

NEWS RELEASE

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***Lolita* in America** **A Symposium to Commemorate the** **50th Anniversary of the Publication of *Lolita* in the United States**

Concludes with a Screening of Stanley Kubrick's *Lolita*



Morgan Acheson, *Visualizing Lolita*

New York, August 4, 2008—On Saturday, September 27, The New School will present a day-long symposium to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the publication of Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita* in the United States. Initially rejected by American editors (one editor recommended that "it be buried under a stone for a thousand years"), *Lolita* appeared under a little-known imprint in Paris in 1955. It was 1958 before this provocative "time bomb" found an American publisher.

"It's so fitting that The New School, with its long and distinguished history of embracing scholars and thinkers from around the world, should host this event. The participation of a wide range of disciplines from across the university reflects the enormous impact that *Lolita* has had on our cultural life," said Linda Dunne, dean, The New School for General Studies.

Speakers will include **Alfred Appel**, author of *The Annotated Lolita* and Nabokov's *Dark Cinema*; **Leland de la Durantaye**, author of *Style is Matter: The Moral Art of Vladimir Nabokov*; **Laura Frost**, author of *Sex Drives*; **Fred Hills**, former editor-in-chief of McGraw-Hill and Nabokov's editor in the last decade of his life; **Nina Khrushcheva**, author of *Imagining Nabokov: Russia Between Art and Politics*; **Dominic Pettman**, author of *Love and Other Technologies*; **Ellen Pifer**, author of *Nabokov and the Novel, Demon or Doll*, and *Vladimir Nabokov's Lolita: A Casebook*; acclaimed journalist **Ron Rosenbaum**; and **Lila Azam Zanganeh**, literary journalist and Nabokov scholar. For a complete list of speakers and bios, please visit: <http://www.newschool.edu/lolitaconference>.

Panelists will discuss *Lolita* in the context of American literature, U.S. publishing in the 1950s, and world literature. Ellen Pifer will shed light on the controversies and the remarkable achievement of Nabokov's American masterpiece. Fred Hills will describe his first encounter with *Lolita* and his eventual collaborations with the author. Alfred Appel will discuss his studies with Nabokov at Cornell and the cultural context of the 1940s and 50s. Nina Khrushcheva will share her first reactions to *Lolita* as a Russian twelve-year-old and her experiences teaching *Lolita* in Russia after her own immigration to the United States. Dominic Pettman will discuss the technologies of love in Nabokov's novel.

Lolita in America is particularly well-timed. With the collaboration of the Nabokov estate, a panel of journalists and scholars will explore *Lolita*'s possible relationship with *The Original of Laura*—Nabokov's final unfinished, unpublished, and, in line with the author's wishes, almost-burned novel—which is only now slated for publication.

The symposium will conclude with a screening of Stanley Kubrick's film version of *Lolita* released in 1962. The film

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received an Academy Award nomination for Best Writing of an Adapted Screenplay, and Sue Lyon, who played the title role, won a Golden Globe for Best Newcomer Actress.

This symposium is sponsored by the Department of Humanities at The New School for General Studies in partnership with The New School Writing Program, The New School Bachelor's Program, the Department of Foreign Languages, the Graduate Program in International Affairs, the Department of Media Studies and Film, and the Eugene Lang College Department of Writing and Literature. For further information, please visit: <http://www.newschool.edu/events> or contact 212.229.5353.

Admission is free but registration is required by September 21, 2008. Please email lolitaconference@newschool.edu to register.

"Visualizing *Lolita*," an exhibition of works by students from Parsons The New School for Design, will be held at its Illustration Department, 2 West 13th Street (at 5th Avenue), 8th floor, from September 24 through October 26, 2008. Created in conjunction with *Lolita In America*, the original works in this exhibition represent students' responses to the characters and themes of Nabokov's novel. The show was organized by Parsons Illustration faculty member and mixed-media artist Jordin Isip.

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY

Located in the heart of New York's Greenwich Village, The New School is a center of academic excellence where intellectual and artistic freedoms thrive. The nearly 9,400 matriculated students and approximately 5,280 continuing education students who attend the university's eight schools enjoy a disciplined education supported by small class sizes, superior resources, and renowned working faculty members who practice what they teach. The eight schools of the university are: The New School for General Studies, The New School for Social Research, Milano The New School for Management and Urban Policy, Parsons The New School for Design, Eugene Lang College The New School for Liberal Arts, Mannes College The New School for Music, The New School for Drama, and The New School for Jazz and Contemporary Music. For more information, please visit www.newschool.edu.

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LOLITA IN AMERICA SYMPOSIUM SCHEDULE

September 27, 2008, 10:00 a.m.–10:00 p.m.

The New School, Tishman Auditorium, 66 West 12th Street

- 10:00 a.m. WELCOME
Carolyn Vellenga Berman, Chair, Department of Humanities, The New School for General Studies
Linda Dunne, Dean, The New School for General Studies
- 10:15 a.m. “LOLITA’S WILD RIDE” (Terri Gordon, *Moderator*)
Ellen Pifer (*University of Delaware*)
- 11:00 a.m. LOLITA IN AMERICAN LITERATURE (Neil Gordon, The New School, *Moderator*)
Anthony Anemone (The New School)
Lolita and the Making of an American Writer
Fred Hills (Former Editor-in-Chief, McGraw-Hill)
The Editor’s Role
Elizabeth Boyle Machlan (New York University)
Reinventing America
(Louis Campagna, *Respondent*)
- 12:15–1:30 p.m. Lunch Break
- 1:30 p.m. “LOLITA AND THE FABULOUS 40’S AND 50’S” (Tanya Mairs, *Moderator*)
Alfred E. Appel, Jr. (Northwestern University)
- 2:15 p.m. LOLITA, LAURA, AND THE BURNING OF BOOKS (Robert Polito, The New School, *Moderator*)
Leland de la Durantaye (Harvard University)
The Original of Lolita
Laura Frost (The New School)
The Scandal of Lolita, the Secrets of Laura
Ron Rosenbaum (*Slate* Columnist)
Second Thoughts About the Fate of Laura
Lila Azam Zanganeh (Literary contributor to *Le Monde*)
Destroy and Forget: The Secret of Durable Pigments
- 3:30–4:00 p.m. Tea
- 4:00 p.m. LOLITA IN WORLD LITERATURE (Val Vinokur, *Moderator*)
Inessa Medzhibovskaya (The New School)
Literary Roots of Deviance in Lolita
Tanya Mairs (The New School)
Dostoyevski, Freud, and Lolita
Dominic Pettman (The New School)
That Complex Ghost: Passion, Recognition, and Resemblance in Lolita
(Liz Hynes, *Respondent*)
- 5:15 p.m. “READING LOLITA IN RUSSIA” (Anthony Anemone, *Moderator*)

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Nina Khrushcheva (The New School)

6:00–7:30 p.m. Dinner Break

7:30 p.m. SCREENING OF *LOLITA* (1962, 152 minutes) (Stanley Kubrick, *Director*)
Introduced by Sam Ishii-Gonzales (The New School)

LOLITA IN AMERICA PANELISTS

Anthony Anemone is associate professor of Foreign Languages and Literary Studies and associate provost of Foreign Languages at The New School. He is the author of many articles on modern Russian literature and culture, including one on Nabokov's early Russian novel *Despair*.

Alfred E. Appel, Jr. is the author of a number of seminal texts on Nabokov and his works, including *The Annotated Lolita* and *Nabokov's Dark Cinema*. An emeritus professor of English at Northwestern University, he is one of the most important figures from the first generation of Nabokov scholars in the United States.

Leland de la Durantaye is associate professor of English at Harvard University. He is the author of *Style is Matter: The Moral Art of Vladimir Nabokov* (Cornell UP, 2007) and numerous articles including "The Pattern of Cruelty and the Cruelty of Pattern in Vladimir Nabokov" (*The Cambridge Quarterly*, 2006) and "Eichmann, Empathy, and *Lolita*" (*Philosophy and Literature*, 2006).

Laura Frost is associate professor of Literature at Eugene Lang College The New School for Liberal Arts, where she teaches twentieth-century literature and culture. Her specialty is modernism with an emphasis on gender and sexuality. She is the author of *Sex Drives: Fantasies of Fascism in Literary Modernism* (Cornell University Press, 2001) and articles on James Joyce, D.H. Lawrence, Virginia Woolf, and Aldous Huxley, as well as pieces on contemporary culture, such as photography at Abu Ghraib. She is at work on a book about modernism and pleasure.

Neil Gordon is professor of writing and dean of Eugene Lang College The New School for Liberal Arts. He is the author of *Sacrifice of Isaac* (Penguin, 2003), *The Gunrunner's Daughter* (Bantam, 2004), and *The Company You Keep* (Penguin 2004). He is the literary editor at *The Boston Review* and reviews regularly for *The New York Times Book Review*.

Terri Gordon is assistant professor of Comparative Literature at The New School. She has published articles on Josephine Baker, and on cabaret, film, and performance art in Nazi Germany. She is currently writing a book-length study of representations of the dancer in *fin de siècle* Paris.

Fred Hills was the editor-in-chief of McGraw-Hill and subsequently vice president and senior editor at Simon and Schuster. He was Nabokov's editor in the last decade of his life and worked on *The Annotated Lolita* (1970) and *Lolita: A Screenplay* (1974), as well as seven other works including novels, short stories, and essays.

Sam Ishii-Gonzales is visiting principal faculty in The New School's Bachelor's Program and the Department of Media Studies and Film. He is the co-editor of two books on Alfred Hitchcock, and has published articles on David Lynch, the painter Francis Bacon, and the philosopher Gilles Deleuze, among others. He has several projects in the works, including a book entitled "Being and Immanence, or Non-Acting in the Cinema."

Nina Khrushcheva is associate professor in the Graduate Program of International Affairs at The New School. She is the author of *Imagining Nabokov: Russia Between Art and Politics* (Yale University Press, 2008) and is currently working on a book titled *Russia's Gulag of the Mind*.

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Elizabeth Boyle Machlan is a lecturer in the Expository Writing Program at New York University. She received her PhD from Princeton University in 2004 and is currently at work on a book entitled “Panic Rooms: Architecture and Anxiety in New York from 1900 to 9/11.”

Tanya Mairs teaches in the Department of Humanities at The New School, where she regularly offers a course on “Nabokov’s *Lolita* and Other Novels.” She is the translator of *The Red Monarch* by Yuri Krotkov.

Inessa Medzhibovskaya is assistant professor of Literature at Eugene Lang College The New School for Liberal Arts, where she teaches a variety of courses in Russian and Central East European Literature, theory of the novel, and movements such as romanticism and modernism. She is the author of *Tolstoy and the Religious Culture of His Time: A Biography of a Long Conversion, 1845-1887* (Lexington Books, 2008) and of numerous essays on Russian literature, culture, and intellectual history.

Dominic Pettman is associate professor of Culture and Media Studies at The New School. He is the author of *After the Orgy: Toward a Politics of Exhaustion* (SUNY, 2002) and *Love and Other Technologies* (Fordham, 2006), and co-author of *Avoiding the Subject: Media, Culture and the Object* (AUP, 2004).

Ellen Pifer is professor of English and Comparative Literature at the University of Delaware, and she has written extensively on modern and contemporary fiction. Her publications on Nabokov range from *Nabokov and the Novel* (Harvard UP, 1980) to *Vladimir Nabokov’s Lolita: A Casebook* (Oxford UP, 2003) to numerous essays—the most recent of which appears in *Approaches to Teaching Nabokov’s Lolita* (MLA, 2008). Pifer’s other books include *Demon or Doll: Images of the Child in Contemporary Writing and Culture* (UP of Virginia, 2000), *Saul Bellow Against the Grain* (U of Pennsylvania P, 1990), and *Critical Essays on John Fowles* (Gale, 1986). A past-president of the International Vladimir Nabokov Society and a member of the Editorial Board of *Nabokov Studies*, she has lectured widely in Europe, America, Russia, and Israel.

Robert Polit is director of the Writing Program at The New School. His most recent books are the poetry collection *Hollywood & God* (forthcoming, Harvard University Press) and *The Complete Film Writings of Manny Farber* (forthcoming, Harvard University Press). He received the National Book Critics Circle Award for *Savage Art: A Life of Jim Thompson* (Vintage, 1996).

Ron Rosenbaum is the author of *The Shakespeare Wars* (Random House, 2006) and a columnist for *Slate*, the online magazine. Dmitri Nabokov has attributed his decision to make a decision about *The Original of Laura* in part to pressure from Rosenbaum’s *Slate* columns on the subject.

Val Vinokur is assistant professor of Comparative Literature at Eugene Lang The New School for Liberal Arts. He is the author of *The Trace of Judaism: Dostoevsky, Babel, Mandelstam, Levinas* (Northwestern University Press, 2008). He co-translated (with Rose Réjouis) two novels by Patrick Chamoiseau, *Solibo Magnificent* and *Texaco* (Pantheon Books, 1997), and is a 2008 Guggenheim Fellow.

Lila Azam Zanganeh is a literary contributor to *Le Monde* and the editor of *My Sister, Guard Your Veil; My Brother, Guard Your Eyes: Uncensored Iranian Voices* (Beacon Press, 2006). She is the author of a forthcoming book, *Light of My Life*—a combination of fiction and essay on happiness according to Vladimir Nabokov. Her work has also appeared in the *New York Times*, the *Paris Review*, and a host of other American and European publications.