

# Introduction

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The Call for Papers that preceded, and invited submissions to, this special issue welcomed essays engaging the rich etymology and history of the word “romance,” a word that the *Oxford English Dictionary* requires three full pages to address. *Mosaic* sought submissions on a wide range of potential topics, including the figure of the “romantic,” the roman, romantic fiction, Romanticism, “the Romantics,” and the state of the love story in literature and film. Releasing such a Call is one of the great privileges of an editor, or so I have found, never yet having been disappointed, or left unsurprised, by the number and diversity of responses each Call receives. The current special issue attests to this kind of receptivity, ranging as it does from “Snuff Fiction” to “ecoromance,” from Hardy to Artaud, and from *Don Quixote* to *Kill Bill*. The essays collected in this special issue represent the “cream of the crop,” in that every submission *Mosaic* receives is vetted, through a blind process, by at least three reviewers who are selected from the journal’s world-wide pool of experts: nameless co-educators who give willingly and freely of their time to evaluate essays in their field of expertise. Without relying on its thousands of reviewers, *Mosaic* would not be able to publish, consistently, such distinguished scholarship across so wide a multi-disciplinary span.

From October 1-4, 2014, *Mosaic* will host its fourth international, interdisciplinary conference at the University of Manitoba, *A matter of lifedeath*. As we recognized

at *Mosaic* before disseminating the conference Call, this topic is a challenging one: I asked myself whether it is too difficult, the same question that occurred to me before sending out the “Freud After Derrida” Call for our last conference in 2010. Then as now, I have been overwhelmed with the number, quality, and multi-disciplinarity of the submissions received. The conference will bring together 109 event presenters from different countries and disciplines along with a projected additional 100 registered participants (all students register at no cost). Event presenters will travel to the conference from various universities and centres in Australia, Brazil, Canada, England, France, Germany, Italy, Mexico, the Netherlands, the Philippines, Scotland, Serbia, Switzerland, Turkey, and the United States, representing a rich cultural diversity that will inform the event. Presenters will also bring diverse perspectives to the conference, coming as they do from a range of academic disciplines, units, and professional backgrounds: Anthropology, Architecture and Landscape Architecture, Comparative Literature, Comparative Studies, English Literature, Environmental Studies, Film Studies, Fine Arts, French Studies, French and Italian Studies, Hispanic Literature and Cultures, Historical and Philosophical Studies, History of Medicine, Humanities, Interdisciplinary Studies, International Studies, Literary Theory, Medical Humanities, Palliative Care, Performance and Cultural Studies, Philippine Studies, Philology, Philosophy, Political Science, Religion, Science and Global Health, Spanish and Latin American Studies, Study of Cultures, Civilization, and Ideas, Study of Theory and Criticism, Theatre, and Women’s Studies. The event will feature five renowned keynote speakers, each of whom will address a specific facet of the conference topic.

While *Mosaic* plans to publish two proceedings issues coming out of this conference, attendance at, and participation in, the event promises to be an extraordinary experience, affording the opportunity to make connections with graduate students and emerging and renowned scholars from around the globe on a spectrum of research topics. The overall goal of the event is to respond critically and creatively to the twenty-first-century challenge of thinking the meaning of life and death, and the relation between the two, in non-oppositional, non-hierarchical ways. The conference program can be found on the journal website. *Mosaic* welcomes your participation.