

Dayton Region JASNA

www.jasnadayton.org

February 2012

Saturday, March 17 *EMMA* at the Movies

Our March meeting will feature a comparison of the four versions of *Emma* available on DVD: the 2009 BBC version, starring Romola Garai; the 1996 A&E version written by Andrew Davies and starring Kate Beckinsale; the 1996 film starring Gwyneth Paltrow; and the 1972 BBC version starring Doran Godwin. We will watch and compare a few scenes from each of the films. Pick your favorite Emma and Mr. Knightly, the best Miss Bates and Mr. Woodhouse, the most annoying Mrs. Elton! Which version is most faithful to Austen's original? Are changes for the better or worse?



Martha Caprarotta and Cynthia and Tori Manship have prepared this program. Martha is well known to all of us as one of our founding members and current treasurer. Cynthia and Tori (shown at left) are new members, who joined after Cynthia attended our May Gala in 2010. Tori, a recent graduate of Ohio University, was a lovely model for the Regency Gala. Cindy and Tori both work at the Huber Heights Branch of the Dayton Metro Libraries.

Time: Saturday, March 17 1:00-4:00

Place: Kettering Moraine Branch of Dayton Metro Libraries (3496 Far Hills Avenue, in Kettering), in the meeting room on the right as you enter the front door. Parking and entrance are behind the building. Enter the lot from Far Hills using the alley on the south side of the building.

Cost: Free!



Refreshments: Hot water, plates, and napkins will be provided, along with sweetener, milk, and stirrers. Bring your own tea (or other beverage) and cup. Also please bring finger food to pass.

Dayton Region JASNA Officers

Area Cordinator	Gary Mitchner	937-299-1663	gary.mitchner@gmail.com
Reading Group	Jean Long	937-287-6919	jtrnlong@aol.com
Newsletter, Membership	Meredith Stoehr	937-434-7567	stoeha@yahoo.com
Librarian	Toni Tumbusch	513-752-5115	victoriantoni@netzero.net
Treasurer	Martha Caprarotta		
Program	Carrie Bebris		
Webmaster	Tom Tumbusch		

Next Reading Group to Meet April 15

Two Reading Group meetings remain for the year:

April 15, 2012	<i>Emma</i> Vol. III, 8-13 (44-49)
May 6, 2012	<i>Emma</i> Vol. III, 14-19 (50-55)

Unless otherwise specified, Reading Groups are held on Sunday afternoons from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. at the home of our leader, Jean Long, **927 Far Hills** (Route 48) in Oakwood. The back of her condominium faces Far Hills, so to enter, turn onto Park Avenue (left if you're going north on Far Hills, right if you're going south), and turn left almost immediately, just before the municipal building. (The street says "City cars only.") You'll be on an alley that leads to the parking lot of Bob and Jean's building. A sidewalk runs between 2 sections of the complex. If you are facing Far Hills, Jean's condominium is on the right. If you have questions, call Jean at 927-287-6919 or e-mail jtrnlong@aol.com.

Since after *Emma* only one of Jane's major novels will be left unstudied by our Group, we can confidently predict that next year's subject will be *Sense and Sensibility*.

Jane's Birthday Celebrated in "Style"

Our December 4 fashion show was the best attended meeting we have ever had, short of a full-fledged gala, and everyone seemed delighted with it. The Golden Lamb provided its usual warm ambiance and excellent luncheon. We especially appreciate the fact that the staff made an extra room available for the emporium, which otherwise would have been exceedingly cramped.

Martha Caprarotta outdid herself in putting the fashion show together. She produced a delightful script that described each ensemble, explained on what occasions it would be worn, and then related it to the Austen characters who might have worn it. Gary Mitchner read the script with great elan. Besides Martha, the models were chapter members Mariah Busher, Angela Jaeger, Jean Long, Tori Manship, and Tom and Toni Tumbusch; Lisa Tyler's daughter Rose, and Gary Mitchner's granddaughters Melisse and Anea Bretz. Martha made many of the garments herself, in her character as proprietress of Regency Recreations, and Tom and Toni modeled costumes from their own wardrobes, all sewn by Toni.



Jane Austen Books, who drove down from the Cleveland area to participate in the Emporium, did a very brisk business indeed, as did Carrie Bebris selling copies of her Mr. and Mr. Darcy mysteries.



More Photos from the Fashion Show

Previous page top: Tori Manship in sprig muslin dress with detachable sleeves and chemisette

Previous page bottom: Narrator Gary Mitchner with seamstresses Martha Caprarotta and Toni Tumbusch

This page from top: Rose Tyler in red velvet spencer, matching bonnet and reticule; Tom Tumbusch in banyan, waistcoat, and breeches and Toni Tumbusch in Vandyked pelisse with burgundy gown; Angela Jaeger in Wedgewood blue gown with ribbon trim, mask and plume; For full spread of photos, taken by Katherine Berg, see our web page, www.jasnadayton.org.



Reading Group Continues to Discover *Emma*

The January and February Reading Group meetings, both with 20 or more members in attendance, have taken up some extremely interesting aspects of *Emma*. The variety of its themes and characters more than makes up for the faults of its heroine, and the lack of faults in its hero. *Emma*, I believe, is as much about Highbury as about any of the characters. Highbury and its environs represent all that is good of England. Taking in the view from Donwell Abbey, Emma muses:



“It was a sweet view—sweet to the eye and the mind, English verdure, English culture, English comfort, seen under a sun bright, without being oppressive.”

Highbury society has its natural equilibrium, and *Emma*'s plot follows from disruptions in it. At the opening of the story, Emma has lost her constant companion, Miss Taylor, through marriage to Mr. Weston. Emma fills the gap by taking up with Harriet, a young girl of unknown parentage. In attempting to match Harriet with Mr. Elton, and to sabotage her courtship by the upstanding farmer Mr. Martins, Emma brings a much larger disruption into her own life. Disappointed in what he thought was his suit for Emma's hand, Mr. Elton brings home a wife determined to oust Emma as the leading lady of the place. A parallel plot, mostly hidden from the reader, involves Frank Churchill and Jane Fairfax. Frank, the son of Mr. Weston, has been raised by a rich relative as heir to his estate. Jane, the niece of the impoverished Miss Bates, has also been raised in a well-to-do family, but is destined to be a governess. Jane, rather than Harriet, is the friend Emma should have cultivated, and Emma's failure to treat Jane as she ought is another disruptive undercurrent in the Highbury social scene. In a disruption of atomic proportions, Frank and Jane are secretly engaged, and Frank camouflages his interest in Jane by flirting with Emma.

The plot proceeds through a series of visits, evening parties, chance meetings, and balls, peopled by a rich cast of characters already familiar to us: people too fond of society (Mr. Weston and Frank) and not enough (Mr. John Knightly); the hypochondriac (Emma's father); and, above all, boring conversationalists *par excellence* Miss Bates and Mrs. Elton. In a more modern novel the protagonists' objective would be to escape these characters, the better to realize their own full potential; but in *Emma* the imperfect characters are as they are, and it is the job of the most responsible characters—Mr. Knightley, Mrs. Weston, and Emma at the end of the novel—to harmonize them into a pleasing society.

Jon Jory *Sense and Sensibility* in Cincinnati Until March 18

The Cincinnati Shakespeare Company will be performing Jon Jory's *Sense and Sensibility* between February 17 and March 18. Jon Jory for many years artistic director of the Actors' Theatre of Louisville, is a major figure in American theatre. A group of JASNA Dayton members will be attending the Sunday, March 18 matinee, and we thank Angela Jaeger for organizing this outing. A year ago, the Cincinnati Shakespeare Company put on Jory's *Pride and Prejudice*. Members who attended that production pronounced it a success. Peter LePage was happy to find it was not a musical.



A Chicago performance of Jory's *Sense and Sensibility* drew favorable comments from Chris Jones in the *Chicago Tribune*:

“With his truly excellent new adaptation... Jon Jory takes the best of both approaches to life and art... managing to dramatize this complex tale without recourse to a narrator... He achieves this quite magnificently, mostly through a combination of keeping the story moving as it floats across southern England and the various suitors ebb and flow, and very cleverly skipping ahead in scenes so that we get to the good stuff. He knows when to wallow, and when to dip in and out. Time and again, Jory collapses time in a way that surprises you -- and that varied piece keeps the action intensely arresting throughout”

No One Willing to Star In or Direct *P & P & Zombies*

Any of us who may be eagerly awaiting the film version of *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* will have to wait a while longer. Scarlett Johansson, Anne Hathaway, Natalie Portman, Emma Stone, and others have decided not to appear as the zombie-conquering Lizzie Bennet; and three directors (David O. Russell (*The Fighter*) and Mike White (*Year of the Dog*), *Deadline* reports that Craig Gillespie (*Fright Night* remake) have dropped out as well. Is the project dead, or undead?

New CD of Music from Jane's Own Manuscript Collection

Entertaining Miss Austen, a CD of songs and piano music from Jane's own manuscripts, comes out of the University of Southampton's study on domestic music making in Britain, led by Jeanice Brooks. It features soprano Amanda Pitt and baritone John Lofthouse with Southampton's head of keyboard studies, Professor David Owen Norris playing an 1817 Broadwood piano. Many of the pieces were first performed at a July 2009 concert given at Chawton church in celebration of the 200th anniversary of Jane Austen's move to Chawton.



The pieces are drawn from 17 music albums that belonged to Jane Austen and her female relations. The collection was held together in the Knight family library until the mid 1900s, when was broken up, with eight books donated to the Jane Austen Memorial Trust, and the remainder split between descendants of the family. Through the generosity of the current owners, the remaining nine books are now on deposit at Chawton House Library, permitting an extended comparison with the better-known set conserved by the Trust.

The CD includes the three songs Jane's niece Caroline remembered as Jane's favorites: *Que j'aime à voir les hirondelles*, the song Caroline remembered her aunt singing the most, *Songs from Burns*, and *The Wife's Farwell*. All three of these songs are from the newly available albums. Another featured piece is *Robin Adair*, which Jane Fairfax played on her new pianoforte to Emma and Frank Churchill. The instrument used for the recording has a connection with the same scene from *Emma*. It was owned by the composer Johan Baptist Cramer, whose music was among that sent to Jane along with the new instrument.

The information above is taken from the University of Southampton website:

http://www.soton.ac.uk/music/research/projects/austen_family_music_books.page

This excellent resource has much more to say about the sources for the manuscripts and the function of music in Austen's social milieu.

Music critic Lee Passarella is less than enthusiastic about the album's appeal to the modern listener:

“Expectedly, the music skews toward the sentimental, dallying with stock themes of the early Romantic era, such as sympathy for the common folk and an attraction to exotic locales. However, like just about all the music on the disc, the exotic is translated into such a cultured Westernized style as to be rendered altogether toothless: we have the world's tamest *Fandango* from a bluestocking composer named Ann Thicknesse, plus an *African Song* and a *Hindoo Song* that might just as easily be a Scottish song and an Isle of Wight song, for all that they conjure up distant climes.”