

Keynote Lectures

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“What’s the Address? Literature, Translation, and Migration”

Literature departments have often been called the “laboratory or workshop of literary studies and, through them, of the humanities.” Puzzling over Roland Greene’s definition of comparative literature, my short address to you ponders what that description might mean today, more than twenty years later. Following an inquiry via the very term “address,” we can, for instance, consider the word as a noun and ask about the *location* of literary studies in the concept of the “global.” Is literary study a global study? Can it be? If so, what might we mean by this? But we can probe further into the work of the disciplines by addressing the more active, verbal potential of the term “address”: what might a field like comparative literature begin to *speak to* through its many substantive areas and approaches today, particularly through its recent, at times vexed, relation with translation studies? Specifically, what might it say to the issue of migration? This talk will offer some tentative responses as well as further questions and suggestions for research.