



International Women's Association
Region Braunschweig e.V.

Newsletter 49

March 2019

What has the IWA_BS been up to?

Dear IWA-BS members,

Well, it felt like a short winter, didn't it??? Or is it just me who was too busy to notice? We are now well into March and the birds are already singing early mornings, trees are budding and the weather is a month ahead and feels more like April than March. Most of the Ladies I spoke to have already put their down winter jackets into hiding and are surviving with their lighter winter garments. Well, not being a fan of winter weather – I am not one to complain!!!!

There is not a lot for me to report on, really, except our fabulous IWA-BS Christmas party that took place at Metin Aslan's restaurant 'Tandure'. As the last time, we occupied the back room all by ourselves where the atmosphere was fantastic and festive right from the beginning. There were around 60 of us that night with an incredible noise level (incredibly loud that is.....) from the start.

It is always such a lovely opportunity to see people again that you haven't seen a lot of during the past year and everyone was enjoying themselves right from the beginning. The buffet was delicious and the waiters quick with providing us with the necessary liquid accompaniments!

Metin Aslan, the owner of the restaurant, added a surprise element after dinner by presenting a (very good!!!!) belly dancer. I tell you, she could move muscles that I am convinced I do not even possess!!!! Anyway, she got everyone in a right party mood and soon a lot of us found themselves on the dance floor.

The party was a big success and a huge thank you to the IWA committee and our president, Marianne Wandt, for organising it all. 'Nothing comes from nothing' is all I say.... Events like this take a lot of organisation in order to be fun and successful – so thank you to everyone involved in making it happen!!!! I personally can't wait for the next one.....

On the 30th of January 2019 Marianne Wandt organised a visit to the Braunschweig theatre to see Benjamin Britten's opera 'The Turn of the Screw'. This is not performed very often and is a chamber opera, prologue in two acts. The story is based on a novella of the same name by Henry James. This very dark and mysterious opera is a true period piece set in the 1840s. 6 of our members joined in and watched 2 hours and 15 minutes (with one interval).

The Braunschweig production (performed in English with German subtitles) highlighted the spookiness of the story to its full extent and conveyed a slight horror scenario that left everyone puzzled if the story was real or imagined throughout. Which was the intention of Henry James and Benjamin Britten. An elaborate production well worth seeing if you get a chance. Thanks to Marianne for organising this.

A huge thank you also goes to our team that oversees our monthly HAPPY HOUR in the restaurant LaVigna. These events are well attended and take place every second Wednesday of the month from 5.00 – 7.00 p.m.

Sunshine Kim and Diana Groschopp run these and what a great job they are doing! This monthly Wednesday has become a meeting place for old and new IWA-BS members and is always a lively 2 hours and more.....

Well, this leaves me wishing you a happy Easter and a fantastic Easter school holiday. For everyone going skiing, please come back in one piece and the newsletter team will be in touch again in June (hopefully with gorgeous sunshine and wonderful blissfully summer weather!!!).

Take care and as always, enjoy life to the full and make the most of every day!

Susanne Kendell

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Pictures: IWA's Members



Pictures: Thomas M. Jauk



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My name is ...

Maria de Fatima Oliveira

In December 2019, our family decided to move to Germany for two years. The school our children went to in Joinville, Southern Brazil, is partnered with the GIS in Wolfenbüttel.

30 years ago, my husband and I moved to Munich for 18 months, which seemed easy! The move with our children was a lot more difficult, since there are so many more things to think about and we spent so much more time preparing. We overcame many obstacles and had to get accustomed to a different lifestyle from the one we were used to in Brazil.

Today, I can truly say that it was all worth it. Our tight family bond has not kept us from diving into the rich German culture. We met fantastic people and made friends for life. A German friend of mine, Susi Marggraf and Victoria Triep, also from Brazil, told me about IWA. Here, I have worked together with a group of wonderful people and experienced thrilling moments which I will never forget, especially the German conversation group and the language program for refugees.

I would especially like to thank Marianne Wandt, Sabine Westphal, Kirstin Jebautzke, Hannelore Kraft, Uschi Streiff, Traude W. Wessel and all the others with whom my paths crossed during the past two years.

We will return to Brazil in July and I will certainly take along the strength which has accompanied me so far and will continue to accompany me on the way to new goals. The good memories of times spent with the IWA will stay in my heart and I am hoping we will meet again.

Maria de Fatima Oliveira - Brazil

Welcome

We'd like to extend a very warm welcome to our new members:

Nia Tucker, USA
Manuela Knaut-Bühmann, Germany
Kerstin Gronert, Germany
Maria Luiza Reimann, Brazil
Manuela Chaves Molina, Spain and
Jun Jin, China

We look forward to seeing you at our groups and events!





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Braunschweiger Tanz -Sport-Club e.V.

One of the most successful, if not THE most successful sports team in Braunschweig is the Standard Dance A-Formation. They work extremely hard, dedicate almost all their free time to their sport and have the success to show for it. The youngest dancer is 18 and the oldest 52 and they train together five times a week for a mind-boggling total of 21 hours per week (I had a peek at the schedule...).

This is the report we obtained from the press office of the Braunschweiger TSC:

For almost three decades, the Braunschweig TSC A-Formation has been among the most successful standard dance formations in the world. The long list of successes includes ten world championship titles and 19 national title wins.

The team consists of 19 dancers - it came together in its current combination in May 2018 and experienced its baptism by fire on November 10, 2018, at the German championship of standard and latin dance formations held at the Volkswagen Halle in Braunschweig. After only five months of training in this new constellation, the team achieved a clear victory after a phenomenal final round in front of a home crowd and was able to bring the German championship title back to Braunschweig. Two weeks later, the team added an international bronze medal to their national gold! In Pécs, Hungary, the formation achieved a third place as one of two teams from Germany. 15 formations from ten nations had competed to enter the round of the world's six best formation teams.

Valentin Lusin, familiar to many through the dance show "Let's Dance", joined the team of trainers in August 2018. The coaching staff with head coach Rüdiger Knaack and Co-Trainer Thomas Kitta has been extended to three and there has been a good deal of positive feedback supporting this decision.

The current program is called "Light & Darkness", with which Rüdiger Knaack is taking a completely different path compared to past programs. Together with his dancers, he is creating a connection between Symphonic-Metal music and standard dance.

Has your interest been sparked? Would you like to see the team in action? Then you're very welcome to watch a training unit close-up! For more information: formationen@btsc.de

Stephanie Cattell





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"And the Oscar Went to"



It's that Ash Wednesday feeling for those involved in any way in the movie business. The 91st Academy Awards have come and gone and the stars are probably putting their feet up, finally relaxing in their pyjamas and eating all sorts of junk food which they had to give up in order to fit into the suits and gowns for the big night.

We (my daughter and I) do love the pre-show, the build-up, the red carpet, the dresses and the whole shebang. Sadly, no chance, because something always manages to go wrong in our recording process. This year, the only red carpet coverage our elaborate and sophisticated and therefore highly sensitive combination of recording devices could scrape together was the German Pro 7 show. Oh my goodness, what a stringing together of embarrassing moments that was! Second-hand embarrassment of the highest order! This was definitely one of the low points of my Oscar experience. The Pro 7 presenter, Steven Gätjen, struggled to find somebody famous who would talk to him and became increasingly frantic in the process. It was as if he was wearing an invisibility cloak - the stars either walked right past him or stopped to chat into the microphones to the left and right of him. And to think that this was his 15th time at the Oscars! Where's his learning curve? At some point I actually started feeling sorry for him, until the greatest cringe-worthy moment of embarrassment came along, when our German movie expert shouted to attract the attention of "Margot!!!" (Robbie), who turned out to be Brie Larson. No surprise that she just kept on walking past like everyone else. After that, we flicked through the rest of the boring red carpet fiasco (I shall spare you my analysis of the useless dribble of the other German team of "experts" on the inside of the theatre) and went straight to the actual Academy Award Ceremony.

Instead of giving you a summary of the show, I'll just give you some of my personal high- and lowlights.

All in all, I can't help feeling slightly underwhelmed. It was the first time without a host in 30 years and to me, it felt as if the show lacked a common theme, something to tie it all together. But that's just a feeling and maybe the three brilliant comediennees who did a "non-intro" at the start (Maya Rudolph, Tina Fey and Amy Poehler) would consider hosting next year?!

One highlight was definitely the new sense of diversity. There were more women and more African American nominees than ever before, Best Actor winner Rami Malek (I so rooted for him...) talked about his Egyptian background, and the Netflix production "Roma" became the first Mexican film to win Best Foreign Language Film, with Alfonso Cuarón also taking home best director and best cinematography.

My most emotional moment was when Lady Gaga and Bradley Cooper performed "Shallow" from "A Star is Born". What a wonderful pair those two make and thinking of the movie gave me goose bumps all over again. Lady Gaga was also one of my favourites regarding overall look. And did you see the Tiffany Diamond? Worth \$ 30 million, its last outing on the red carpet was 50 years ago, around the neck of Audrey Hepburn!



"And the Oscar Went to"

My award for best acceptance speech goes to Olivia Colman (Queen Anne in "The Favourite"): So natural, from-the-heart, hilarious – English humour and spontaneity (at least it seemed that way!) at its lovable best.

And then in no particular order:

Helen Mirren and Julia Roberts are my best-dressed picks of the night, both in different shades of pink, classy, beautiful, hair and makeup just right.

Also an altogether wonderful look: Emilia Clarke (Game of Thrones), not at all like Khaleesi: She went from a blond, longer style to a short, brunette bob, which I think suits her wonderfully!

Another new brunette: Charlize Theron. Maybe she should have stayed with the blonde. Her hair in combination with the high-necked, lavender gown and jewellery snakes wrapped around the neck made her look 5 – 7 years older at least.

Glenn Close, all in gold, looked like she wanted to BE an Oscar statue! Maybe, after 7 nominations and still no win, she should decline future nominations

and go straight for the "lifetime achievement award".

Melissa Mc Carthy's pants suit was somehow unfortunate (She was absolutely hilarious later on when handing out an award, dressed as Queen Anne with a huge, rabbit-spiked train, one bunny-puppet on her hand, struggling to open the envelop with it).

Rachel Weisz obviously couldn't quite make up her mind: Her hair and makeup looked like she was on her way to play Anne Boleyn in a Tudor drama, her upper body was covered in what looked like red latex (an oversized bib? Scared of making a mess? Or maybe a rain poncho? In Hollywood?), but from the waist down she looked very award-show-appropriate.

Jennifer Lopez looked like a huge mirror had exploded all over her. Now that dress cannot possibly be comfortable when sitting down. And the people around her were probably either blinded by the twinkling mirrors or used her as a means of touching up their makeup without having to leave their seats!

I could go on – the most interesting outfits were worn by those neither nominated nor handing out awards, so I'll hold myself back with my opinions on those. You can always go online and check out all the outfits – the wonderful, the weird and the outright hilarious.

And all of the above is, of course, just a kind of excerpt of the running commentary my daughter and I indulge in. That's why the Oscars are so much fun. Years ago, right after we'd moved back to Germany from the US, my Oscar nights were spent jotting down notes on ABSOLUTELY EVERYTHING and then chatting to my wonderful American friend and co-commentator during the commercial breaks. Obviously, back then, I watched the whole thing live. Almost twenty years later, pulling an all-nighter would mean several days of feeling and looking like a zombie, so we've moved on to the light, slightly delayed version for those 50 and over. But "Oscar morning" is wonderful as well and it's become a cherished tradition to watch it together (right, Marie?). Just something light for our troubled times.

Stephanie Cattell





Easter Bonfires - an ancient German Tradition



For hundreds of years, the Easter Fire has been a tradition in Germany. In Christian tradition, the Easter fire starts with the lighting of a [Paschal candle](#), usually by a Priest or Pastor, to symbolize the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. The candle is generally lit on Holy (Black) Saturday to start the Easter Vigil. Parishioners can then light their own candles from this candle. The large Paschal candle is kept lit through the Easter Season. In some churches it stays lit until Ascension Day, or is used throughout the year for Baptisms.

But there is a much older meaning behind the Easter fires that comes from the pre-Christian Saxon tradition. Bonfires at this time of year help the Earth to usher in Spring and banish the cold and dark of Winter. The fires were also considered a symbol of fertility and rebirth. The ashes from the Easter fires were spread on the fields to fertilize the soil and insure good crops for the coming year.

Today, Easter bonfires in Germany have lost most of their religious meaning and tend to be social event. Friends and family come together with neighbours around a fire, and it's more like a huge party with food and drink. In most areas bonfires are built and monitored by the local fire department and have to be registered in advance with the city council.

More recently the 'Osterfeuer' have evolved into small Volksfests. Booths are set up near the fire to sell food and drink, and some communities even have rides for the kids!

Fires are generally left lit until dawn on Easter Morning, although, in some places they continue burning until Easter Monday, which is a National Holiday in Germany.

There have been 53 Easter Fires registered so far in Braunschweig and the region. Please go to the following websites to find out times and venues:

www.regionalbraunschweig.de

www.bs-live.de

www.citylife-bs.de

Have fun attending one of these. They are great family events and after all a typical German tradition.

Susanne Kendell



One Last Thought...."Goodies Gone Bad"

As part of my continuous clean-up campaign, I've once again been tackling my food supplies – quite the job with all those full shelves and cupboards in the kitchen and the basement (slight tendency towards panic buying and stocking up...). Even though there's a lot to pick through, you'd think that compared to other categories of things, food is pretty easy to sort: Just check the sell-by date and toss anything that's expired. That's what my husband and kids would do (not that the idea of sorting – anything really – would ever figure into their normal routines...). Well, it's certainly not my way of doing things, since we all know that sell-by-dates are an invention of the food industry designed to get us to buy more. Most things can be kept and consumed days, weeks and months after they've officially expired.

I can feel my family shaking their heads at me. Their unfaltering belief that sell-by dates are written law does have a nice advantage, though: I can enjoy my favourite chocolate treats in clear view of everybody without being afraid of something being snatched from under my nose! Interest in expired confectionery reliably dwindles with its age, and when I add something like: "These are last year's chocolates, ever so nice, would you like one?" they'll pull a face, shout "ugh, yuck!" and then they'll leave me to it! What also helps is if there's a bit of that tell-tale whitish layer on the chocolate. Now that's a complete turn-off for them and means that it's all mine.

All this started when I was trying to think of a way to keep my personal chocolate treasures to myself, since I'd repeatedly found half-eaten or even empty (!!) packs of treats I was so very much looking forward to. The problem is that these goodies cannot be bought in the supermarket around the corner and are therefore very precious to me:

My all-time favourite is the Reese's peanut butter cup, which I first came across when we moved to the US in 1978 and have stayed happily faithful to ever since. I've also grown to greatly appreciate all available variations of the original cup: the miniature, Reese's pieces, Reese's sticks and Reese's spread (even though I can "create" that myself by spreading chocolate spread over peanut butter).

And then, when we moved to the UK in 2006, it didn't take me very long to be introduced to my second-favourite: the Cadbury's creme egg, a thick chocolate shell filled with white and yellow fondant to replicate a real egg. It's so sweet that one normal-sized one is almost too much for the halfway modern palate. A Cadbury's creme egg comes with the conflicting feelings of being on the verge of feeling sick and at the same time really, really enjoying it (best with a cup of coffee, by the way). They've come up with a nice miniature version, which is a bit easier to eat. And the good thing is: All creme egg variations have a shelf life of at least 10 years!

In Northern Germany, both Reese's and Cadbury's products require a bit of hunting and gathering, so I'm sure you can understand my protective instinct and the need to cultivate a secret stash. In addition to my US/UK favourites, this secret supply also includes a number of chocolate Easter egg variations, which I find too expensive at regular pre-Easter price and therefore buy on the Tuesday after Easter at 50 % off! This is something like my personal "black Tuesday". It's so gratifying to come home with a big bag of reduced eggs...

Then comes the difficult part of hiding them in places (plural, since there's so many of them) that I'll be able to remember and nobody else will stumble across. That's the tricky part. So tricky actually, that I tend to outsmart myself and forget about the one or other secret spot over the course of the weeks and months to follow, leaving my lovely Reese's peanut butter cups and my Cadbury's creme eggs and all those other wonderfully reduced Easter leftovers to approach and pass their sell-by date. They'll stay hidden until I start tidying and find them again...

Do you realize we've come full circle?

... for more of my random thoughts on day-to-day issues, you can visit my blog <http://www.dontgetmestarted.de>

Stephanie Cattell





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Upcoming events

General Information

March

22.03., 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Allerlei Genuss at the Autostadt, Wolfsburg

28.03., 11 a.m. Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg: "Now is the Time",
25 years collection Kunstmuseum WOB

April

04.04., 4:30 – 6:30 p.m. Tour of Police Station with police detective chief
inspector Ines Fricke

Date to be determined Day trip to Dessau (100 years of Bauhaus) or
Göttingen

May

Beginning of May Tour with night-watchman Hugo through the
Magniviertel

08.05., 5 – 7 p.m. Happy Hour, La Vigna

**15.05., 7 p.m. Annual Members' Meeting, Al Duomo,
Deutsches Haus**

21.05. Hanover city tour



Two very important dates we are hoping you will all put in your diaries:

Our Annual Members' Meeting is coming up on Wednesday,

May 15th

and we are hoping that very many of you will be able to attend! Official invitations will be sent out soon.

This is our once-a-year chance to get together as an association – both old and new members. We want to reflect on the past year and talk about plans and ideas and anything else that's on your mind. Your opinions matter very much, so please sign up for the meeting - we're looking forward to a great turnout!

It's never too early to make sure you'll be there for our annual **Christmas Party**, which is scheduled for **Friday, November 29th**, so please save the date!

Please note that the ongoing, regular programme does not continue during the school holidays. Also, the IWA-BS will be officially closed during the holidays. Please note that e-mails and requests will not be answered until after the holidays.

Easter break from April 8th to 23rd

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Please note that dates for the termination of a membership are March 31st and October 31st of each year.

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Please note that we have taken great care to make sure that all information at the time of printing was correct but we can accept no liability for mistakes or printing errors.

As always, we would appreciate any input and ideas for future publications. Anything that you think is important to you. Please inform me (Susanne.Kendell@t-online.de) of any suggestions.

Thank you!