

Cambridge Translation Studies Network

Lent 2026 Events

Welcome to our programme for this term!

All events are open to all and free to attend. You can read about us and sign up to our mailing list [here](#).

Wednesday 11 February, 4 – 5.30pm

Room SG2, Alison Richard Building

Kasia Szymanska

Translation Multiples: the plurality of translation and reading out of context - workshop

Format: *interactive seminar with reading exercises (featuring texts in various languages, no prior knowledge of any language other than English is required)*

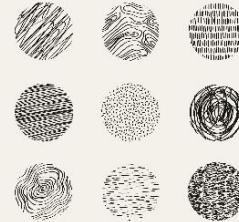
How can we read texts composed of multiple translations?

What happens when translators, poets, and artists expose the act of translation by placing parallel translation variants next to one another in a standalone work of art, presenting each as a legitimate version of the original?

In this interactive seminar, Kasia Szymanska will introduce 'translation multiples', a new genre of writing discussed in her recently published book *Translation Multiples: From Global Culture to Postcommunist Democracy* (Princeton University Press, 2025). Throughout the session, we will try to read and discuss 2-3 short examples of translation multiples together in a way that requires no prior knowledge of any language other than English. The main premise of the exercise is to look at the wide array of translation variants in their own right, 'out of context' and without trying to guess the original work, which arguably imitates the reading experience of audiences who may not know the source languages at play. In reading translation multiples in this way, we will try to see how an original text can diverge into variants, how a halo of possibilities can be displayed and embraced, and how this comparative and procedural practice can redefine our approach to reading translations.

TRANSLATION
MULTIPLES

FROM GLOBAL CULTURE TO
POSTCOMMUNIST DEMOCRACY



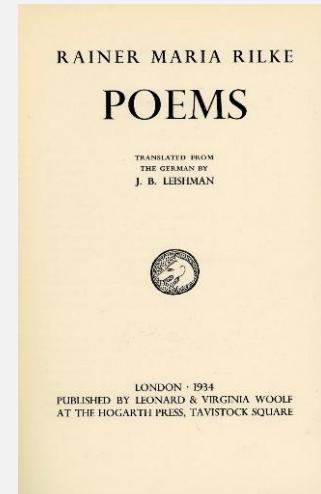
KASIA SZYMANSKA

Kasia Szymanska is Senior Lecturer (Associate Professor) at the Centre for Translation and Intercultural Studies at the University of Manchester and an associate member of the Oxford Comparative Criticism and Translation research centre. She is the author of *Translation Multiples: From Global Culture to Postcommunist Democracy* (Princeton University Press, 2025), which is part of the Translation/Transnation series. She is currently co-editing two volumes: *The Tender Translator: Olga Tokarczuk Across Languages* (with Joanna T. Huss) and *The Bloomsbury Handbook of Modernism and Translation* (with Rebecca Beasley).

Wednesday 25 February, 5 – 6 pm
Room 142, Raised Faculty Building
John Guthrie

Translating German Poetry: the Rilke translations of J. B. Leishman

The poet Rainer Maria Rilke (1875-1926) is one of the great virtuosos of the German language. His reputation was slower to establish itself in English-speaking countries than in France, where he had lived and imbibed French culture. He had little contact with England or affinity with English literature and there was considerable resistance in England of the interwar years to translating German poetry. Today, however, Rilke is one of the most read and most translated of all German poets. This change in fortune was largely due to the pioneering efforts of J. B. Leishman (1902-1963), an Oxford English don who devoted much of his life to translating Rilke's works. In my talk I contextualise Leishman's translations, assess their merits and weaknesses and discuss some of the problems of translating German poetry into English. I draw on material in the New Hall Archives, which houses the J. B. Leishman Bequest.



John Guthrie is an Emeritus Fellow of Murray Edwards College Cambridge, founded as New Hall. He taught modern German literature, culture and language in Cambridge from 1984-2018. <https://www.murrayedwards.cam.ac.uk/fellow/dr-john-guthrie>

Wednesday 11 March, 5 – 6 pm
Room 142, Raised Faculty Building
Timothy Mathews

A Reading from Roland Barthes, *Translating Again, Writing Again*



What motivates a literary translator to translate? Or to re-translate? How is their hearing of the voice they're translating shaped by the voices resonating in their own mind? How might the translator approach their own subjectivity, what part does it play in the material life of the text, and in the way the translator relates to their readers?

Timothy Mathews will be reading for about 30 minutes from his translation of selected pages from Roland Barthes, *Fragments of a lover's discourse*, published in 2023 as a special issue of the journal *CounterText*, and from his translator's memoir that accompanies it. The reading is intended to open a discussion on those questions, on the relation of creativity to translation, and any others on the practice of literary translation.

Whether in writing criticism, translations, or creative pieces, **Timothy Mathews** is driven by what relating to art can tell us about relating to people. *Chronicles of Art and Hope: on Demagoguery and Beyond* is published by MA BIBLIOTHÈQUE in 2026. His other recent work of creative nonfiction is *There and Not Here: Chronicles of Art and Loss*, MA BIBLIOTHÈQUE, 2022. His most recent work with translation is Guillaume Apollinaire, *Seated Woman*, Shearsman Books, 2023; and Roland Barthes' *Fragments of a Lover's Discourse: Translating Again, Writing Again*, co-edited with Patrick ffrench, *CounterText*, 2023. With Sarah Kay, his most recent co-edited book is *The Modernist Bestiary*, UCL Press, 2020. His most recent book of art writing, is *Alberto Giacometti: the Art of Relation* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2014). He is Emeritus Professor of French and Comparative Criticism, University College London.

Further publications and other information at: timothymathews.com

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