

From the Editor

2011 Max Kade Article Prize

With the start of every new volume of *Modern Austrian Literature*, it is always instructive to step back and reflect upon the work that has preceded it. Since 2005, when the Max Kade Foundation generously began funding the Max Kade Prize for the Best Article in *Modern Austrian Literature*, that reflection includes determining an annual prizewinner from among the articles published in the previous year's volume. The members of the *Modern Austrian Literature* editorial board recently selected the recipient of the 2011 Max Kade Prize from among the sixteen articles constituting volume 43 (2010) of the journal. Selection criteria included the originality of the thesis, the clarity of the theoretical perspective, the author's ability to situate the argument within the field, the stylistic sophistication, and the wider applicability of the findings. While it is rarely easy to select only one article for the award, this is the charge presented to the journal's editorial board.

The results of the deliberations were announced at the 2011 annual conference of the Modern Austrian Literature and Culture Association in Washington, Pennsylvania. On the evening of the first full day of the conference, following dinner in the ballroom of the Rossin Center on the campus of Washington & Jefferson College, I had the pleasure of informing the conference participants that Neil Christian Pages was selected to receive the 2011 Max Kade Article Prize for his essay "What's Hidden in *Caché*." As this year's prizewinner was among the participants at the 2011 MALCA conference, I was able to personally present him with the \$1,500 award.

Neil Christian Pages received his Ph.D. in Germanic Languages and Literatures from New York University in 1999. That same year, he began teaching at Binghamton University, State University of New York, where he is currently Associate Professor of German and Comparative Literature. His publications include essays on Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Georg Brandes, W. G. Sebald, and Rachel Whiteread's Holocaust memorial. He has also co-edited, with Mary Rhiel and Ingeborg Majer-O'Sickey, a volume of critical essays on Leni Riefensthal, *Riefensthal Screened: An Anthology of New Criticism* (2008). Neil Christian Pages is currently working on a book manuscript investigating memorials, public memory, and commemorative practice.

In "What's Hidden in *Caché*," Pages examines Michael Haneke's 2005 film and the ways in which it appropriates the French colonial past. Drawing on Adorno and considering the film's references to the 1961 Paris Massacre, Pages deftly

analyzes the dynamics of repression and revelation in *Caché*. By investigating the historical, ideological, and aesthetic tensions in Haneke's film, Pages presents a nuanced and innovative reading of *Caché* and provides considerable insight into the politics and ethics of its director.

The members of the editorial board had many words of praise for the theoretical sophistication and intricate textual analysis contained in Neil Christian Pages' article. I include here a representative sample of their comments:

This article makes a compelling case for what Pages terms the film's (and, by extension, Haneke's) political cynicism that adroitly relies on a philosophical framework (primarily Adorno), historical contextualization, and close reading/formal analysis. Rather than simply dismissing Haneke as conservative, it develops a keen reading of the movie that shows how the film casts its audience in a position that both invites them to savor the gratification of critical awareness while at the same time exempting them from its responsibilities and burdens. The argument is clear and complex, its implications far-reaching.

In this sophisticated and well-written argument, Pages compellingly outlines the problematic political and ethical implications of Michael Haneke's much-discussed film *Caché*. Pages fleshes out an argument put forward in schematic terms in the pages of *Screen* that the film in fact elides the Other it claims to represent.

This is a well-written and well-researched article on Haneke's 2005 film *Caché* and its interwoven exploration of personal and collective memory vis-à-vis the figure of Georges Laurent and the continued engagement with the problematics of France's colonial past as exemplified by the October 1961 Paris Massacre. In examining the film in this light, the author does an excellent job of drawing together the multiple threads (historical, political, cinematic, aesthetic) needed to engage the reader within the arguments being posed and the close reading being conducted.

This article presents a sophisticated reading of the film in its cultural-historical context, taking politics and aesthetics equally into consideration. The argument balances the director's sources and project well, making this a contribution to overall readings of the filmmaker's project, not just a reading of an individual film.

You can read this year's prizewinning article in *Modern Austrian Literature* 43.2 or on the journal's website, where you will find Neil Christian Pages' essay along with those of the previous six Max Kade Article Prize winners.

The members of the editorial board and I extend our heartiest congratulations to Neil Christian Pages for his prizewinning work. At the same time, we hope you will consider submitting your outstanding scholarship to *Modern Austrian Literature* so that you may be among the list of future prize recipients.

Craig Decker