

Highlights



CLIC Day 2025: Journalism and Literature

Another year, another CLIC Day! In **December**, CLIC held its 15th Annual Research Day on the theme "Journalism and Literature". Scholars from 8 universities and 6 countries came together to present their work demonstrating the intersections between literature and journalism, in theory and practice. CLIC members are working to publish a special issue on the topic in *JLIC* in 2027. For more details [see page 9](#).



Inaugural Lecture Lorand Chair Intermediality 2025-26

CLIC is delighted to welcome Shuangyi Li (University of Bristol) as the 2025-2026 Lorand Chair in Intermediality. Having worked on Franco-Chinese literary and visual arts, his expertise on comparative and intermedial studies of art and culture will be a valuable addition to CLIC. [See page 6](#) for more information.



Biennial International Society for Intermedial Studies Conference

Vrije Universiteit Brussel will host the 8th Biennial International Society for Intermedial Studies Conference from **27 to 29 May**. This year's theme is "The Politics of Intermedial Connectivity". [See page 12](#) for more information.

Featured in this newsletter:

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**Are you a PhD researcher?
See page 7 for more
information about the
upcoming events and
activities!**

New Members

Welcome to CLIC!

Rainer Maria Ceci

Joined as a visiting PhD student under the supervision of Dirk Vanden Berghe. His research investigates the intersection of literary production, journalism, and publishing in the late nineteenth-century Italian periodical press.



Tiago Silva

Joined MERLIT as a visiting researcher in early 2026, focusing on Postcolonial and Decolonial Studies, with an emphasis on literary and cultural theories and representations. Since 2023, he has led the REBRALLI research group dedicated to investigating the cultural and social representations of Brazil and its peoples in Anglophone literary and cultural contexts.



Hadas Zahavi

After first joining us as a Grant Writing Resident in 2025, Hadas will return to CLIC for two years from April 2026 following the success of her MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowship application!

She is the Founding Director of Columbia University Global Center for Peace Innovation where she leads an interdisciplinary lab, pedagogical hub, and contemporary art gallery, positioned at the intersection of peace studies, contemporary Francophone literary studies, and media theory.



New Members

Welcome to CLIC!

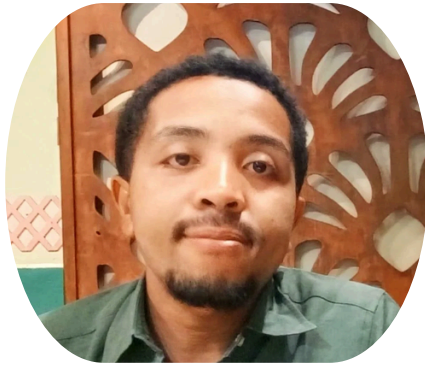
Lisa Heyvaert

Joined as a new predoctoral researcher focusing on children's literature, trauma, and care. She also works as a pedagogical assistant in the Multilingual Bachelor at Vrije Universiteit Brussel.



Jean Martinely Iata

Joined as a new PhD candidate on the AFROPRESS project, researching magazines and journals printed during the colonial and post-independence periods in Madagascar. He is a graduate of the University of Antananarivo, Madagascar, where he earned both his BA and MA degrees in Plurilingual and Multicultural Studies. His research focuses on interdisciplinary exploration, merging ethnology, sociolinguistics, and literature.



Collaboration between ARTO and CLIC

CLIC is growing. We are thrilled to announce that, from April 2026 onwards, the VUB Research Group for Artistic Research (ARTO) and CLIC will merge. This strategic boost, solidifying CLIC's ties with arts research and heralding opportunities for more interdisciplinary collaboration, welcomes 6 ZAP members and 34 PhD candidates to our research group. Keep an eye out for their introduction in the next CLIC Newsletter!

RITCS[®]
Royal Institute for
Theatre, Cinema
& Sound

KC[®]
B Koninklijk
Conservatorium
Brussel

Congratulations to our members who successfully defended their PhD theses!

Jade Thomas: *Metatheaters of Race in Twenty-First-Century African American Playtexts*

10 November



Mo Zhu: *Self-Translation and Nostalgia: A Case Study of Pai Hsien-Yung's Taipei People and Ha Jin's A Good Fall*

19 November

Alice Lacoue-Labarthe: *Poetik deutschsprachiger Exilnarrative im Kontext der 'Flüchtlingskrise'*

21 November



Congratulations to our members who successfully defended their PhD theses!



Bette Dam: *“Certain things are not known to those who eat with forks” (Hundred Years of Media-Elites and Their Impact on Society – Case: Afghanistan*

21 November

Yuhan Qi: *The Rewriting and Narrative Reframing of Yan Fu's Translation of Thomas Huxley's Evolution and Ethics in Tian Yan Lun*

12 December



Brenda Bressan Thomé: *Translation Critique and the Reassessment of the Original: A Case Study*

15 December



2 Updates CLIC Activities & Projects

Lorand Chair Intermediality

A Senior Lecturer in Comparative Literatures and Cultures at the University of Bristol, CLIC's new Lorand Chair in Intermediality, Shuangyi Li, brings a wealth of expertise in transcultural dialogue and transmedia aesthetics. He is the author of two acclaimed monographs, including *Proust, China and Intertextual Engagement* (2017) and *Travel, Translation and Transmedia Aesthetics: Franco-Chinese Literature in a Global Age* (2021).



During his time with us this spring, Li will host a series of events. We warmly invite you to kick things off by attending his **Inaugural Lecture**: "Sino-African Transcultural Memory in the 20th & 21st Centuries: Literary Articulation and Visual Mediation of Space in Women Writers' Works"

Time and Place: 17 March at 18:00, Campus Etterbeek, room I.0.03

Li's visit is now planned to feature two more opportunities to engage with his work. As part of WOLEC, he will lead an interactive workshop on calligraphic aesthetics on **5 May**, 12:00 (room TBA). On **12 May**, 18:00 (promotiezaal, D.2.01), there will be a public screening of Zhi Xu's techno-choreographic dance performance *Being River* (2024) with an introduction by Shuangyi Li and followed by a hybrid panel discussion with the choreographer. More information will follow!

MERLIT



Media Appearance

CLIC member [Eva Ulrike Pirker](#) was interviewed by Vrije Universiteit Brussel about joining CLIC, the MERLIT project, and the impending cuts to higher education.

[read the interview in Dutch or in English](#)

Workshops and Lectures

A MERLIT Theory & Methodology Workshop took place on 4 March, featuring Natalya Din-Kariuki (University of Warwick). Her visit also included a lecture titled "Colonial Politics, Colonial Poetics? Reading Early Modern Travel Writing, Then and Now". She also led a workshop on Travel Writing ([read more](#)).



AFROPRESS

Upcoming AFROPRESS Lecture

Chakib Ararou (INALCO Paris) will be delivering a talk on Moroccan magazine culture: "Al-Thaqāfa al-Jadīda: Cultural Autonomy and Arab Embeddedness in Morocco's Years of Lead". The talk will take place on **26 March**, 4-5 pm (Meeting Room LW 'Profzaal').

[read more](#)



2 Updates CLIC Activities & Projects

WOLEC

The Study Group for Literature and Culture (WOLEC) has hosted a number of Lunch Lectures and Q&A sessions. Highlights include an insightful visit from Caitlin Vandertop (University of Warwick), commissioning editor of *Postcolonial Text* and *Literature Compass*, as well as a talk by [Hadas Zahavi](#) titled "Warketing Peace". We also successfully kicked off early 2026 with presentations by [Tiago Silva](#) on representations of Brazil through English eyes, [Tem Mirkazemiyān](#) on absurdist theatre in Iran, and [Chiara Cremona](#) on foreign literature in the 19th-century Italian periodical press.



Upcoming Spring Events

There are many WOLEC events just around the corner! Be sure to mark your calendars for these upcoming sessions:

- **25 March:** Lily Beckett (University of Bristol) presenting on "Intermedial References and References to History".
- **21 April:** Chris Mourant discussing "Revised Passages: A New Edition of E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India* (1924)".
- **5 May:** A special interactive workshop led by Shuangyi Li, CLIC's 2025–2026 Lorand Chair in Intermediality.
- **22 May:** Aya Chriaa presenting on "Afro-optimism or Afropessimism?: Negotiating Possible Futures and Issues of Race in Contemporary Black American Speculative Fiction (2014–25)".

click [here](#) to view the full spring programme

Career Development

"Life After the PhD?"

A CLIC/BCLS Career Development Workshop

Are you an early-career researcher wondering about your next professional step? Curious about the diverse career paths a humanities PhD can open up, both inside and outside of academia? Join us on **12 May** for a joint career development day co-organised by CLIC and the Brussels Centre for Language Studies (BCLS). This full-day event is designed to help you navigate your post-PhD journey. The programme will feature useful testimonials from professionals sharing their own career paths, a session on humanities funding opportunities by VUB Research, and exclusive panels with "jury insiders" from FWO, BAEF, and MSCA. We will wrap up the day with a Tips & Tricks Career Café and a small reception.

[Register Now!](#)



3 Past Events

Lorand Chair French Literature CLIC welcomed Nicolas Bianchi

This year's Lorand Chair in French Literature was awarded to **Nicolas Bianchi** (Université Toulouse Jean-Jaurès). He was welcomed to CLIC in November 2025 and gave a lecture series, titled "Lire Céline". The series consisted of six lectures organised in November and December.

[read more](#)



Experimental,
exophonic,
ecstatic:
performative writing
& the expanded page

Symposium: "Experimental, Exophonic, Ecstatic: Performative Writing and the Expanded Page"

The symposium "Experimental, Exophonic, Ecstatic: Performative Writing and the Expanded Page" was held on **13 and 14 November**. The conference was focused on performative writing and included keynote lectures by Peggy Phelan (Stanford) and Nizan Shaked (California State University Long Beach).

[read more](#)

CLIC Participated in the Compassionate Week at VUB

As part of the annual Compassionate Week at VUB, two events were (jointly) organised by CLIC members on **17 November**. CLIC member [Kayra Maes](#) looked at how children's and young adult literature represents grief and loss. CLIC also co-organised an evening dedicated to mourning and healing called Voices of Compassion which included a variety of writing intended to promote compassion in the face of grief. Poet Evangeline Agape closed the event with a reading from her work.

[read more](#)



Lorand Chair Italian Literature 2025–26 CLIC welcomed Roberta Colombi

On **24–27 November**, CLIC also welcomed this year's Lorand Chair in Italian Literature, held by Roberta Colombi (Università Roma Tre). Six lectures were delivered as part of a series on the novel, titled "Il romanzo e la storia. Dai modelli della tradizione alle strategie narrative contemporanee".

[read more](#)

3 Past Events

Looking Back: 2025 VAL Symposium

On **28 November**, CLIC members [Maxime Honinx](#), [Eva Ulrike Pirker](#), [Marcela Scibiorska](#), [Jade Thomas](#), and [Hannah Van Hove](#) hosted the 2025 VAL Symposium of the Flemish Association for Comparative Literary Studies ([Vlaamse Vereniging voor Algemene en Vergelijkende Literatuurwetenschap](#)) at Hoek38 in Brussels. Centred around the theme of “Gender Anxieties”, the international conference provided a lively forum to explore how literary and cultural studies respond to the increasing contentiousness surrounding gender debates in today’s political and institutional landscape.

[read more](#)



Study Group: Reading Affect Theory

Between **November and December**, CLIC member [Isabella Villanova](#) and CLIC Talent for Research student [Mehran Ghandi](#) organised a study group on affect theory for MA students at VUB. The group under Villanova’s supervision read some fundamental texts on Affect and affect theory, concluding with a workshop on the affordances of affect theory in the analysis of literature.



CLIC Day 2025: Journalism and Literature

On **5 December**, CLIC held its 15th Annual Research Day on the theme “Journalism and Literature”. The event attracted scholars coming from 8 universities in 6 different countries. The keynote lecture by John S. Bak (Université de Lorraine) set the tone for the day by probing deep into the landscape of the French press and the representation of the Boers during the Anglo-Boer War, 1899–1902. The 10 presentations that followed were arranged in three panels, each illuminating an important angle of the theme and collectively working to demonstrate the manifold – and often overlooked – intersections between literature and journalism, in theory and practice. A **special issue of JLIC** devoted to this topic will be published in 2027.

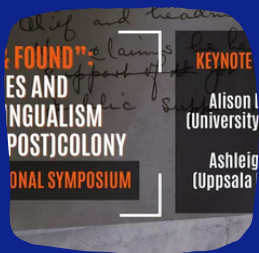
[read more](#)

3rd International Meeting of Researchers in Intermediality

On **4 and 5 December**, CLIC members and affiliated researchers participated in the [3rd International Meeting of Researchers in Intermediality \(IMoRI 2025\)](#). Held online under the theme “Mapping New Territories in Intermedial Studies,” this two-day research forum brought together leading research units from Europe and the Americas to foster dialogue and explore emerging directions in the field. A diverse group of CLIC scholars showcased the centre’s ongoing research projects, presenting fresh insights on intermedial crossings in audio media, transmedial literary aesthetics, and intermedial engagements with identity and belonging.



3 Past Events



CEREP/CLIC Symposium

"Lost & Found: Archives and Multilingualism in the (Post)Colony"

On **12 January**, this international symposium took place at the University of Liège. Co-organised by CEREP in collaboration with CLIC and the ERC-funded AFROPRESS project, the one-day event, a testament to the close academic ties of CLIC and CEREP, brought together researchers to interrogate traditional definitions of the archive and what "counts" as archival material within colonial and postcolonial multilingual contexts. Featuring keynote talks by Alison Donnell (University of Bristol) and Ashleigh Harris (Uppsala University), alongside dynamic project presentations by VUB researchers, attendees discussed strategies to overcome historical monolingual biases, recover neglected literary voices, and fundamentally reimagine inclusive archival practices across languages.

[read more](#)



Lecture by Sandrine Colard:

"The Alchemy of the Museum: Kanal's Black Archives in Two Acts"

On **15 December**, renowned art historian and curator, Sandrine Colard (Rutgers University-Newark) visited the VUB as part of the ['Ties that Bind Us' series](#). As a specialist in African art and photography, she has examined how colonial imagery became embedded in modernity. In this lecture Colard discussed how museums can address their colonial legacies and reimagine historical propaganda as a source of creativity and strength today.

[read more](#)



An Evening with Timothy Snyder Ties that Bind Us

On **16 January**, renowned historian and author, Timothy Snyder (University of Toronto) visited Bozar, Brussels, as part of the ['Ties that Bind Us' series](#). Having spent his career as a historian of Central Europe, Ukraine, the Soviet Union, and the Holocaust, and written on both freedom and tyranny, Snyder discussed these ideas and our responsibility towards freedom and democracy in the world today.

[read more](#)



Conference: "Sounds of a Lifetime: Exploring Life Writing in Audio Media"

CLIC members [Inge Arteel](#), [Birgit Van Puymbroeck](#), and [Iana Nikitenko](#) organised the international conference "Sounds of a Lifetime: Exploring Life Writing in Audio Media", held at HOEK 38 on **29-30 January**. The event formed part of the research project "Broadcast Biographies: Innovations in Genre and Medium" and, more broadly, of CLIC's research strand Audio Literature and Sonic Narratives. The programme opened with a pre-conference workshop led by Marit MacArthur (University of California, Davis) and Robert M. Ochshorn (KASK School of the Arts) entitled "Slow Listening: How to Study Audio Recordings as Vocal Performance". Three keynote speakers addressed distinct genres of audio life narratives at the conference: Julia Lajta-Novak (University of Vienna), Matthew Rubery (Queen Mary University of London), Jarmila Mildorf (University of Paderborn).

[read more](#)

4 Future Events

19 March, Building I.2.02

Workshop: Comics as Bridges

On **19 March**, CLIC member [Diana Castilleja](#) is organising the EUTOPIA-CLIC workshop “Comics as Bridges” at VUB. The workshop brings together work on comics as a medium of connection and exchange, and forms part of CLIC’s broader engagement with intermedial and transdisciplinary research. It will take place from 10:00 to 14:00 at VUB. More information is available via the CLIC website.

[read more](#)



24 March, Pleinlaan 5

“Universalism or What? Who Writes? Who Reads?”

Class of Excellence with Prof. Roland Greene

On **24 March**, CLIC will host a Class of Excellence with 2025 [International Francqui Professor](#) Roland Greene (Stanford University), titled “Universalism or What? Who Writes? Who Reads?” The Francqui Chairs are a prestigious academic tradition in Belgium, established to promote excellence and foster collaboration between Belgian universities. The seminar forms part of a four-university series on universalism in literary studies, co-organised by CLIC (VUB), UGent, KUL, and UCLouvain. The event will take place from **10:00 to 12:00** in Room Van Gogh, Pleinlaan 5, 5th floor, and is open to PhD students, postdocs, and lecturers. You can register via [this link](#).



31 March, LIC Learning Theatre

Ties that Bind Us

Art Effects: Sensory Education in Uncertain Times

On **31 March**, South African professor Premesh Lalu will visit the VUB to deliver a guest lecture as part of the cross-disciplinary ‘[Ties That Bind Us](#)’ series. Focusing on the intersection of art and environmentalism, Lalu will discuss *The Herds*, a public art and climate initiative designed to inspire action and renew humanity’s bond with the natural world. By reflecting on this project, Lalu’s talk will explore how the convergence of arts and science can serve as a vital form of sensory education and an urgent call for climate action in uncertain times.

[read more](#)



4 Future Events

Registrations Open

“The Politics of Intermedial Connectivity”

Mark your calendars! From **27 to 29 May**, Vrije Universiteit Brussel will host the 8th Biennial Conference of the [International Society for Intermedial Studies](#) co-organised by [Janine Hauthal](#), [Marcela Scibiorska](#), and [Gry Ulstein](#). Centred on the theme “The Politics of Intermedial Connectivity”, this international event invites scholars to explore how media interactions shape, reflect, and challenge dynamics of power, identity, and cross-cultural exchange. The event will feature keynotes by Mieke Bal, Patrick Jagoda, and Birgit Neumann. [Register now!](#)



“Periodicals and the World”

From **9 to 11 September**, the 14th Annual ESPRit Conference will take place at the Royal Library of Belgium (KBR) in Brussels. Co-organised by CLIC members [Chiara Cremona](#), [Dirk Vanden Berghe](#), [Cedric Van Dijck](#), and [Birgit Van Puymbroeck](#), the conference will revolve around the theme of “Periodicals and the World”. Scholars will explore how magazines and newspapers have historically travelled across regions, shaped public discourse, and constructed their own unique worlds. [Register now!](#)



26 May, Campus Etterbeek

Faculty Research Day Talent for Research Presentations



Each year, BA and MA students apply for and are selected to join CLIC’s Talent for Research training programme. Students are individually coached and integrated into the research group’s activities. This year, these students will demonstrate their work in their respective research groups with a poster presentation during the Research Day organised by the Faculty for Language and Humanities. Visit [here to read](#) about them and their work.

CLIC/BCUS Lecture Series 2026-27

StadsSalonsUrbains: “The City and the Senses”

We are excited to announce that the Autumn 2026 edition of the StadsSalonsUrbains lecture series will explore the theme “The City and the Senses”. The upcoming interdisciplinary series will delve into the sensory fabric of urban environments. The lectures will investigate how the city’s sensorium shapes the everyday experiences of its inhabitants. Bringing together international speakers from sociology, literary studies, history, and the visual arts, the series will interrogate how sensory regimes regulate public and private spaces, and how art and literature serve as archives of these contentious urban sensations.

Stay tuned as more information regarding the exact dates, venue, and full lineup of speakers will be released soon!



5 Publications

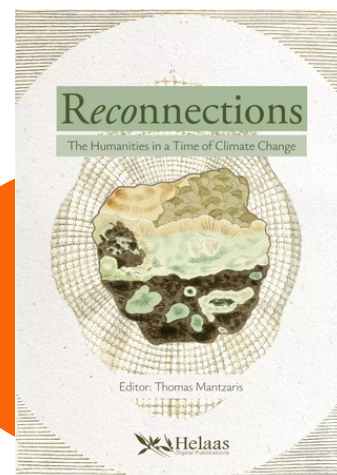
Please note that the announcements are presented in the original languages of the publications.

Reconnections: The Humanities in a Time of Climate Change

(Helaas Digital Publications, series: Conversing with American Culture)

Edited by [Thomas Mantzaris](#) (CLIC)

[read more](#)



Metamorphoses

Tracing the Translator in the Long Eighteenth Century, 1660-1830

BRECHT DE GROOTE, LIEVE JOOKEN,
SONJA LAVAERT AND GUY ROORYCK
(EDS)



BREPOLS

Metamorphoses: Tracing the Translator in the Long Eighteenth Century, 1660-1830

(Brepols)

Edited by Brecht de Groote, Lieve Jooker, [Sonja Lavaert](#) (CLIC) and Guy Rooryck

[read more](#)

Revista de letras, vol. 1, n° 44, 2025: "Transatlantic Flows: The Circulation of Literature between the Americas and Europe"

Edited by [Arvi Sepp](#) (CLIC), Luana Ferreira de Freitas, Marie-Hélène Catherine Torres and Walter Carlos Costa

[read more](#)



6 Call for Applications

Call for Applications: CLIC Grant Writing Residencies 2026

Following last year's success, CLIC will soon launch its Call for Applications for the 2026 Grant Writing Residencies. Like last year, 4-5 postdoctoral researchers will be selected to come to CLIC for 1-2 months and join CLIC's screening sessions while they prepare postdoctoral fellowship applications for Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) and the Flemish Research Foundation (FWO). Each candidate will receive a grant writing fee of 2000 EUR per month. Keep an eye out for the Call on the CLIC website! Meanwhile, see the preliminary timeline below:

- Call open: 30 March 2026
- Deadline: 31 May 2026
- Interviews: 16-19 June 2026
- Final selection: 22-26 June 2026
- Residency start: 1-15 August 2026
 - MSCA-PF deadline: 9 September 2026
 - FWO-PF deadline: late November 2026

CLIC's Steering Team

Chair: Janine Hauthal (Janine.Hauthal@VUB.be)

Vice Chair: Arvi Sepp (Arvi.Sepp@VUB.be)

Secretary: Gry Ulstein (Gry.Ulstein@VUB.be)

Communications Team: A communications team has recently been established within CLIC to coordinate the centre's website, social media, newsletter, and onboarding communication. The team consists of Tessa van Wijk, Roba Eissa, Mehran Ghandi, and Noah Van den Eynde. Members are kindly invited to send any news related to their activities, events, publications, or other updates to: CLIC.Comms@vub.be.

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