“The Myth of the Foreign Woman: Translating Medea”: A Lecture by Arie Thompson
Monday, March 28, 2011, 7 p.m., Sulzberger Parlor, Barnard Hall
In this talk, award-winning singer-songwriter Arie Thompson discusses why and how she translated Max Rouquette’s Occitan/French/Bambara version of the Medea story for an American audience. Rouquette borrows the story of Medea—a woman scorned by the man she loved once she has uprooted herself to live in a foreign land—from Euripides, but refashions her plight to foreground her status as refugee. Thompson will discuss why Rouquette’s version was of particular interest, and how she went about translating and producing the text for an American audience. A reception will follow.

“A Space Like No Other”: A Lecture on Translation by Rosmarie Waldrop
Thursday, March 31, 2011, 7 p.m., Ella Weed Room, Milbank 223
Rosmarie Waldrop is the author of over three dozen books of poetry, prose and works of translation. Among her works of poetry are: Lawn of the Excluded Middle (Tender Buttons, 1993), Reluctant Gravities (New Directions, 1999), Love, Like Pronouns (Omnidawn, 2003), and most recently Driven to Abstraction (New Directions, 2010). Her translations include works by Paul Celan, Friederike Mayröker, Emmanuel Hocquard, and Jacques Roubaud. She is the foremost English translator of Edmond Jabès, whom she memorialized in Liverish Absence (Wesleyan, 2003). A reception will follow.

“Translation, Intertextuality, Interpretation”: A Lecture by Lawrence Venuti
Thursday, April 7, 2011, 7 p.m., Event Oval, The Diana Center
Translator and translation theorist Lawrence Venuti (The Translator’s Invisibility, 1995, The Scandals of Translation, 1998) will discuss the theoretical and practical issues raised by intertextuality—the presence of discreet or explicit allusions to prior texts in a work of literature—by looking at three cases: Rossella Bernascone’s Italian version of David Mamet’s play Sexual Perversity in Chicago; Kate Soper’s English version of Sebastiano Timpanaro’s study, Il lapsus freudiano: Psicanalisi e critica testuale (The Freudian Slip); and his own English version of Melissa P.’s fictionalized memoir, 100 colpi di spazzola prima di andare a dormire (100 Strokes of the Brush before Bed). A reception will follow.

Tuesday, April 12, 2011, 7 p.m., Milbank 328
In this talk, George Varsos (University of Athens, Princeton University) will present for discussion some basic problems in the comparative study of translations of the Homeric epics into different modern languages, starting with English, French and Modern Greek. The main theoretical question: in what ways does translation engage historical relations between the present moment of the translation and the past as indexed by the original, especially in the case of distinctly old literary texts? Varsos’ main argument will concern the problematic relations between language and culture and will involve the critique of corresponding historicist premises on grounds connected to the work of Walter Benjamin.

“Sound Poetry”: A Reading and Lecture by Jean-Pierre Bobillot
Thursday, April 21, 2011, 7 p.m., Sulzberger Parlor, Barnard Hall
An evening with the celebrated French sound poet Jean-Pierre Bobillot, who defines himself as a “Poète bruyant, non-métricien tendance pro-Dada, chercheur de poux” (“a noisy Poet, non-metrical and with pro-Dadaïst leanings, who (re)searches (for) lice.” The author of more than twenty books and CDs of poetry, as well as of a number of books about authors such as Rimbaud, Bobillot will be both performing and talking about poetry in this one-off event. All are welcome to participate in Bobillot’s live “action reading.” Talk and performance in English and French. A reception will follow.

Conference: “A Language for Every Latitude: The Poetry of Amelia Rosselli”
Friday and Saturday, May 6-7, 2011, Event Oval, The Diana Center
Amelia Rosselli is widely recognized as one of the most innovative and exciting Italian poets of the past half-century. As she was both a poet who wrote in three languages—Italian, English and French—and a translator, questions of translation are central to her work. This international conference brings together the major critics and translators of Rosselli to discuss her poetry and read some of the finest translations of her work.

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All events are free and open to the public, and are sponsored by a grant from the Mellon Foundation.