

Speeches Delivered by MA Anglo-German Cultural Relations Students at the German Ambassador's Residence in London

Thursday 26 March, 2009.

1. Ms. Jamie Searle, MA Anglo-German Cultural Relations, Part-Time Candidate, 2007-8, 2008-9

The Anglo-German Cultural Relations MA is a unique and innovative programme, and I am very proud to be one of its students. Both the Centre and its MA are still in their infancy, but are already going from strength to strength, and have gained respect and recognition here and in Germany. Devoted to the study of cultural transfers and interrelations between Britain and the German speaking world, the MA – in the opinion of its students and many others – does not merely study these relations, but is actively involved in developing positive links for the future.

As a part-time student completing the course over two years, I've been lucky enough to witness the MA develop from its very first seminar in Autumn 2007, and although my fellow full-time students have since completed, I know that they would join me in saying that the course organisers have allowed us to become part of its journey by seeking and responding to our feedback, something which I am certain will benefit future students.

The programme caught my attention straight away with its challenging focus, which looks not only at modern-day interrelations but also the many colourful and thought-provoking events which play a part in Anglo-German history. I've been fascinated by German culture and literature for a number of years now, and to me personally, the MA has enriched my awareness by encouraging me to consider the background to the perceptions which have developed over the years between our two countries.

The structure of the MA itself allows us to gain a fascinating overview of these historical details in the core course, whilst also offering a selection of more specialist modules through which to develop our own individual research interests. These options are extremely diverse: during the course of last year I was able to research wide-ranging topics such as the current reception of contemporary German-language literature in the UK (a particular interest of mine), the complexities of translating the Austrian author Thomas Bernhard, and also British foreign policy towards the GDR in the two decades preceding the fall of the Wall.

This diversity was a significant part in the MA's appeal to me, but even more so was its practical component - something which I think is often overlooked in theoretical MA programmes. Through this we had the enviable opportunity to meet and engage with people already working in key Anglo-German roles; from the German Embassy in London, the British Council, the Goethe Institut, and many others, including individuals from the fields of translation, publishing and the media. This to me was the MA's unique selling point, and for this reason I'm sure it will continue to attract not only those who wish to engage in postgraduate research, but also students who wish to play an active role in the future development of Anglo-German Relations.

2. Mr. Matthieu Honnefelder, MA Anglo-German Cultural Relations, Full-Time Candidate, 2008-9.

First of all I would like to thank you for your kind invitation to this beautiful evening tonight - Jamie and I are very excited to be here.

My name is Matthieu Honnefelder. I am one of the German postgraduate students at the Centre for Anglo-German Cultural Relations. After studying International Cultural- and Business-Studies at the University of Passau and International Relations at the London School of Economics, I applied for the Master-Program in Anglo-German Cultural Relations at Queen Mary, University of London last Autumn. And to my pleasure they offered me a place in the programme.

The courses of study offered at the Centre for Anglo-German Cultural Relations are excellent. They cover the fundamental questions of Anglo-German Cultural Relations in language, linguistics, literature, history, philosophy and current topics of course. All courses are highly interesting and intensive. Those interested in cultural relations between the two countries will find more than a basis for how to act in this difficult field. In addition to that we had the chance to have an inside view of the institutions which deal with Anglo-German relations every day, like the Goethe-Institut, the DAAD or the German Embassy of course.

But allow me to explain what makes the Master-Program of the Centre of Anglo-German Cultural Relations so special and different from others. It is the outstanding support and assistance which you find in this department. I personally never experienced such a motivation, such a support and personal interest in the development and improvement of my studies as I did with Professor Görner, Dr. Nicholls and Dr. Gillett. Not at the London School of Economics and surely not at the University of Passau. It is really a pleasure to be part of such a small and extraordinary fine institute.

Thank you very much.