Senior Spotlight: Carsten Gehring

1. Which literary characters would you most want as a) your wingman/wingwoman, b) your only companion on a deserted island, and c) your cool aunt or uncle?
   a) Chaucer the character from *The Canterbury Tales*. Hard to look bad next to him. b) Nabokov’s Pinin, if only because I could use that extensive time to learn Russian and Russian literature from him. c) Captain Wragge from *No Name* by Wilkie Collins. He’s dishonest, a cheat, and immoral, but still lovable, and, as an uncle you only see once in awhile, I think he’d be great.

2. 6 words describing your experience as a Carleton English major:
   Making my goodreads account less pathetic.

3. Tell us something that most of the other English majors don’t know about you.
   I’m a dual citizen with a German passport.

4. Have you ever judged a book by its cover? Which one, and was it worth the read?
   I was skeptical in high school that *Watership Down* would be any good based on its cover, but I ended up really enjoying it.

5. If you could rewrite the ending of one novel, what would it be and how would you change it?
   I wrote a paper once about how much I hated the ending of *The House of Mirth*, so I’d probably rewrite it so that Lawrence Selden doesn’t get the tragic yet romantically happy ending he seems to get in the original.

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Faculty Spotlight: Peter Balaam

1. You get to steal (successfully!) any original copy of any book in the world. Which would you take with your five finger discount? Can I admit a grievous personal failing? I’m more than a bit allergic to old books and the melancholy reverence having them around can produce in the unwary. From Jesus, Elvis, and Emerson—my gurus—I’ve imbued the conviction that, though they need not do so, old books can really foul a guy up. I aspire to be able to withstand the force of old books some day. But obviously I’d steal the Dead Sea Scrolls and donate them to Gould Library Special Collections.

2. What is your secret (perhaps superhuman) English professor power that all Literature students should know about?
   Well, there’s just so much say! Alas, the deal I have with the Agency prevents me. But I do have a neat little contraption in my wristwatch that, while I’m teaching, helps me readily discern the differences between the picturesque and the beautiful, metaphor and metonymy, and the scriptible and lisible. Without it, I’d be sunk.

3. What are you most looking forward to doing in London as the leader of the English Theatre and Lit. 2011 Program?
   Oh, that’s easy. I intend to have many moments of the Metropolitan Sublime while walking back toward Victoria Embankment across the Thames. It’s going to be a deliciously warm spring in England this year and, after another evening at the National, as I walk the expanse of Blackfriars Bridge with my lively young theater-going companions, our heads and our chatter still slightly caught in the remarkable play we’ve just seen, the Gothic spires of Westminster will shimmer over the dark water off to our left and the great dome of St. Paul’s will loom up on the right. Well, it won’t be a late night trip to Econo, but I guess everyone has to spend the spring somewhere.

4. If you could go back in time to your college years, what would you tell your past self as a budding English scholar?
   I’d adapt Henry James: “Try to be a person on whom nothing is lost, only this time please try much, much harder.”

5. Describe your experience as a professor at Carleton with six words.
   Great peeps, readerly deeps, no sleeps.

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Quote of the Week

O, that a man might know
The end of this day’s business ere it come!
But it sufficeth that the day will end,
And then the end is known.

STUDENTS, call in to ext. 4322 with the author and the name of the work; the first person to name the quotation correctly will win a “beautifully wrapped” Pepperidge Farm cookie package and a hand-made card from Carolyn with a special faculty signature! Last week’s answer, which no one correctly identified, was Robert Browning’s “My Last Duchess.”

Random Sampling of twitterature from...

The Great Gatsby

@ West-Egg Gatsby is so emo. Who cries about his girlfriend while eating breakfast … IN THE POOL?

Calling all senior English majors!

Looking for some direction for your post-graduation life? Get in touch with a mentor through the Career Center—there’s a light at the end of the Carleton tunnel!

The Carleton Alumni Mentoring Program (C.A.M.P) pairs seniors with alumni volunteers who help coach and guide their mentees through their senior year and beyond.

Mentor pairings begin this Monday: contact Susie Pham (phams) with questions, and visit the Career Center website for details.

This Spring---OCS in London

Theatre! The Romantic Revolution!
Lodging in the bustling heart of Bloomsbury!
Applications are still being accepted.

For information contact director Peter Balaam (pbalaam@) or the OCS office.