

## The International Merleau-Ponty Circle (IMPC)

### December 2022 Newsletter

Season's Greetings! We have added many new members to the Circle in 2022 and we encourage both our older and more recent members to attend our annual conferences. The warm welcome and stimulating presentations and discussions are why many of us return faithfully to participate year after year!

Below is information about our recent fall 2022 conference as well as the elections that were held at the annual Business Meeting for the General Secretary and Associate General Secretary positions. We also have announcements to share about the upcoming IMPC conference locations for 2023, 2024, 2025, and 2026.

#### 2022 Annual Conference

The 46<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the International Merleau-Ponty Circle was hosted by Georgetown University in Washington, DC, and was directed by Joel Michael Reynolds, Assistant Professor of Philosophy and Disability Studies, and Senior Research Scholar at the Kennedy School of Ethics. This was an especially noteworthy conference because it was our first in-person event since our 2019 conference at Fordham University in NYC. It was also our first hybrid conference, with 64 registered participants (35 in person and 29 virtual).

The 2022 conference theme was "Fits and Misfits: Rethinking Disability, Debility, and the World with Merleau-Ponty" and there were 22 individual presentations over the three-day event. Rosemarie Garland-Thomson (Emory University) gave the keynote, which was entitled: "The Romance of Miss Fitz and Norm Mates." There were also three invited lectures: Alia Al-Saji (McGill University) presented "A Debilitating Colonial Duration: Merleau-Ponty and Fanon from Amputation and Colonial Prosthesis to a Politics of Refusal," Helen Fielding (University of Western Ontario) presented, "Movement and Perceptual Thinking: Challenging the Standard of Right Perception," and David Morris (Concordia University) presented "Bewildering and Decolonizing Time: Melting the Clock as Hypernorm of the I Can (and Philosophy)."

The recipient of the 2022 M. C. Dillon Award for the best graduate student submission was Gaia Ferrari of Duquesne University. Her 2022 Dillon Memorial Lecture took place on Friday November 11th and was entitled, "Entangled Embodiments: Merleau-Ponty's Method for Grounding a Phenomenology of Disability." Gaia's award-winning paper will also appear in a forthcoming issue of *Chiasmi International*, the tri-lingual journal devoted to contemporary Merleau-Ponty Studies. The IMPC welcomes donations to the M.C. Dillon Fund, which also covers the Business Lunch and Banquet fees for every graduate student who presents a paper at the annual conference. Donations can be made directly through our website at: <http://www.merleauponty.org/m-c-dillon-memorial/>

We are also pleased to announce a new award that we will be giving out for the first time for the fall 2023 conference to defray one of our presenter's international travel expenses. The Ron Morstyn travel stipend honors the memory of one of our longtime regular members. Ron and his wife Gaye traveled from their home in Australia to attend many of our IMPC conferences and we are very grateful to Gaye for proposing and funding this new award in Ron's memory. Additional details about how to apply for the Ron Morstyn travel stipend will be provided in

future communications from our incoming General Secretary, David Morris and incoming Associate General Secretary, Kym Maclaren.

During the lunch break on Friday, November 11th we held our sixth annual graduate student mentoring session, which was organized by our conference director, Joel Reynolds. We are grateful to have been able to run this session again this fall and want to thank the faculty and graduate students who participated in it!

On behalf of this year's participants, we would like to express our profound gratitude to Joel Michael Reynolds for putting together a terrific 2022 program and for organizing and running our first hybrid conference. We are especially grateful to the Georgetown University departments and programs that co-sponsored this year's conference including Art and Art History, American Studies, French and Francophone Studies, Psychology, Global and Comparative Literature, History, the Medical Humanities Initiative, Humanities Initiative, Culture and Politics Program, Environmental Studies Program, and Program on Peace and Justice. Generous support was also provided by Georgetown's Graduate School, the College, the Department of Philosophy, the Disability Studies Program, and the Kennedy Institute of Ethics. Ellie Yaeger and Carina Olsson in the Georgetown philosophy department and the staff at the Glover Park Hotel ensured that everything ran smoothly from start to finish. We are also indebted to Joel for expertly facilitating the inclusion of our virtual participants in each hybrid session.

## **2022 Elections for General Secretary and Associate General Secretary**

At the Saturday, November 12<sup>th</sup> Business Meeting we elected our current Associate General Secretary, David Morris (Concordia University), to a new three-year term as General Secretary. Kym Maclaren (Toronto Metropolitan University) was elected to a three-year term as Associate General Secretary. Congratulations to them both on their new leadership positions! We are grateful to Patricia Locke (St. John's College) for running the 2022 Elections.

During the Business Meeting we also voted to approve the by-law revisions that were mentioned in last year's annual newsletter, which specify that the three year (renewable) terms for General Secretary and Associate General Secretary are intended to cover three consecutive conference years. I (Gail Weiss) am stepping down after seven years as General Secretary and this will be my last annual newsletter. I am immensely grateful for our wonderful IMPC community and am very happy to have left David and Kym with a great lineup of future conferences for the next few years, the details of which we are thrilled to share below!

## **Future Conferences**

**IMPC 2023:** The 47<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the International Merleau-Ponty Circle will be our 2<sup>nd</sup> hybrid conference and will take place at Deakin University's downtown campus in Melbourne Australia from December 4-6, 2023. It will be co-directed by Jack Reynolds and Helen Ngo. The conference theme is: "Merleau-Ponty and Embodiment: Between the Cognitive, Aesthetic, and Socio-Political" and the Call for Papers for the 2023 conference is attached. Please note that the Australasian Society for Continental Philosophy (ASCP) conference will be taking place the previous week in Sydney for those who may want to attend both conferences.

**IMPC 2024:** At the Business Meeting we provisionally approved a proposal from Martina Ferrari (Villanova University) and Whitney Howell (La Salle University) to co-direct the 48<sup>th</sup> annual conference in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in fall 2024. The daily conference sessions will take place at Villanova and one of the plenaries will take place on the La Salle campus. The proposed conference theme is “Art, Politics, and Radical Imagination” and we will have more details to share as their 2024 conference plans evolve over the coming year. We will formally vote to approve their proposal at next year’s Business Meeting when we have the requisite letters of support from their respective University administrators.

**IMPC 2025:** Kirsten Jacobsen, Don Beith, and Susan Bredlau of the University of Maine in Orono were officially approved at the Business Meeting as the co-hosts for our 49<sup>th</sup> annual conference. Susan was present to share some information about the university campus, which is located near the city of Bangor, and we are looking forward to our first conference in Maine in the fall of 2025!

**IMPC 2026:** At the Business Meeting, we also provisionally approved a proposal from Stefan Kristensen to host the 50<sup>th</sup> annual conference at the University of Strasbourg, France with support from his colleague in film studies, [Benjamin Thomas](#). We will finalize the approval of this 2026 location at a future Business Meeting after Stefan has had an opportunity to arrange the necessary conference funding. Stefan served as the director of our 2014 conference at the University of Geneva, Switzerland and we are excited to have him host another conference in another fabulous European location!

Though we have a wonderful line-up for the next four years, we encourage those of you who are interested in serving as a future conference director to contact the new General Secretary, David Morris ([David.Morris@concordia.ca](mailto:David.Morris@concordia.ca)) or our new Associate General Secretary, Kym Maclaren ([kym.maclaren@ryerson.ca](mailto:kym.maclaren@ryerson.ca)) to learn more about the process.

### **IMPC Facebook page**

If you have a Facebook account and have not already done so, please consider joining the International Merleau-Ponty Circle Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/228461034267776>. It currently has over 1,700 members from all over the world and is an excellent place to post Calls for Papers and news about upcoming conferences as well as information about new publications that you think would be of interest to Merleau-Ponty scholars.

We hope you have enjoyed these updates about this year’s conference and our future conferences. On behalf of the Circle, Gail would like to close by thanking our incoming IMPC leadership team and longtime members, David and Kym, for their willingness to serve as our new General Secretary and Associate General Secretary. The Circle could not be in more capable hands!

We wish you all happy holidays and a very happy new year!

All the best,  
Gail Weiss, General Secretary  
David Morris, Associate General Secretary