, 'What's going on in there? What do people do there? What's it like to grow up there?' So for me, as a foreigner, that experience is really exotic and intriguing actually."



So did you grow up in a city?

“My parents moved to the US when I was 3. I was born in Seoul, South Korea. I mostly grew up in university-like towns or in suburbs. But then when I was in high school, my father moved back to Korea permanently, because his job took him there, and my mother stayed in the US until I graduated. So since high school, I’ve either lived in the US or, whenever I’ve had time, I’ve been in Seoul, which is a huge city.”

Do you go back and forth during holidays, or do you stay there for longer periods of time?

“I used to go back to Korea on the holidays and - before I was married and had kids - I would make sure to have summer jobs there [in the US, summer vacations usually last three months].

“It was important to me to feel like I could get to know Korea on my own terms and not just through my parents.”

I also studied for a term at Seoul National University. It was important to me to feel like I could get to know Korea on my own terms and not just through my parents.”

During the interview, Mia mentions that all of the decisions she made about her studies were made at the time itself.

She repeatedly asked herself the questions ‘What’s the thing that I’d most prefer to do right now?’ and ‘What’s the best option I have in front of me?’

“I think if you do something with literature that’s just what has to happen. You can’t really plan anything or have a clear career trajectory in mind.”

She adds that in college she had a different kind of trajectory than most literature majors. “In college in the US you don’t have to decide on your major as soon as you enter, so you get two years just to take classes and then decide. So when I entered college, I thought I wanted to go to law school eventually, so I started studying English and Political Science, and during my second year of studies I did an internship at the Stanford Law Review. I also had a part-time job at this big Silicon Valley law firm.

They had such fancy offices: there was a gym inside, there was a huge cafeteria, but everybody just seemed sad to be there and my job was to copy-and-paste different rich people’s names into wills.

Her passion for the material might not have been the only reason she eventually chose to study English literature.

While discussing her upbringing, she briefly touches upon another factor of influence.

“Because my father did his Ph.D. in the US, we were obviously sort of privileged. We always lived in nice neighbourhoods, but that also meant that it could be culturally homogenous. There was definitely a very dominant upper-class, white, American kind of culture. I always felt that, to be successful, I had to do all those things well that I saw all of my neighbours doing well and maybe that’s in part why I became a scholar of English literature.”

Because Mia mentions that the school system in the US is very different, we discussed what would have happened if she had studied someplace else, where she would have had to decide her major earlier.

She says it’s hard to say; she might have ended up complet-



ing law school. But she does know one thing for sure:

“I definitely know that I’m not intended to become a millionaire. The year that I started at Stanford was also the year that Google was founded, and I remember that I came out of my dorm once and there was a table with some guys sitting at it with pencils and signs that said ‘Work for Google.’ Instead of signing up, I was like, ‘Oohh! Free pencils!’ Then when I was at Harvard, Facebook started, and I think I was just about the fortieth person to join Facebook and still I never thought, ‘Maybe I should try to work for Facebook, maybe I should get in touch with the people who are running this thing and try to get a job?’

So I think it’s pretty clear that I’m never going to be the kind of person that sees a good business opportunity and makes a lot of money.”

“Instead of signing up, I was like, ‘Oohh! Free pencils!’”

What were you like as a student?

“As a student, I had this weird thing where I didn’t want to be friends with anyone in my major, because I didn’t want to talk about literature all the time. I wanted to be like a ‘normal’ person also. I love bringing my

old college friends (now doctors, designers, etc.) to poetry readings. It’s very eye-opening to see their reactions.

They always enjoy them more than I expect they will, but they also help me keep things in perspective.”

And finally, she shares her guilty pleasure with us.

“I listen to really bad music. I was reading earlier interviews in the Phoenix and the English faculty all seem to be Nick Cave fans and they make these very artsy, cool, rock references. I hate when people ask me about music, because I’m just like, whatever. I listen to pop music. I listen to K-pop. Once every couple months, I’ll have a K-pop marathon morning in which I catch up on all of the videos I’ve missed so far.”



“Usually when I’m marking your papers, I’ll be listening to Justin Bieber.”

“And I like Taylor Swift, Justin Bieber, all that stuff. I have to admit that - it’s really embarrassing - usually when I’m marking your papers, I’ll be listening to Justin Bieber.”

Once we noticed we had already been talking for well over an hour, we decided it was time to end the interview and take some pictures.

The living room had a beautiful bookshelf on display that took up an entire wall, and it proved to be the perfect backdrop for the photos.

We cuddled the dog one last time, and then, at last, we made our way back home.

Mia, thanks again for the lovely conversation and the hospitality!



Interview: Laurel Sanders and Indie Reijnierse
Photography: Laurel Sanders
Text: Indie Reijnierse

SHOWCASE - RICARDO MORAN

POEM

By Indie Reijnierse

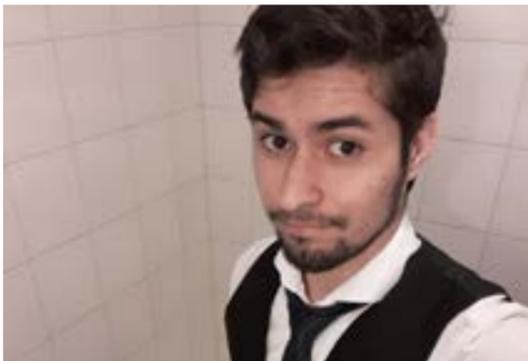
Hiya, my name is Ricardo and I write books for fun. My first book is called *Nowanights Penings*, and is, for the most part, a collection of poems, and the second will be titled *Eating a Piece of Cloud*, a full-fledged novel, to come out next summer.

A minimalist library.

My brother used to read only one book
The book itself is not important here
But he'd read it daily, like clockwork
And plenty, like ticks and tocks
And I never understood
Not entirely, anyway
Or in any case correctly
How a book could be so damn good
That it could eclipse the whole remainder
Of literature.

And it wasn't that it was a bad book
If anything it was rather brilliant
And anyway certainly a good pick
For a personal bible
But I asked him why
And he said, plain and simple,
Looking up, his finger marking
Where he had been interrupted:
"I've found something I like,
And I'm scared to look further,
For I cannot imagine that,
The ageless army of libraries,
Could house something better."

He's read other books, of course
And afterwards I introduced him to
Typed mistresses and scribbled paramours
And none came close, not at all
To this book that spoke to him
As a mentor, as a lesson, as a steadfast lover,
And this book, composed of only a spine,
A couple of hundreds of pages, and ink
Was all he needed of words.



Cistern.

In the distance of my youth Amidst memories of deep ruth
Of a yanked-out milk tooth
And of gospel truth
I remember that time I heard the cry
Of a little lamb not yet ready to die.
Bleating silent, bleeding violent
Weird how I picture violet
Perhaps it was the color of her mouth
I wanted to scream NO but only the N came out.
Of the after I remember little
Except feeling as if torn down the middle
Daily, life became a harder riddle
Inside burning Rome, outside fit as a fiddle.
And even though I was too young to know
Your departure something in me did sow
I don't even know if I recall it well
Ah hell, now it's too late to tell.
Little lamb, I hope your tiny box isn't damp
I wish I'd given you books, and a lamp
I liked you, though I can't really say why
Perhaps because you loved bees more than
butterflies.

The Crossing Noctambulist.

Somewhere in the world
Someone out of bed unfurled
Put on robe and slippers
And left with the absent mind
Of a devoted worshipper
Leaving the door unlocked behind.
It was a middle-aged man
With the lightest summer tan
Face irate, face barbate
A bald spot spreading at the pate.
He was a formulaic drinker
But quite the keen thinker
His fingers twitched
His head heavily enriched.
And I sat across the street
And saw him slowly on his feet
And I recall the sweat-inducing fear
That the future was whispering in my ear.
But I brushed it away
Drank till the come of day
Watching this sleepwalker marching forth
Not knowing south from north.

An Autumn Whirlwind

Leaves lazily lingering in the air,
Detached from the sturdy roots,
That supported them with care.

Carelessly flying high up in the atmosphere,
Only to come down,
Floating at my feet,
Covering the street
In a sheet of lifeless Brown.

Crunching beneath my feet,
As I walk along the boulevard,
Watching people rake up,
The lost leaves left in their yard.



ALBION CALENDAR

November:

Thursday 16 - Extra ALV

Saturday 18 - Albion goes PANN NEON +
Pre Party

Thursday 23 - Movie Night

Wednesday 29 - AcCie Event

Thursday 30 - Werkbezoek



CULTURE CORNER

Klap van de Molen Podcast: A Review Episode #51 'De Fan: Ik heb twee tatoeages van jouw band'

By Tess Masselink



If you like rock, metal, hip hop and music in general, this podcast is for you. Those of you who know the band John Coffey are most likely to have heard of this podcast, since it is hosted by John Coffey's ex-vocalist, David Achter De Molen. The band broke up last year, after having toured Europe several times and even having toured the U.S.A. for a bit. David now works as stage-manager for Tivoli Vredenburg as well as hosting this podcast.

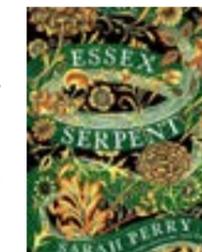
In some of his episodes he invites people over whom he thinks do something impressive on stage or backstage. In this particular episode he talks with a John Coffey fan: Eva. The subject is 'fanship'; what is it like to be a fan? Eva has seen John Coffey live 52 times and explains to David why and how she committed to the band this much. It's very interesting to hear this conversation between former band-member and fan. It shows that the band members whom fans adore so much are just normal people like everyone else and all former boundaries, like a stage, aren't present anymore. David plays three songs which Eva requested, like he does for every guest he ever chats with on his podcast. This is extremely nice, as he makes an effort to really allow his guests to show their personality and interests through their music. The episode is all about his guest and David even gets a little uncomfortable when the conversation tends to concern John Coffey more than Eva's experiences with John Coffey and other bands. David is a really fine host who knows what he's doing. He asks just the right questions and really gets you to think about what it is to be a fan.

There is only one thing that bugs me a little bit: the fact that they sometimes interrupt a song to talk a bit about it. It's a bit annoying when you're thoroughly enjoying a song and it suddenly gets interrupted.

Overall, this podcast is really good in what it tries to achieve: teaching the world about overlooked aspects of music and everything about it. I would really recommend this podcast to anyone who likes music and is interested in hearing people's stories about their experiences in the world surrounding music, and of course, discovering new songs and artists!

The Essex Serpent by Sarah Perry

By Nurai Mertens



The review I initially wrote after reading this book this past summer contained only one sentence: "I do not have words to describe how much I loved this book." However, since I'll be re-viewing this book for you, I'll try to give you a better impression.

I like reading historical fiction during the months when it gets a bit colder, snuggled up with a hot cup of tea/coffee/beverage of choice and a cosy blanket. This book – even though I read it during the summer – is a perfect autumn read.

The Essex Serpent tells the story of Cora Seaborne, a recently widowed woman living in London in the late 19th century. Some people say she isn't behaving the way a 'normal' widow should, but she isn't concerned with social conventions. In the 1890's, Darwin's evolution theory had become quite popular and all sorts of fossils were being dug up. She hears rumours about a mythical serpent living in the marshes in a small town in Essex and, being fascinated by the subject, decides to go there in hopes of discovering the creature herself. In the town of Auldwinter, where the serpent has supposedly been spotted, the local vicar named Will Ransome isn't too happy with the rumours concerning his town. He thinks it's distracting his parish from their faith, and would like everyone to realise that the mythical creature is just that: a myth. Cora and Will are polar opposites in every way, yet they still begin an unlikely and unconventional friendship.

"The characters are incredibly well-realised; the writing is superb; and the plot is so engaging that it was an absolute joy to read from start to finish."

There are definite gothic elements in the book, like the marshes, all misty and mysterious. You can see that Sarah Perry took some inspiration from Victorian sensation novels (Charles Dickens and Wilkie Collins are examples of writers of that genre), but it isn't old-fashioned by any means. The characters are incredibly well-realised; the writing is superb; and the plot is so engaging that it was an absolute joy to read from start to finish. Even if you're not inclined to pick this up after reading the summary (because, I'll be honest, it didn't do much for me, either), I highly encourage you to give this book a try.

CULTURE CORNER

IT

By Vincent Potman

“...more of a drama to me, than a true horror epic.”

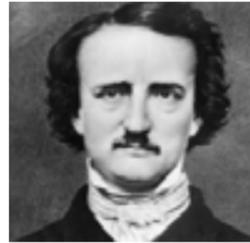
I'm not what you would call a horror fanatic, and as such I never saw the original rendition of IT, a two part miniseries released in 1990, and neither have I read the book. So, the movie was completely fresh to me, and I actually got excited by the hype surrounding the remake. IT is a horror classic and with that in mind I thought that the new IT would live up to the expectation of being terrifying. Being somewhat of a wuss, I was surprised to find that there were really only two moments that truly terrified me.

The Story of IT takes place during the 80's (the late 50's in the book) in Derry, a small town, where many children disappear every year. The movie starts right off with Georgie, the younger brother of main the character Billie, being horribly taken down into the sewers by Pennywise the clown, the villain of the movie. An iconic moment, and because of it, fully expected. Still, after that the story builds up on how a year later, the Loser-Club (a group of social outcasts) is harassed by strange and scary visions which always end with Pennywise being there. Bonding together in friendship and mutual hatred towards the clown the six of them conspire to hunt down this monster and kill IT; this means entering the sewer system, and entering its home turf. As you can imagine, Pennywise does not make it easy for them.

It is in this part where the two scariest bits happen, but overall, all of the moments are immensely predictable. The movie, outside of these moments, often has a lighter tone when the Losers laugh and banter, and I couldn't help but really enjoy their comradeship. The movie is thus really more of a drama to me, than a true horror epic. The soundtrack, however, is great for adding an element of tension that Pennywise on his own never quite manages, no matter how great Bill Skargård is in his role. Maybe it's because clowns and lepers and fountains of blood are not entirely what I fear, and really, I am very glad that there were no dolls to be found anywhere. The point is, if you want to watch a scary movie, but still be able to walk around without a flashlight, put on IT, and join the Losers Club as they hunt down their fears.

Edgar Allan Poe's The Tell-tale Heart: A Review

By Tess Masselink



Warning: spoilers about the content and ending ahead.

Edgar Allan Poe is a writer like no other. His work is dark, eerie and macabre. He has written both prose and poetry, much of which is still popular today. One of the short stories he has written is The Tell-tale Heart. This short story tells the tale of a man who lives together with another, older man. It is written in first person perspective. It is a maddening story: the protagonist starts his story by telling you he is not insane and actually very smart, only to go on and prove himself wrong, for he is, in fact, insane.

“The reader is sucked into the protagonist's thoughts”

Poe makes this evident by his way of writing the protagonist's thoughts. Whenever the protagonist says or does something that might make him seem insane - stalking the old man in the night and obsessing over his blind eye for example - he tries to convince himself and the reader that he is not insane at all. At one point, after many nights of creeping in the door of the old man's bedroom, the protagonist cannot handle it anymore because, not only is he bothered by the old man's blind eye, he starts to hear his beating heart as well. He murders the old man and cleans up the mess neatly. He still says he is clever rather than mad. The police come around and the investigation goes smoothly. But the protagonist hears a ringing and starts to repeat the word 'louder' over and over again. Consequently, the reader is sucked into the protagonist's thoughts and your mind goes fuzzy as the protagonist's thoughts grow more chaotic with each word. The last sentence of the short story is the climax, and Poe leaves you at that. The last sentence is the protagonist shrieking out that the old man's heart is still beating.

It is typical of Poe to have the climax of his short stories at the end. It leaves the reader with a uncanny feeling and rushing adrenaline. Poe has achieved, with this short story, the macabre and intensely creepy vibe that is characteristic for most of his works. So, for anyone who likes a bit of horror and creepiness, this is for you!

Popronde

By Lola van Scharrenburg

Last month, I went to three instalments of Popronde, the annual touring music festival that showcases young Dutch talent. In a timespan of about 2 months, the festival tours some 40 Dutch cities, with bands and artists playing in local venues, pubs, and sometimes even museums. Entrance is free, and each town hosts a selected number of the 100+ artists that are on the tour. So far, I have visited the instalments in Apeldoorn, Wageningen and Utrecht, and each one of them has been amazing. Although Popronde is quite an integrated concept among fervent concert-visitors and other music lovers, it is not that well-known amongst the general public. This causes most venues to be comfortably crowded, but not “it's-way-to-full-here-and-I-need-to-get-out-because-I-can't-breathe”-type crowded. Another pleasant surprise was that none of the pubs that I have been to was charging more for drinks, which quite often happens at similar events.

As for the music itself; I haven't been disappointed by a single act so far. The festival is known to have hosted big names when they were still in an early phase. For instance, De Staat, Kensington and Chef' Special have all played at Popronde during earlier editions. This year's acts again seem to be carefully and skilfully curated.

“The festival is known to have hosted big names when they were still in an early phase.”

One of this year's highlights was Tusky, a punk-rock band consisting of, among others, ex-John Coffey guitarist Alfred van Luttkhuizen. Although it was somewhat noticeable that their show in Apeldoorn was one of their firsts ever, their Utrecht performance was definitely one of the better parties I've been to. They were loud and

high-energy and the crowd loved it, showing their appreciation by somehow managing to crowd surf in the back area of Kafé België. An entirely different but nonetheless amazing act was EUT. EUT are a 5 piece from Amsterdam, making what they themselves apparently call 'post-pop'. I'm not entirely sure what that is, but I do know it's catchy, good for dancing and mostly just great fun. So much fun, actually, that I went to see them three times already. Singer Megan de Klerk has the most wonderful voice, and the entire band simply radiates happiness and excitement, dragging you along with ease. Popronde still has a few dates left to go, including a final party in Amsterdam on November 25th. If one of these dates suites you, please don't hesitate to go. I promise you won't be disappointed.



HUMANS OF ALBION



Idris (32) from Kobani

“Hope is the only living thing that gives you strength when you are nowhere and have nothing... When I came to the Netherlands two years ago, I had to confront a new culture, a new language, a new everything. One day, I was walking alone in a quiet park in the north of Amsterdam when two old women passed me and said “welkom” to me in their gentle, Dutch accent. This warm “welkom” expression ignited the feeling of hope in me. It is the only moon that shines in the dome of your dark sky. It is a feeling of warmth. Hope is that powerful motive that changes the grey, lifeless soul into a new being full of life and optimism.”

CULTURE CORNER

Halloween Nightmares: Haunted House
By Vincent Potman

This year, at shopping center the Wall in Utrecht, from September to the end of December, resides the biggest haunted house of the Benelux, with more than 25 rooms of scary stuff. The theme of the year is clowns, and so the shape it has taken is that of a circus, which these entertainers of the Night call their home. I went and visited one night, all on my own.

“...affects you more if you fear clowns.”

The entrance is nice, the coat check-in is convenient (as well as mandatory), and the smoke projectors add a bit of suspense. So, it looked good, and I was pretty pumped to be scared since IT had kind of let me down on that front, and I well-remembered going to a haunted forest when I was 12, which utterly terrified me. Then the scary clown who “owns” the place, is the one who lets you in and explains some of the rules, before putting you in the room with the introductory video, but he just didn’t understand that calling someone stupid for entering the place alone is not very scary, or intimidating. It set the wrong tone, and the short introductory video didn’t help, with little to no lore exposition to get you into the mood, and largely an explanation of the rules about phones and the like. I get why it’s there, but that part could just be played at the entrance instead of putting cheesy horror scenes from bad 70’s and 80’s movies on display. Honestly, both those things didn’t help at all with turning it into an experience, but merely reinforced the intuitive knowledge that this is all a ride. I went through it with that in mind, and though there were moments of being startled, that feeling of constant dread that I remember feeling in that forest almost a decade ago was absent.

I have to admit though, that they put a lot of effort into it and perhaps if you’re with a larger group, which undeniably slows your progress down, the feeling of it all builds up, with their fear and tension ratcheting up your own. It had all the tropes, all the phobias, and truly the claustrophobia part was a well done thing. It probably also affects you more if you fear clowns. All in all, though, I came out of it feeling warm, but not on edge. I even laughed out loud when the last person got me right at the exit. So, if you’re into horror, or still feel that Halloween spirit, you can visit it for the next two months for the measly price of €15.

Kingsman 2 - The Golden Circle
By Vincent Potman

“Austin Powers, but as if it were directed by Tarantino.”

The sequel to Kingsman: The Secret Service, as expected, was just as much a smasher. If you’ve seen the first movie, you already know what’s in store, but if you haven’t I’ll tell you what they sell! Mostly suits, actually, but also ultraviolence, smuttiness, wit that doesn’t take itself too seriously, and a good lesson on manners. As for brand names? Colin Firth, Julianne Moore, Channing Tatum, Halle Berry, Jeff Bridges, Mark Strong, Pedro Pascal, and Taron Egerton make quite a fine selection. There is even a Top Secret one, which is for your eyes only! If that is all to your liking, I’d certainly go browse the racks.

Yes, Kingsman: Golden Circle, continues the story of Eggsy, a British teen working for the Tailor Shop Kingsman, which, as you may infer from the sequel’s title, is a front for a secret service. Their duty is to save the world from zany megalomaniacs, and even more important is that, while doing so, their agents have all the class, while kicking some serious ass. It’s very British. Sounds like a mighty nice gig, right? Well, Poppy (Moore), boss of the Golden Circle, a drug cartel that all but has a monopoly on the global drug trade, agrees and proceeds to blow the organization to smithereens, leaving only two members alive; Eggsy (Egerton) and Merlin (Strong). The Doomsday Protocol activated, they go to Kentucky to work together with Statesman, their American cousins. Instead of selling spiffy suits, the front is a business that produces alcohol, the kind with burn, a great taste, and aged label. Statesman’s Agents are walking Wild West men, with the hats, guns, boots and drawl to match. The only way they could get any more American is if a jingle accompanied their steps. As you can imagine, the first meeting does not go well, but they get over it; they’ve got bigger fish to fry than each other. The hunt for the Golden Circle is on, and the clock is ticking as Polly initiates her plan for recognition, tired of hiding while being so very rich and powerful.

The hunt is action-packed, with the required amount of witty one-liners being delivered, and slow motion and a rapid paced moving camera being applied where necessary. It’s not quite as iconic as the Church Scene in the first movie, but it was still awesome. Yes, Matthew Vaughn has done Kingsman: the Secret Service justice with this sequel. Ultimately it is like Austin Powers, but as if it were directed by Tarantino. Therefore, not watching both is, quite frankly, bad manners.



Honours Programme
By Mees Roelofs

When I got an invitation to the open evening of Honours Humanities, I was instantly interested. After I sent my CV, a motivation letter, representative essay and grades, I was invited for an interview. Turns out everything went great, as I got accepted to the Honours programme! This school year I started our first course, which is called Honours Explorations. The classes are very small, which means that I got more time to think about certain ideas, talk about my opinions and to discuss. There were only five other students in my class, and one teacher. Because of this small class, we got more attention from our teacher than in a normal seminar. All of these students came from the department of languages, literature and communication. This means that we all already had the same background information and together we, during one seminar per week, focused on one topic: canonization. I needed little time to prepare for these seminars; usually we had to read an article which we would talk about. Very nice and interesting!

Through the Honours programme I have come into contact with fantastic and interesting people who are all very motivated and enthusiastic. The study association called Eureka is great: lots of events are organised, such as watching a film together and going to shows and concerts. I am a member of the travel committee and right now I am organising a trip to Frankfurt; it has to be ‘honours-worthy’, a term that comes up quite a lot. The best thing about the Honours programme is that almost anything is possible. If you have an idea about an interesting topic, a film everyone needs to see, a trip you want to organise or something completely new - it is always appreciated! Taking initiative is what it is all about. At the end of the Honours Explorations course we had to write a paper on a topic which was ours to choose. The topics were very diverse, as we all chose something that we were interested in. This is extremely different from what we were used to, as normal papers have to be about a predetermined topic. My paper was about the Facebook page called Onnodig Engels Taalgebruik, and why Dutch people don’t like it when English is used in a Dutch sentence or context. This was fun and interesting. I most definitely do not regret joining the Honours programme. If you get the chance, go for it, as it will enrich your university experience!

MINOR & MASTER MARKET



RMA Literary Studies at UvA

By Jitske Brinksma

When I was deciding what master to apply to last year, I knew one thing: it was going to be a literature program. After some soul searching I realised I wasn’t quite done doing literary research, which meant that a research master seemed like the right choice for me. I applied both to the rMA comparative literature in Utrecht and the rMA Literary Studies in Amsterdam. I found deciding between the two very difficult, but in the end I felt that it would be good for me to experience a change in academic environment.

Literary Studies at UvA combines Literary analysis and Cultural analysis. The program allows for a lot of freedom: apart from three core courses, you are free to take courses from the humanities department, design your own tutorials with a teacher, and follow seminars and master classes at one of the Dutch Research Schools. A downside to this program may be that it is rather difficult planning-wise to go abroad. If you’re interested in this program and you do want to go abroad, I’d say ask someone before the start of the first semester and it should be possible!

This first semester I am taking a course called “Key Debates in Literary Studies.” The course has a strong focus on different literary theories. We discuss current debates going on in the field of literary studies, and try to think through the question of what it means to study literature and through what lens it is possible to do so. I am also taking an elective course called “Going Global: Globalisation and the Cultural Imaginary:” an interdisciplinary course where we consider meaning of globalisation, the mechanisms behind it, and the cultural effects of globalisation.

To apply to this program you are expected to have an average of at least 7.5. You will have to write a motivation letter, supply a sample of your work, and, of course, a résumé.

Although I have only been in this program for a few months, I think I can say that I’ve made the right decision: I am enjoying my courses and the program is challenging but I feel like I am learning a lot. If you’re interested in pursuing literary research I would definitely recommend checking out this program!

BRENT'S BOOKSHELF

By Nina van de Voort and Laurel Sanders

The new school year has started, and that means lots of new first years! Of course, there are always a few (or a lot) of people who read... a lot, and this year is no different. For the first Bookshelf of the year I travelled to beautiful Heeze, below Eindhoven, to have a nice chat with Brent Snoeijen about his reading habits.

Do you have a favourite genre?

I don't know if you know Jack London? He's kind of like this American naturalist/transcendentalist, and the genre he writes in is so purely naturalistic, it's something that I really adore. I don't know if that's like a particular genre in literature, but yeah, transcendentalism.

What's one of your favourite books that you've recently read?

The Count of Monte Cristo (by Alexandre Dumas), definitely. It's a revenge story of this young man, Edmond Dantès, a French man, only 18 or 19 at the beginning, and he has like this big life ahead of him. He's a seafarer, and at one moment everything is taken from him by a few bad people who don't like how he has everything. Then he gets sent to prison, where he gets a life sentence, but he manages to escape after 20 years. After that, he sort of goes onto this revenge path. But it's so complicated, it has so many side stories and side plots which just combine into this one big ending, and I think it's just brilliant.

What makes a book good according to you?

There are many things that make a book good or bad. I would say character development is one of the most important things. It also has to fit the theme and fit the book: like Ernest Hemingway, one of my favourite writers. He writes very simplistic and Dumas, another one of my favourites, is more elaborate in his descriptions of environment. Like with big revenge stories with all those plots, those books need the elaboration Dumas offers. But if you tell a one-person, simplistic story, Hemingway can do that way better.



Picture this: you are home, outside it's raining and chilly, there's a fire in the hearth, and you have time to read. What book would you pick?

I guess Lord of the Rings. It's not a very simple book, but it's not a very hard book either. It's just a book that inspires me, and it's a very relaxing book with another world to picture yourself in without too much going on, no deep contemplation about other societies needed or something like that, but just to relax.

Do you have a favourite quote?

I have two. They are both from Walden by Henry David Thoreau. He, like Jack London, has a very naturalistic view of things. He has a few quotes that I really like. One from the book is "I am monarch of all I survey/my right there is none to dispute", and another one from the same book is "humility, like darkness, reveals the heavenly light". I like the emotion they hold, and that they have a very extreme transcendentalism-like feeling, taking you back to the root of humanity.

What is one author that you haven't read yet, but would love to read one day?

Shakespeare. I've read his sonnets, and those are quite easy to read, but with Hamlet and Macbeth, I still find it quite hard to just sit through and read it in one go because you have to look up almost everything. And I would like to read Hamlet mostly because of, and this might be a cheesy reason, The Lion King, which is also my favourite Disney movie.



What is one genre you can never seem to get into or refuse to read?

The cheesy knock-offs, like the dystopian books, such as Divergent, Hunger Games, that sort of thing. I don't like them because they're just knockoffs of Harry Potter and Lord of the Rings, but they don't bring in anything else. A lot of high and epic fantasy does bring in something new like A Song of Ice and Fire by George R. R. Martin. Those books add something, and I don't think that the dystopian novels do that.

If you were stranded on a deserted island, what book would you have with you?

Robinson Crusoe. I read it a year ago, and I liked it, though sometimes it's too descriptive.

Laurel: How did you go about reading it? beforehand, did you look it up on Wikipedia or did you do that afterwards?

The editions of the books that I have, have an introduction before the book starts, but on the first line it says, "don't read this until after you've finished the book". But always when I finish those books, I just move on to the next one without ever reading the introduction. I probably should, to learn more about the book, see the grand scheme of things.



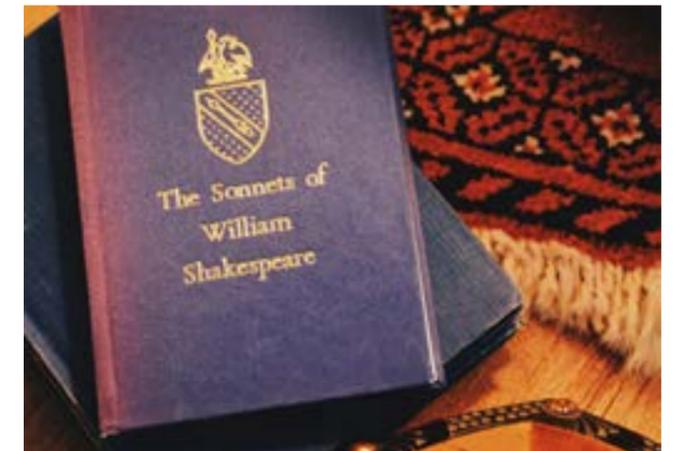
Do you have a favourite character?

Edmond Dantès from The Count of Monte Cristo. You actually have to read the book to know why, but he's a perfect hero, and I can kind of find myself in him. But mostly with the revelation he finds in himself in the end after the revenge plot, what he has learned from life, that just stayed in my head.

"He's a perfect hero, and I can find myself in him."

Is there any book that you would recommend?

The Call of the Wild and White Fang by Jack London. Call of the Wild describes this dog, who is a domestic dog, in America, who undergoes a transition from a domestic dog to a wild one. And White Fang is the other way around, of a wolf born in the wild who gets domesticated by Native Americans at first, and then later by Westerners. Those are two opposites, but together they just give a beautiful vivid view of those canines. It's hard to explain, but you almost feel like a dog or a wolf, and I think that's beautiful.





HOW TO...

DECORATE A SMOL ROOM

HOSPITEREN



Finally, you've got that room you tenaciously contested for. Now it's time to make it your home! You might be starting completely fresh, or you may have some pieces already. Utrecht being Utrecht, the chances of this room being a sweeping grand hall are small, thus making the most of the space you have is important! Here are a few tips that will hopefully get you started.

By Valerie Palmen

Firstly, mirrors! These shiny pieces instantly make your room seem larger, and they're useful too! If you can, hang more than one and place them opposite each other. This way, light is distributed and there is an instant feeling of space expansion! Light is a big player in how your room will feel space-wise, and soft light is the better option if you choose to have more than just one big light overhead.

Space-saving furniture is the way to go if you have to compromise on the amount of furniture

you're able to place. You can do this with your bed, for example, with drawers that pull out from under the bed.

Think about your headboard as well, as you might have the option to build around it, making it multi-functional! A trusty bunk bed is also a great way to literally elevate your sleeping area, giving you the chance to either place your desk or a couch (or a sofa bed!) underneath.

Lastly, colour! Colour plays a huge role in how your room will feel. Option for light colours to blur the edges of your space. White always works! If you're going to paint, try to have one wall as your standout piece. You can do this with either an eye-catching wallpaper or, a calmer option, choose a colour you love and use that to paint one wall.

Hopefully you'll soon have the most amazing, homey room with these tips. Good luck!

Ps: plants are the best accessories.

"Hospiteren" 101: A Step by Step Guide to Getting the Perfect Room.

By Ymke Verploegen

As a student in the lovely city of Utrecht, you might feel the need to get a room here. Maybe you live very far away or maybe you are just completely done with living in your parents' house. Whatever your situation might be, after reading and following this handy guide you will be able to move out in no time.

"Maybe you live far away, or maybe you're just completely done with living with your parents."

The most important thing to remember is that every student living in a room in Utrecht has at one point been through the exact same experience you will now be subjected to: "Hospiteren". As innocent as this word might sound, it sends a shudder down the spine of every single student in Utrecht. How will you, a humble first year (or not first year) ever survive this experience of judgement.

Here are some tips to get you through this.

Firstly, be prepared for anything, questions can range from "what is your favourite book?" to "What kind of fruit, board game, or rock would you be?" These questions are meant to give the people already living there a sense of who you are.

Secondly, make sure you have

a list of semi-interesting hobbies and interests prepared for that uncomfortable introduction speech. Make sure you include as many as you can, so all occupants of the house can relate to you. If you are afraid you might forget some of your interests right them down and read the list before you go to your "hospi".

Thirdly, if they offer you a drink, choose beer, this will show them that you are a true student. If for whatever reason you don't drink, you can disregard this tip.

And last but not least, remember that even if you don't get a room immediately you are still an incredibly fun person. Never give up hope, eventually you will find the room that best suits you, and hopefully you will be living there happily for the duration of your studies.



ALBIONEERS ABROAD

Thijs Grootveld

University of Victoria
Canada

Hey there, dear Albioneers!

I'm writing this while sitting in a bus riding through the beautiful fall landscapes of Victoria, Canada. All of the trees, and there are a lot(!), have turned yellow, the sun is shining bright; it is everything I could ever wish for in Fall. And that on the rainiest island in Canada! I've been in Victoria for two months now and I have to say it really feels like home. It's a beautiful 'little' city that is way too proud of being the, I quote, "city of the newlyweds and nearly deaths". The University (UVIC) is great, Canadians are awesome, and I'm still not sick of all their "about"s and "eh"s.

So far, I have been doing everything an exchange student should be doing: travelling, making friends, dominating karaoke, and barely passing my midterms! Canadian students are really a different species compared to us Dutchies. If they know the answer, then the entire class will know for sure! Always fun when you're having a group discussion about Europe, as if they know what they're talking about...

Something that is immediately noticeable about Canada is their 'lack' of history. One day, I decided to visit one of the oldest castles in Victoria, and I found a weird, small building that looked like it was built just the day before. Presumably, it was spooky, but I couldn't help but wonder how spooky they would find our castles then.

Being abroad for an entire semester also brings up some difficulties of course. Being away from your family for a long time is strange for

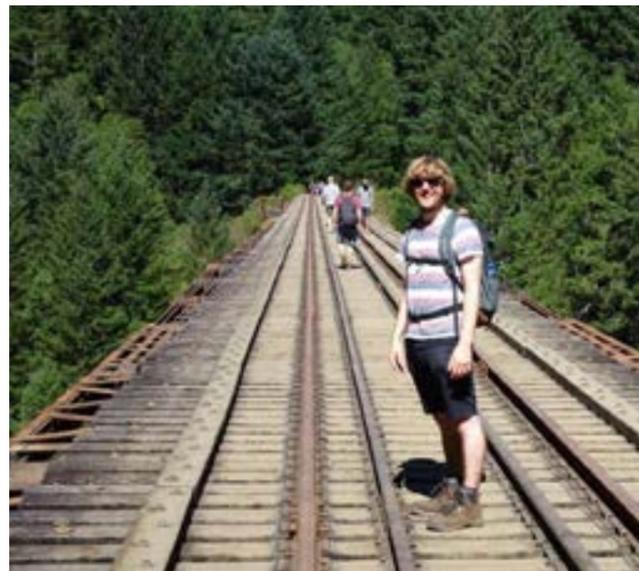


many internationals, and the amount of bonding over missing a certain someone back home is way too high! It's also a challenge not to visit Tim Horton's every day. Many think it's just a lame stereotype, but let's face it; most Canadian stereotypes are true, eh?

While Canada has been a paradise so far, it definitely sets home in a new perspective as well. The comfort of having all your friends close-by, the beautiful historical city center of Utrecht, having an AH XL around the corner (grocery shopping is always an adventure in this country; will I go for healthy? Or for something that is actually affordable to someone who is not Bill Gates?). It sure makes me miss home and I'm excited to see in what way home has changed or remained the same when I come back in winter. For now, I will continue to love this different world, root for UVIC's great sport teams like the hooligan I am, travel for as much as possible, study a bit every now and then, and try to stay warm as it slowly turns into a winter wonderland (Christmas, yes!).

I will see you all in the New Year, have a good one!

Cheers,
Thijs (or whatever these people try to call me)



ALBIONEERS ABROAD

Iris Pijning

University College Dublin
Ireland

As I'm writing this, I'm listening to the legendary 'Als ik bovenop de Dom sta' and trying to think of things that make me feel homesick. I've been cruising around Dublin and most of western and Northern Ireland for a few months now and I have to say I haven't really gotten homesick yet. Of course it's weird not seeing my family, the Utrecht squad, or those sexy beasts that made up the XX-VIth board of Albion for such a long time, but time goes by so fast here and I'm doing so many fun things that I almost never have enough unused brain flaps to actively miss anything that much.

So far in Ireland I kayak surfed (and nearly drowned) in the Atlantic ocean, climbed ruins while humming Game of Thrones tunes in film locations for Dragonstone in Northern Ireland, had a about a barrel of free wine at Google's European headquarters, played around on some cliffs, I've joined a juggling society, I'm studying economics (I know, wtf), and I've made friends from all over the world (I may be learning more about Italy and Australia at the moment than about Ireland actually). I found myself a nice little Dutch bicycle shop in the city centre so I'm touring all around Dublin on my sturdy omafiets. The whole cycling on the left side on the road in a city that has about three cycle lanes in total is going

surprisingly well. I've survived about an hour cycle journey a day and only been shouted at by impatient cab drivers twice so so far so good.

Even though I'm massively enjoying my time here and just keep pushing the bullet point 'book flight home' further down my to-do list, there are some things here that make me notice just how comfortable living in the Netherlands is compared to here. For instance, I used to think Ireland was a party country but rolling out of a pub at closing time (about 1 am) and considering whether I'm prepared to pay €5 to €10 to spend another couple of hours in some club until it closes at half 2, even this Flevolander thinks of Brabant sometimes. Or at least the K-sjot. And when I actually do join a line for a nightclub, it's a bit disappointing not to be able to do that fundamentally Dutch '90's kids activity of singing 'Het is een nacht' en masse.

Apart from those minor inconveniences though, the country of Guinness, leprechauns, James Joyce, and the only slightly less famous Barack O'Bama Plaza is a nice home away from home. And judging by this last paragraph the only Dutch thing I seem to miss enough to write about is Guus Meeuwis. However, I do look forward to my next Albion monthly drinks, meeting the new firsties, and shouting along to the top2000 number one on new year's eve (hopefully O-Zone's Dragostea Din Tei this year, plz plz vote).

See you in 2018!



Q&Alumni

With Liane van Piggelen

Our latest interviewee for the Q&Alumni series has left us quite some time ago. Liane started studying English Language and Culture in 1996 and graduated in 2000. "Sometimes I can't believe it's been that long!" Liane shows us that there are many different ways to go with English.

She works at Broese Boekverkopers, one of the biggest bookstores in the Netherlands, as one of the many enthusiastic booksellers in the store. If you're looking for your next favourite book, she's the one to ask!

By Nurai Mertens

When did you study English Language and Culture?

I studied English Language and Culture from 1996 to 2000- sometimes I can't believe it's been that long!

Why did you choose to study English? And why in Utrecht?

In secondary school, I had high marks in both English and German. English won out over German because 1; I like English literature better than German literature and 2; The English teachers made their room nice and bright and filled it with souvenirs from trips to the UK. The German teacher didn't do any of those things. So, English = nice and German = boring. Sorry, German...

I lived, and still live, just outside of Utrecht, so that made studying there a logical choice.

Was the study what you expected/hoped for?

I didn't really have any expectations. In the end, I thought some classes were great, some classes were not so great. The study as such was a good one and I really enjoyed my time at university.

Did you know what you wanted to do after you graduated?

Work! I had no idea as what though. Just not as a teacher, that much I did know.

Did the study prepare you for your current job?

There are quite a lot of English-speaking people passing through Utrecht and coming by in our shop. So, it's nice to flex my English-speaking muscles so to speak and I know quite a bit about literature so if people need a good read, I can certainly recommend them a title or two.

Do you have any advice for current students of English?

Take advantage of the fact that you can take other classes too, and have fun!



**Don't Even Get me Started!
Living at Home: Oy Vey Chipkaart**

By Vincent Potman

"...the NS is nothing to write home about, and if you do, it's to complain."

When one becomes a student in a city not their own there is always a choice that stands before them: move there or stay home. For many moving out feels like the next step to adulthood, offering a sense of autonomy and freedom. Get out from under the thumb of parental guidance, and make it on your own in a place you can rightly call your own. It also, as a bonus, allows you to bike to your seminars and lectures, instead of having to commute by train. A commute that no one who still lives at home can escape, and which can, at times, truly be a most vexing experience. Indeed, trains may have been, once upon a time, the pinnacle of human invention and ingenuity. However, that time has long passed and the NS is nothing to write home about and if you do, it's to complain.

Yeah, the Tokyo Subway it is not, and for student living at home the unreliability of the NS and the early hours these commutes can demand do not exactly make us appreciate the organization. Honestly, it is the loss of precious sleep that is the most grievous offence, which is, of course, why we praise the fact that tea exists (and for the heathens out there, coffee). Speaking of losing sleep, going to parties is not always as easy as you want it to be when you don't live in Utrecht. Sometimes your friends don't have a couch left over for you, and depending on where you live, there might not be a night train to take you home. Not the worst thing if a weekend is around the corner, but during the week it can pose problems.

Living at home is not all cons though, as it has plenty of pros. It might not be that next step to adulthood, but that does relinquish you of responsibility; like paying rent, buying your own groceries, cooking your own meals, doing laundry and all of that jazz. Of course, depending on your parents these chores might very well be things you're already tasked with, exempting rent, unless your parents are very strict. For me they are, but there is a laxness to it, because in the end I am not solely responsible for it. You don't need to Hospiteer either, which, having done it, can be a right chore itself. I'll just have a room without competition, thank you.

In the end it comes down to what you want, but there is no shame in staying home and commuting, just be prepared to rely on the OV, which is more than a little flawed. Expect packed trains, expect delayed trains, and do not be too shocked when it turns out all that was wrong was a leaf on the tracks. Just mentally check out, drink your warm beverage, and mutter, "Oy Vey, not again".

WORD OF THE BOARD... Tanisha



"If you were to write an autobiography, what would it be called?" That is a question which I have been asked once, and it didn't take me long to come up with an answer.

For as long as I can remember, people have been very surprised when I tell them I grew up on an island. "Do you have to take the ferry every time?" "I thought only sheep lived there?" "But do you have Internet connection?" "Do you know everybody who lives there?"

Let me answer these questions, before I tell a little more about living on an island.

Yes, you do have to take the ferry every time you want to reach the island. Unless you really like swimming. No, people do live there, almost 14.000. There are indeed a lot of sheep, though. Yes, WiFi, television and mobile networks, it is all there. No. I do know a lot of people, or maybe just by name, but I certainly do not know every inhabitant.

Growing up on an island is quite fun! It is a dream to have lots of space and nature to experience all kinds of adventures. Knowing a lot of people is quite an advantage here, because you could always find someone to play with.

As you get older, it does seem to get a bit small, and I was definitely excited to go to a new place to study. It's great to live in the city and I am very happy with my choice to be living in Utrecht. However, when I go back to Texel for the weekend, it does really feel like coming home.

As some people might say (or maybe I just made this up): "You can take the girl away from the island, but you can't take the island away from the girl." And I totally agree, because it will always be home.

Anyway, I do recommend all of you to visit sometime, even if it is just for the delicious "Texels Bier" ;)

And to get back to the title of that autobiography; "On a non-deserted Island", would be quite fitting I think, you can fill in the rest yourself.

PHOENIX SERVES...

Cous Cous Salad by Nurai Mertens

Serves 4
+/- 30 minutes
€2,20 per person

200 grams Israeli (or pearl) couscous
2 cans of tuna (160 grams each) (falafel if you want a vegetarian option or just don't like tuna)
500 grams of broccoli
1 can of chickpeas (400 grams)
50 grams of walnuts
50 grams of basil pesto
Half of one avocado (or the whole thing if you're feeling fancy)

Some feta or other kind of cheese might also be nice to add, but it's not necessary. If you're a fan of couscous, wait till you try pearl couscous. It's a bit more expensive than regular couscous, so if you're really low on cash you can use regular couscous, though you would be missing out. I'm normally not a big fan of tuna but in this recipe the taste isn't so overwhelming.

Preheat the oven to 200 °C. Drain and wash the chickpeas. Cut the broccoli into very small pieces and spread them on a baking sheet (put parchment paper on the sheet first). Add the chickpeas, some olive oil, some salt and pepper (some smoked paprika powder might also be nice), and bake in the oven for about 20 minutes. Prepare the couscous according to the package and drain. Roughly chop the walnuts. Drain the tuna. Cut the avocado pieces into your preferred shape.

Mix the couscous with the broccoli and chickpeas, pesto, walnuts, tuna and avocado. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Apple Crumble By Lola van Scharrenburg

Serves 6
+/- 60 minutes
€0,60 per person

3 apples
2 tsp cinnamon or 'speculaaskruiden'
100g sugar
75g butter
75g flour
75g rolled oats

Start by preheating your oven to 190°C. Next, peel and core your apples, and cut them into chunks. In a bowl, mix the apples with your cinnamon or 'speculaaskruiden' (or both!) and 50g of sugar, and put the mixture in a baking dish. For your crumble, dice your butter and add the flour, rolled oats and remaining sugar to it. Knead the dough until it reaches a crumbly texture. If your crumble is either too dry or too sticky, add some butter or flour until it is nice and crumbly. Next, use the crumble dough to cover the apples, and bake for 45 minutes, or until the apples are cooked and the dough is golden brown.



FOOD ON A STUDENT BUDGET

Chili By Nanne Veeke

Serves 4
+/- 30 minutes
€2,16 per person

Chili con carne seasoning mix (because who really has time to make their own blend of spices?)

2 onions
1 red bell pepper
1 leek
1 can of tomato puree
1 can of kidney beans
1 can of chili beans
300 grams of minced beef (but of course you can substitute this for more beans or veggies to make the dish vegetarian).



Chili is one of our favourite winter dishes back at home because of its spicy yet comforting flavour. It really warms you up when you're feeling a little... chili. Bad puns aside, this dish is very easy to make and nutritious as well.

Drain the beans and rinse them with cold water. Cut the onions, leek and bell pepper into small pieces.

Heat up some oil or butter in a pan and brown the minced beef (or skip this step if you're vegetarian). Add the chopped-up veggies and let it sit for a few minutes. Add 350 ml of water and the seasoning mix. Let it come to a boil and let simmer for 2-3 minutes. Add the tomato puree and beans. Let those heat up and you are done!

You can eat it on its own or with a serving of rice, whatever floats your boat. For an extra crunch, you can sprinkle some crushed tortilla crisps on top. Sounds odd, but it's actually pretty good! Enjoy!

Tagliatelle Alla Broccoli By Alessandra Polimeno

Serves 4
+/- 30 minutes
€2,45 per person

500 gr broccoli
150 gr bacon (preferably veggie bacon!)
Olive oil
One pack of herb cream cheese
One small bottle of cream
Tagliatelle
Parmezan cheese



For this meal, you need 3 pans (or two if you don't mind cooking your pasta and broccoli in the same pan).

First, cut the broccoli in small pieces and cook them for a very short while, 2 minutes is enough.

Bake the veggie bacon in the other pan (preferably a big frying pan) and add the cream and the herb cream cheese.

Stir it well! Let it cook for a minute while you start boiling water for the pasta.

Add the broccoli to the stuff in the frying pan, and when it's cooked, drain the pasta and add it too. You might want to reserve a bit of the cooking water in case the pasta gets too dry.

Add Parmezan cheese and pepper, and your meal is ready!



We know Valentine's Day still seems ages away, but do you already feel excited about surprising someone with flowers, a box of chocolates or a card signed "your secret admirer"? Maybe you've even got some super elaborate date set up? No? If thinking about this leaves you feeling stressed and anxious, Phoenix has got you covered! In our January issue, we've got our love expert Alby ready to answer all your questions about love and relationships in her very own column "Ask Alby". If you have any issues that you would like Alby's advice on, don't hesitate to send an email to albionphoenix@gmail.com with "Ask Alby" in the subject line.

COLOFON

This issue of Phoenix was made possible because of:

Idris Ali, Jitske Brinksma, Isolde van Gog, Thijs Grootveld, Joppe Kips, Tess Masselink, Nurai Mertens, Lotte Murrath, Valerie Palmen, Liane van Piggelen, Iris Pijning, Alessandra Polimeno, Vincent Potman, Indie Reijnerse, Mees Roelofs, Laurel Sanders, Lola van Scharrenburg, Marlon Schotel, Brent Snoeijen, Nanne Veeke, Ymke Verploegen, Pauw Vos, Nina van de Voort, Emma Wassser, Tanisha Wetsteen, and Mia You