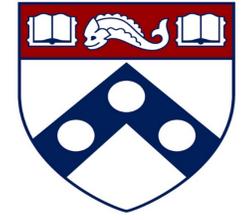


Your Language My Ear

Rachel Dennis, COL 2022 and Andrew Basile, COL 2023
Professor Kevin M.F. Platt, COL REES



PURM funded!

Background

Your Language My Ear (YLME) is a poetry symposium centered on the study and translation of contemporary Russian poetry. Organized by Professor Kevin M.F. Platt, the symposium has been held three times, in 2011, 2015, and 2019, with a fourth conference planned for the 2021-2022 school year.



A crowd gathers for a poetry reading at the Kelly Writers House during the 2019 YLME symposium. Images such as this were added to the website, with captions in Russian and English, during the project.

Research Goals

1. We wanted to update the YLME website with information concerning the 2019 symposium and associated images.
2. We wanted to compile complete English bibliographies for important and popular contemporary Russian poets.
3. We wanted to expand the online documentation of the poets, beginning with Wikipedia, the Online Encyclopedia.

Process

- Reviewing images and content from the 2019 symposium and uploading images and information to create a full record of the event.
- Collecting the published translations of the previous YLME participants, including YLME translations, as a starting point for expanding the resources on the website. This research was done by browsing scholarly databases, contacting literary magazines, and searching archived journals.
- Reaching out via Facebook to Russian writers and translators, soliciting further recommendations for poets to include in the translations list, as well as sources of English translations.
- Drawing on our bibliographic citations, in order to edit and create Wikipedia pages for several of these poets, enlarging their digital presence and increasing the availability of English-language biographical information. In addition, we added links to the YLME website to existing Wikipedia pages we did not have time to edit, thus raising the profile of YLME.



Poets and translators collaborate during the translation portion of the 2019 YLME symposium. For images such as this, we looked for the names of those pictured amongst participant lists and photo galleries from previous years. For instance, pictured here from left are Julia Bloch, Michael Wachtel, Leonid Schwab, and James McGavren.

Results and Revelations



Kevin M.F. Platt and Leonid Schwab (right) read at the Kelly Writers House at the 2019 YLME symposium. While being a professor at the University of Pennsylvania, Professor Platt is also a published author and translator.

- By the end of our summer research period we added over thirty names to the translation bibliography on the YLME website, as well as expanded the pre-existing entries.
- The website's About page and photo archive were updated.
- The English-language Wikipedia pages of several poets were edited to contain more coherent and recent biographical information.
- All poets on the YLME Resources page with pre-existing Wikipedia pages had the YLME website link added as a resource.

Beyond results, we learned about:

- Poetic trends, such as Moscow Conceptualism and the Language School.
- Linguistic traits of particular poets during our weekly close readings of poems we selected.
- The intricacies of translation, when we compared different English translations of the same Russian works.
- The ins and outs of scholarly resources like LibCal and WorldCat, as well as what constitutes a well-regarded scholarly journal in the field of Russian and European Studies.