Luncheon
Sunday, February 3, 2013 • Noon to 3:00 pm
The Parthenon Restaurant • 314 S. Halsted Street, Chicago, IL
(Free Valet Parking)

Panel and Discussion
From the Book to the Boards:
Staging Pride and Prejudice

Kristin Leahey, Resident Dramaturg, Northlight Theatre
Laura McClain, Elizabeth Bennet in the Lifeline Theatre production of Pride and Prejudice
Phil Timberlake, Mr. Collins in the Lifeline Theatre production of Pride and Prejudice
David Woolley, Society of American Fight Directors & Columbia College Chicago

Moderated by Debra Ann Miller, Member at Large, JASNA-GCR

LUNCHEON REGISTRATION FORM
Members: $25; Guests: $35
Registration deadline: January 30

Member Name ________________________________
Guest(s) Name(s) ________________________________
Address __________________________________ City __________________ State _____ ZIP _______
E-mail __________________________________ Phone __________________ Amount enclosed $________

You can register by
1. Going online to www.jasnachicago.org and pay using your Visa or MasterCard.
or 2. Mailing your check—payable to JASNA-GCR—and this form to Pat Wieber. 1526 N. Mohawk St., Apt. 3 South Chicago, IL 60610.
Austen Takes Center Stage
As all lovers of Jane Austen know, we are in the midst of a series of major Austen anniversaries. 2013 will bring one of the most highly anticipated celebrations of all: the 200th anniversary of the publication of Pride and Prejudice!

As you will read in subsequent pages of this newsletter, JASNA–GCR has found a way both to celebrate the 200th anniversary of Pride and Prejudice, and to honor its status as Austen’s most staged and stageable novel, as we focus on the connections between Jane Austen and the theater.

JASNA–GCR will start off the new year with a bang: Pride and Prejudice at 200; a live reading of the entire novel, to be held in the pedway of Block 37, 108 N. State St., Chicago, on Monday, January 28, 2013, beginning at 7:00 am. This program is the inspiration of Debra Ann Miller, who may be new to the GCR Board, but who is already well known to our members as the creator and performer of Jane Austen Speaks. In addition to preparing our exciting panel discussion on bringing Austen to the stage for our Winter Meeting on February 3 (see pages 4-5), Debra has been marshaling the troops of volunteer readers–actors, authors, JASNA members and lover of Austen–who will bring Pride and Prejudice to life exactly 200 years after it came into the world.

You should have already received an e-blaster calling for help with the reading. If you would like to participate in this extraordinary event, please let us know by sending an e-mail to DebMiller@post.com. Even if you do not have a hankering for the spotlight, I hope that I will see many of you at Block 37 on January 28.

I can’t think of a better way to kick off 2013. Curtain going up!
An Exciting Year Of Discoveries And Premieres

Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice*, which celebrates the 200th anniversary of its publication on January 29th 2013, regularly invites its admirers and detractors to indulge in superlatives. Depending on the individual reader’s perspective, it either boasts the best, or the worst, marriage proposal in literary history; the sexiest, or the haughtiest hero who ever strutted across a ballroom floor, and so on. *Pride and Prejudice* is Austen at her most Shakespearian, balancing to perfection the art of comedy with the craft of tragedy, and adding a dash of social satire for good measure. It is also the novel that features Austen’s most complete and loving (although far from perfect) family, and her happiest ending. It is, in a manner of speaking, the least typical of her books, although the majority of people would say that it is her most famous. *Pride and Prejudice* regularly tops the Best of... literature lists, and it is the British Library’s “most adopted title” in its fund-raising campaign that allows subscribers to sponsor a particular text.

The popularity, universality, and adaptability of *Pride and Prejudice* have inspired the program committee to select as our theme for 2013 THE MOST STAGED AND STAGEABLE JANE AUSTEN NOVEL: *PRIDE AND PREJUDICE*. We are extremely pleased to announce that our yearlong tribute to the novel is already poised to include several notable discoveries and premieres. We have chosen the coming attractions for our winter, spring, and summer 2013 meetings, but will soon update you on what will be following in the fall.

On February 3rd, the date of our Winter Meeting, brand-new board member and Jane Austen impersonator Debbie Ann Miller will begin our celebration with FROM THE BOOK TO THE BOARDS: STAGING *PRIDE AND PREJUDICE* when she will ask four talented members of the thriving Chicago theatre community to share with us the joys and pitfalls of bringing Jane Austen’s heroines, villains, and world to the modern stage.

Our exciting Spring Gala on May 4th will feature JANE AUSTEN AND OTHER DIVAS, introducing you to plays and performances that have never been seen or heard in Chicago before. In DEAR JANE ON STAGE IN 1932, we will revisit the New York production of a play thought until recently to be lost. The presentation by Russell Clark will focus on the author, Eleanor Holmes Hinkley, a cousin of T.S. Eliot, and the actors who portrayed Cassandra and Jane Austen. We will hear two extracts from *Dear Jane*, not heard anywhere for more than 80 years.

Elisabeth Lenckos’ JANE AUSTEN BLUE-STOCKING will introduce you to a sweet and funny Victorian play from 1840s Germany, which imagines that “Johanna von Austen” never died, but lived well into her sixties and retired to the shores of the Rhine, where she spent her days in a bookstore, writing poetry, and trailing the curls and silhouettes of her former admirers. You will learn how Austen “travelled” from Hampshire to Westphalia, and why she came to be seen as both old fashioned and loveable by her German audiences of the nineteenth century.

We conclude the Gala with a presentation by Jeff Nigro and John Nygro entitled DIVAS OF AUSTEN’S DAY. The Nigro/Nygro brothers will take us back to the operatic world and the divas of the Regency era, highlighting the careers of some of the great female stars of the time, including a live performance of items from their repertoires. We will also go to the theater with Jane in a discussion of the...
From the Book to the Boards: Staging Pride and Prejudice

If we can judge from her letters, Jane Austen loved the theatre. What better way to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the publication of Pride & Prejudice than to explore the adaptations of Pride and Prejudice and Jane’s other novels through the eyes and experience of the artists that have brought these beloved characters to life. Austen’s rich dialogue, her economy of locations and compelling relationships conspire to tempt us to bring her novels to the stage. But what are the realities of bringing a novel to life? Join us as we return to the Parthenon Restaurant in Greektown for a luncheon and panel discussion on the pleasures and pitfalls of bringing the 19th century world of Jane Austen’s characters to a 21st century audience.

Our panel includes both actors and members of the “behind the scenes” creative teams who have brought Austen to the boards.

Kristin Leahey is the resident dramaturg at Northlight Theatre and formerly the literary manager at Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company in Washington, DC. She has worked with Goodman Theatre, The Kennedy Center, the Indiana Repertory Theatre, Cleveland Play House, Victory Gardens Theater, Notre Dame Shakespeare Festival, Collaboration, Teatro Luna, Teatro Vista, Steep Theatre Company, Eclipse Theatre Company, Redmoon Theater, Next Theatre Company and A Red Orchid Theatre. This spring, Ms. Leahey will graduate with a doctorate from The University of Texas at Austin. Her publications include articles in Theatre Topics, Theatre History and Theatre Studies, and she has taught at The University of Texas at Austin, Lake Michigan College, and at DePaul University.

Laura McClain appeared as Elizabeth Bennet in Lifeline Theatre’s Jeff-recommended, critically acclaimed production of Pride and Prejudice in the summer of 2012. As an actor and singer, she has also worked with Griffin Theatre, Circle Theatre, Bohemian Theatre Ensemble, Bailiwick Repertory, Vintage Theatre Ensemble, Quest Theatre Ensemble, Apple Tree Theatre, Metropolis Performing Arts Centre and Bailiwick Chicago, among others. Laura received one operatic performance that we know she saw.

At our summer event on June 2 we will welcome the wonderful Pamela Whalan, author of Emma—Understanding Jane Austen’s World. Ms. Whalan, who comes to us courtesy of the equally fantastic William Phillips, will visit us from Australia to talk about her adaptations of four of our author’s novels into plays. She retired as a lecturer in the Faculty of Education, University of Technology, Sydney in 1994 and was Director of the Genesian Theatre Company Inc. in 1994 and from 1998—2000. She is a member of the Jane Austen Society of Australia, holding a Master of Arts from the University of Sydney and a Master of Letters from the University of New England. She has delivered many insightful papers on aspects of Austen’s work to the Jane Austen Society of North America.

We, the program committee, now comprised of five members, Diane Capitani, Elisabeth Lenckos, Debbie Ann Miller, Jeff Nigro, and William Phillips, hope that you look forward to our 2013 celebrations of Pride and Prejudice as much as we do. Please join us for the events we have planned for you, and add your own ideas to the list.
David Woolley, S.A.F.D (Fight Master) is a veteran of Chicago Theatre. He is a Fight Master with the Society of American Fight Directors, Senior Lecturer at Columbia College Chicago, and Guido Crescendo in Dirk and Guido the Swordsmen! He has staged fights for over 500 productions since 1982, and is the recipient of a 1988 Jeff Award for Consistent Excellence in Stage Combat Choreography; an Off-Loop Theatre Award for Best Fight Direction, (Les Liaisons Dangereuse, Interplay Theatre 1991); the 2005 Oakland Press Award for Best Choreography for Norma and Wanda at the Purple Rose Theater in Chelsea, MI; and, a 2010 Jeff Award for Best Fight Direction for The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity, Teatro Vista at Victory Gardens. Most recent work includes: staging fights for American Theater Company’s Disgraced, Goodman Theater’s Sweet Bird of Youth and City on the Make, The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui at Chicago Columbia College (where he coordinates the violent needs of a burgeoning department; 23 shows this semester!) and teaches 3 classes of combative arts.

Moderated by Debra Ann Miller (our own Jane Austen), this year’s Winter Meeting panel discussion promises to provide an enlightening and candid look into the hard work that goes into making theatre look effortless.

Welcome New Members
Timmetre Burruss
Peggy Connolly
Gloria Cooper
Rachel Poelarends

Lisbeth Schlesinger
Ashley Spencer
Madeleine Super

Thank you to Contributors
Connie McArdle
Jane Austen Birthday Tea, December 8, 2012

On a lovely, clement early December day, Chicago Janeites and guests once again made their way to the lovely Lathrop House, home of The Fortnightly of Chicago. As always, the club was beautifully decorated for the season, the food was delicious and elegantly presented and the afternoon was a delight for all present.

This year’s tea was filled to capacity, reservations pouring in quite early, regional coordinator Jeff Nigro informed the group as he welcomed all to a jam-packed afternoon, once again sponsored by member Jane Hunt. He thanked our new venue liaison, Georgia Cibul, for handling the arrangements; she was not present, busy attending her grandson’s bar mitzvah, or, as Jeff noted, she had “a higher power than Jane to answer to.” Noting that 2013 will be the 200th anniversary of the publication of *Pride and Prejudice*, we were introduced to member Debra Ann Miller who announced our special public reading of the novel on its anniversary date, January 28 (see page 2).

Program Director Elisabeth Lenckos provided an overview of upcoming programs for the remainder of our program year. Since *Pride and Prejudice* is the most staged and stageable Austen novel, our theme for 2013 will be Jane Austen and the Theatre: February will feature “From the Book to the Boards: Staging Pride and Prejudice,” with Debra Ann Miller leading a panel of actors and other theatre professionals, followed by the annual Gala in May, “Jane Austen and Other Divas”.

After this exciting introduction to the remainder of our program year, Elisabeth introduced the notable speaker for the afternoon, Lucia Mauro, adjunct professor of Dance History at Loyola University Chicago and its Rome, Italy campus, a longtime Chicago dance-theater critic and arts writer, and the dance critic for WBEZ-Chicago Public Radio. Her credits go on and on in the dance world and she recently launched an on-line dance history series that is broadcast live every Wednesday at noon at www.luciamauro.com. Interestingly, Ms. Mauro began by telling the audience that she had been an English major, so she came to Jane Austen in a legitimate way, as she began her discussion of “Social Dance and Social Consciousness in Jane Austen’s Times.”

Austen’s novels contain a great number of dance scenes because “dance was a way of life in Austen’s world.” Indeed, it revealed one’s social status, in particular by one’s knowledge of different types of English country dances. This social dance was closely related to stage dance. English country dance, however, peaked in the 18th century, in Jane’s lifetime, and Ms. Mauro took us back to the Royal Court Masques of the 17th century, and on a whirlwind tour of the history of dance in Italy and France, to explain how the elaborate forms found in those earlier days on the continent eventually came to life in the country dances of the landed gentry of Jane Austen’s gentlemen “farmers.”

Possibly one of the most interesting bits of information that makes one overwhelmed with fatigue to think about, is that one HAD to finish a set one began, even if tired; otherwise, one was considered terribly rude. And one dance could last thirty minutes to an hour! It makes one tremble to think of dancing with Mr. Collins for an hour.

The final to the day, as always, was the birthday toast given by Gail Murphy and Marianne Newman. A fine afternoon, indeed.
Clockwise from top: Regional Coordinator Jeff Nigro and speaker Lucia Mauro; Duwanna Wall ready to party; Enjoying the tea delicacies are Constance Kozikowski, Annette Terovoles and Arlene Kallwitz; the audience settles in; Table set up with Christmas tree; Members at the buffet table; Members Dushanka Milotovic, Ashley Spencer, Charlene Uney partake of tea and conversation; After giving her toast to Jane Gail Murphy waits on the left as Marianne Newman gives her toast to Jane; Cone wreath.
Have you been to the JASNA-GCR Website lately?

In March, we’ll be celebrating the first anniversary of the relaunch of the GCR website and if you haven’t been back since then, we invite you to explore the site again. With William Phillips’s Daily Quote Quiz, the material on the website literally changes every day. In addition, William contributed a new set of puzzles, the Austen Jumbles, with a new one debuting every month. These are fun ways to test your knowledge of Austen and her world.

Our latest feature, Ask Jane Austen, is the brainchild of actress and new board member, Debra Ann Miller. Lay your modern problems in front of Miss Austen and receive a response back from her. We know Jane Austen’s wit and wisdom is just as relevant today as 200 years ago. Other new additions to the website include a short story from Felicia Carparelli and a Hands-On Regency project—the Turban Draping Demo conceived by Master Milliner, Laura Whitlock. There are going to be a lot of lovely turbans in Chicagoland and beyond, as this has received a lot of page views, even some who translated the page into Italian!

Thank you to everyone who contributed material to the website and we’re always open to receiving new material. If you have something you’d love to share, please contact any board member.
Teaching *Pride and Prejudice*

Teaching Austen novels is a joy. Over my twenty-year career at St. Ignatius College Prep, I taught *Emma*, *Persuasion* and *Pride and Prejudice* to juniors and seniors. Though Austen’s formal address is foreign and nineteenth century women faced much more restricted life choices, the conflicts are analogous to contemporary problems. Students would tell me that Emma sat at their lunch table (and this before the movie *Clueless*) and that Mary Musgrove was sooooo annoying and reminded them of a classmate, cousin, aunt or (heavens!) a sister. But the most teachable is *Pride and Prejudice* for its vivid scenes, accessible characters, a timeless story appropriate for adolescents, and a modern ironic sensibility.

It is eminently teachable because it is a novel about reading. Elizabeth begins by thinking she is an astute observer of character, but midway through the novel, after reading Darcy’s letter, she has to reread everything and everyone. And we readers must reevaluate alongside Elizabeth.

I have used excerpts for many different classes. In a course on rhetoric, Mr. Collins’s marriage proposal to Elizabeth is great fun for analysis of argumentation. In a course on drama, I’ve selected scenes from short stories and novels to give students practice with editing and transforming prose to performance. *Pride and Prejudice* provides many mini scenes with conflict and dialogue in a location that can be adapted to a classroom setting. Think, for example, of Mr. Darcy visiting Elizabeth at Huntsford Parsonage. Notice when Darcy moves closer to Elizabeth and when he pushes his chair further back in embarrassment. So much subtext is suggested by the details. Blocking a scene brings out the drama. Consider the card playing scene at Netherfield Hall: what happens when Elizabeth picks up her book instead of joining the card players? Note Caroline’s attack and Elizabeth’s parry; notice when Elizabeth sets aside her book and draws near the card-table. She stands between Mr. Bingley and his eldest sister to observe the game. If you stage it, you see immediately that she faces Mr. Darcy and his admiration, motivating Caroline to ask Darcy about his sister and hint of her intimacy with Darcy’s family and prior claims on Mr. Darcy. In a subtle way, the discussion that follows about women’s accomplishments is really about Elizabeth and Darcy. When the full novel is included in my syllabus, students sign up for a mini-scene performance group. It is great fun and students learn about subtext.

Of course, performance is not the only way I have taught. In so many ways, Austen delineates her characters and we looked at all the ways characters are paired and contrasted: so many single men “in want of a wife” and so many pairs of sisters, mothers, so many degrees of prejudice. The houses reflect their owners in many subtle ways. My students wrote about passages in a close reading of text, but they also wrote letters in the voice of a character—which we read aloud to great hilarity.

One of the joys of reading is to be immersed in another culture. We looked at power relationships, read excerpts from Edmund Burke, Thomas Paine, Mary Wollstonecraft, and Lawrence Stone’s study of marriage in England from 1500–1800, and discussed the implied social commentary in the novel. Anyone who has joined a book group knows how many issues are raised while discussing a novel. My students discussed power relationships, marriage, parenting, sibling rivalry, education, life choices. Jane Austen novels stimulate great discussion, with *Pride and Prejudice* bringing the most joy.
Kenwood House

On view through January 13 at the Milwaukee Art Museum are The Treasures of Kenwood House, London.

A treasure on exhibit is the painting The Spinstress, considered one of the finest of George Romney's many portraits of Emma Hamilton, mistress of Horatio Nelson, killed in the 1805 British victory at the Battle of Trafalgar. While Austen was writing Emma in 1814 and 1815, Emma Hamilton was imprisoned as a debtor. She publicly begged the government and the Prince Regent, with whom she had once been acquainted, for money, but to no avail. In 1814 Nelson’s love letters to her, which she claimed had been stolen, were published. Some think the name Emma was Austen’s allusion to Emma Hamilton and a subtle criticism of the Prince Regent to whom she somewhat reluctantly dedicated the novel.

Kenwood House was purchased in 1754 by William Murray, 1st Earl of Mansfield, Lord Chief Justice of England in 1772. In the Somerset case that a slave coming on English soil became free. Some think Mansfield Park is a nod to him. He raised two grandnieces at Kenwood House: Dido Elizabeth Bell, called a “mulatto,” and Elizabeth Murray, later known as Lady Elizabeth Finch-Hatton when she and her family visited with Austen who wrote Cassandra on August 24, 1805 that “for a woman of her age & situation, [she] has astonishing little to say for herself.”

Authors

As a tribute to the late Portuguese writer José Saramago poet Robert Pinsky in a review of his last novel, Cain, writes in The New York Times Book Review, “Masters of narrative have the power to expose the act of fabrication without invalidating the work: sublime puppeteers like Austen or Nabokov smiling at the audience above their creations, addressing the reader or discussing what they know or need to suppose about the puppets and their stage. Such gestures of acknowledgement that the story is a made thing, far from diminishing our commitment to a tale, somehow increase it. We crave more of the story, and we crave it all the more because a glimpse of the sorcerer’s workshop confirms that we are in the hands of a master.”
“Because of Jane...”

Pinterest, I believe, is one of the best new tools in new media. For those of us who enjoy scouring the internet for news, resources, and inspiration, it’s the tool of choice to keep all of it organized.

Among one of the first boards that I created on Pinterest I titled “Jane Austen”. Obviously, it would be the board where I could pin “everything Jane”. And, I was not alone. There are many other users with similar boards. The boards are filled with countless articles, news, illustrations, cartoons, videos, etc., about Jane. But the boards are also filled with so many other things that she and her novels have inspired for us. And, for this reason, I recently changed the name of my board to “because of Jane Austen”.

I first read Jane Austen in high school without really realizing it. We were assigned to read *Pride and Prejudice*, which was followed by a test that one cared more about answering correctly than understanding—not a very romantic introduction. After college, in search of something “new,” I reread *Pride and Prejudice* and I understood—Jane Austen made sense, she “totally gets it.”

Should Elizabeth marry Darcy? Of course. Should Lydia end up with Wickham? Of course. Should Lady Catherine de Bourgh be defied? Most definitely. Should Mrs. Bennet end up having two daughters with adoring husbands and good fortunes? Well, even her poor nerves deserve some consolation in the end.

Because of Jane’s ability to get to the heart of things in such an elegant way, it is clear that “the most valuable knowledge we could acquire: knowledge of ourselves and our duty” (from *Mansfield Park*). Her characters certainly demonstrate this, possibly as a reflection of Jane’s self-knowledge and duty. But I believe many of her readers would also admit to acquiring some or much self-knowledge upon reading her novels.

Because of Jane I continue to learn many valuable things about my sentiments and expectations and that has shaped many of my interests, adventures, and enjoyments. (My family and friends can definitely attest to this now that all hope is lost that “my Jane Austen craze” was just a phase.)

I will always remain very grateful for picking up *Pride and Prejudice* again. I am also very grateful to the Jane Austen Society:

1. for celebrating Jane Austen and all things she inspires,
2. for friendship and good times; and,
3. for assuring that more people and future generations will not miss out on knowing the life and work of such an extraordinary and timeless author.

Because of Jane Austen I am honored to write this essay.

Congratulations, Jane, on the 200th anniversary of *Pride and Prejudice*—may “your darling child” continue to bring delight and inspiration for centuries to come!
For more events and programs that will be of interest, visit our website at jasnachicago.org, and click on Events>Austen-Related Events.