



# Friends of the Wade

The Marion E. Wade Center    Wheaton College

## Audio-Visual Materials on Display

Most visitors are aware of the large collection of written materials housed at the Wade Center, but relatively few know of the Wade's extensive library of audio and video recordings. Thanks to a generous gift from the members of Wheaton College's Class of 1961, these materials will be increasingly apparent to museum-goers on the newly installed audio-visual kiosk.



This new technology, housed in a beautiful custom-made cabinet, introduces guests to the Wade authors through audio and visual media. The first program featured is entitled "Dorothy L. Sayers responds to scientist Fred Hoyle on BBC Radio" and contains an audio segment of Sayers giving a radio broadcast talk. Additional programs featuring voice or video recordings focusing on other authors will be added to the kiosk over time. We hope that by introducing museum visitors to our audio-visual collection, they will not only benefit from the kiosk programming itself, but also be prompted to make fuller use of our A-V collection at the listening station in the Kilby Reading Room.

The kiosk could not have been completed (or even started!) without the creative and

diligent collaboration of several people outside of the Wade Center staff. Remarkably, the expertise we needed was available through various on-campus departments, saving us significant costs in time, energy, and finances. Members of Wheaton College's Media Resources Department provided technological expertise from the research phase of the project onward, and the carpentry shop at Wheaton College's Physical Plant assisted us with the crucial task of custom-building a cabinet that meets both the technological and aesthetic needs of the kiosk. We especially thank Beth Johanson, who took our content design and turned it into an interactive computer display, and carpenter Kevin Brady, who conceived and built a handsome wooden cabinet that not only unites modern technology to the Wade Center's traditional environment, but meets ADA requirements.

The current kiosk program coincides with the Sayers-related exhibit in the central museum display case (also part of the gift from the Class of '61). The case, designed especially to allow the display of fragile original papers and artifacts, currently features the exhibits "From Pen to Publication" using manuscripts and first editions of Dorothy L. Sayers's play *Busman's Honeymoon* to describe the process a piece of writing undergoes from early drafts to publication (and in the case of a play, subsequent performance). We hope that you will be able to visit the Wade Center soon and enjoy the variety of new displays made possible by the generosity of Friends of the Wade like yourself. **W**

*It is not what  
God can give  
us, but God  
that we want.*

—George MacDonald



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For the beginning of 2009, I have been occupied primarily with traveling, lecturing, and teaching. The month of January I spent at Scott Theological College in Machakos, Kenya teaching a course entitled "Gospel Witness in Historical Perspective," in which I used several of the Wade authors as highly effective examples. In March I delivered the Richard Caulkins Lectures at Corban College in Salem, OR, a series of talks based upon C.S. Lewis's book *The Abolition of Man*. The following week I taught a series at the Joshua Institute at Hume Lake, CA. Then on March 25<sup>th</sup> I took off for Dornach, Switzerland where I attended an international Owen Barfield Conference, followed by a visit with Douglas Gresham in Malta to discuss issues pertaining to C.S. Lewis studies.

In the fourteen years I have been Director, I cannot remember a more positive response to the works of our authors than in this most recent series of speaking opportunities, as true in Kenya as in Oregon or California, in young people as in old. In the present state of global uncertainty, it is noteworthy that the witness of the Wade authors continues to be as relevant as ever in the English-speaking world, and increasingly relevant to the non-English speaking part of the globe.

WITH ALL GOOD WISHES,



### Did You Know?

Since the Wade's inception, researchers have had to ask the archival staff to conduct searches of the collection on their behalf, since there is no searchable catalog. In recent months, we have alleviated some of the inconvenience for researchers by placing finding aids for manuscript and letter collections and several archives on the Wade website. Meanwhile, the Wade has also developed a plan for transferring collection records to a widely-accessible online catalog. Enacting this plan, however, requires a large initial financial outlay. If you are interested in helping fund this accessibility project, please contact Director Chris Mitchell at [wade@wheaton.edu](mailto:wade@wheaton.edu). **W**



## The Wade Authors' Works Reimagined

Many of the writings of the seven Wade authors were best-sellers in their time, and most of these continue in print today. Because of this enduring popularity, numerous other writers and artists have chosen to use these works as the basis for their own creative vision. Over the years, this process of inspiration has resulted in the production of a wide variety of adaptations, including books, movies, illustrations, music, plays, and more. The Wade Center's mission includes both adding adapted works to our collection, and supporting adapted performances and projects.

While the majority of the Wade Center's collection has an academic focus, artistic adaptations and interpretations of the authors' works are not neglected in our acquisition process. We add popular movies such as *The Lord of the Rings* to the collection, but we also obtain less widely known creative renderings, such as Robert Cording's illustrated book *The Lion and the Land of Narnia* or Dale Ahlquist's forthcoming film version of *Manalive* based on G.K. Chesterton's book. Often recordings of non-permanent media such as musical or dramatic performances are not available, so the Wade Center collects related items as a way of "preserving" the event. For instance, *Perelandra*, an opera based on

C.S. Lewis's space travel novel will be presented by the Oxford C.S. Lewis Society on June 25 and 26, 2009. Currently, the Wade Center holdings contain the libretto and other performance-related material from the initial operatic premieres in 1964 (U.K.) and 1969 (U.S.); when this year's production of *Perelandra* ends, similar items will be added to our archives.

In addition to collecting physical material for the archives, the Wade also supports performances of a variety of adapted works. In recent years, the Wade Center hosted Tom Key performing *C.S. Lewis on Stage*, Tony Lawton performing *The Great Divorce*, and Chuck Chalberg performing *An Evening with*

*Chesterton*. Chicago's Lifeline Theatre has adapted four of Dorothy L. Sayers's Lord Peter Wimsey mysteries to the delight of Wimsey fans and neophytes alike since 2002 when they produced *Whose Body?*. When the Wade Center wanted to provide an evening of entertainment for the 2007 Dorothy L. Sayers Convention in Wheaton, Lifeline Theatre seemed a natural partner. Their highly popular adaptation of *Gaudy Night* demonstrated a love for Sayers's work as well as a delight in the new opportunities provided by staging the story. Though the play had already closed in Chicago, the cast and crew

graciously brought the production to Wheaton especially for the Sayers conference weeks later. In a lecture the day before the performance, playwright Frances Limoncelli described her process of turning a 600-page book into a 2-hour play, illuminating the challenges and rewards of telling a beloved story again with new methods. She articulated how it is possible to retain the spirit and essential themes of an

original work while giving it a form that introduces it to a new audience and illuminates new meanings for those familiar with the book.

The Wade Center is uniquely positioned to help promote these new artistic versions of old favorites, as well as to provide access to related resources for both adaptors and audience. In fact, a side-benefit of a successful adaptation is usually a revived interest in the source material. For example, the Wade Center felt the effects of this in a dramatic way from the two Narnia movies, as our annual attendance increased by two thousand during the years the movies were playing!

The Wade authors probably could not foresee the enormous amount of scholarship that would result from their literary efforts or the diverse forms their stories would take in the hands of other artists. Nonetheless, they would surely appreciate the way that these adaptations draw audiences back to the original material, bringing new readers as well as reigniting the interest of those long familiar with the primary works. **W**



## PERELANDRA

World premiere of a new opera

by

DONALD SWANN

Libretto by DAVID MARSH

Based on the story by C. S. LEWIS

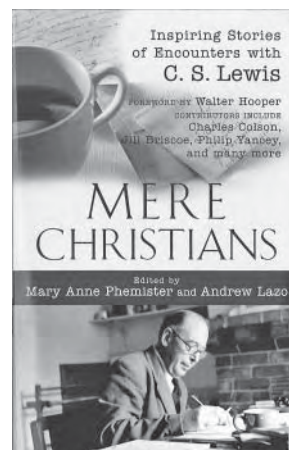
Performed at the Guildhall, Cambridge, on 16th June, 1964  
at the Town Hall, Oxford, on 18th June, 1964  
and at the Mermaid Theatre, London, on 21st June, 1964

1964 opera program  
from Swann archive

## Seeing *Busman's Honeymoon*

Lifeline Theatre will present Frances Limoncelli's adaptation of Dorothy L. Sayers's *Busman's Honeymoon* May 1 - June 21, 2009. With sufficient interest, the Wade Center staff may arrange a group trip to see the play. If you might like to participate, let us know ASAP of your interest. Go to [www.lifelinetheatre.com](http://www.lifelinetheatre.com) for more information about the show. **W**

## Mere Christians Book Launch



Wade Center volunteer Mary Anne Phemister and co-editor Andrew Lazo celebrated the launch of their book, *Mere Christians: Inspiring Stories of Encounters with C.S. Lewis*, on February 12, 2009 in the Wade museum. Community members, including

many Friends of the Wade, came to the afternoon event to hear comments by Mary Anne and Andrew and have books signed by them.

*Mere Christians*, published by Baker Books, gathers fifty-five accounts of the influence of C.S. Lewis's writings on Anne Rice, Chuck Colson, Francis S. Collins, Pierce Pettis, and dozens of others. It includes a preface by the Wade's Associate Director, Marjorie Mead, and also features a new biographical essay and lists of books by and about Lewis. The book can be purchased through any bookstore and signed copies are available at the Wheaton College Bookstore.

Another volume of *Mere Christians* is already planned, for which submissions are being considered. If you would like to submit your story of how C.S. Lewis has influenced your life for possible inclusion in the forthcoming collection, write to [merechristians@gmail.com](mailto:merechristians@gmail.com) for details. **W**



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## Highlights



Above: Laura asks the group a discussion question on the final night (note Dr. Kilby in the portrait above her depicted reading *The Return of the King!*).

### ***Lord of the Rings* on Monday evenings**

For eight weeks, 15–20 community members met on Monday evenings around the Wade Center fireplace to discuss J.R.R. Tolkien's famed fantasy story *The Lord of the Rings*. Laura Schmidt, Wade archivist and long-time Tolkien aficionado, facilitated discussion and coordinated visiting speakers, along with a final celebration featuring Middle-earth themed treats. **W**

