

# STRADDLING THE DIVIDE //

## Reception Studies Today

This is to announce 'Straddling the Divide// Reception Studies Today', a conference aimed at postgraduate students interested in Classical Reception. The conference will be held at the University of Melbourne on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> of December 2011. Our Call for Papers will be announced in June/July, but we are currently seeking indications of interest. Please email us at [receptionpostgrads@gmail.com](mailto:receptionpostgrads@gmail.com); join our Facebook group, 'Reception Post-grads'; or check out our up-coming blog for more information.

### What is Classical Reception?

Classical Reception is the study of how the literature, history, language and culture of the Ancient world has shaped our own. The Ancients felt that 'it all began with Homer' and this holds true today, whether you find echoes of Homer's epic program in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, or in *Star Wars*, or simply know of him from *The Simpsons*, where even the name 'Homer' invokes a unique but familiar vocabulary of Western literary thought. The way we write about war, religion, history and love is built on foundations laid down during classical antiquity. Stories and archetypes from the Greek and Roman worlds continue, so that it is impossible to speak of a disjuncture between ancient and modern retellings of the fate of Troy, the dilemma of Oedipus, or any story from the vast corpus of classical mythology. Classical Reception, therefore, seeks to better understand these links between Western culture and the classical past.

### Conference Aims

In light of the various paradoxes, uncertainties and ambiguities surrounding Classical Reception, its practice and its place in the academic discourse, we are interested in exploring the definition of 'Reception' itself. In a field where the definition of culture, text and intertext is fluid; how are the Classics translated to modern researchers working across the humanities?

This conference aims to bring together scholars in Australia and New Zealand, particularly postgraduates, who are interested in the Classical tradition and to ask what is unique about the Australasian vision of Classical Reception. We hope to facilitate meetings between scholars who otherwise would not have the opportunity to interact in such an interdisciplinary forum. Those who work in reception are often found in Classics departments, but may also be working in English Literature, Linguistics, Art History, Drama, History, Philosophy or even Fine Arts, Architecture or Politics. As such it can be difficult to know who around you is working on research which interacts with the Classical world. We hope to find you all at this conference.

While our primary focus is on literary reception, we welcome other approaches to the Classics: the twentieth century has certainly shown us how broad and all-encompassing the notion of the 'text' can be. This conference will provide a comfortable and supportive, yet critically rigorous, forum in which to discuss the meaning and direction of Reception Studies

in Australasia today. We hope to show this by having the conference proceedings published. This still relatively new discipline is constantly creating new ways of interacting with and understanding our Classical heritage, and we want you to be part of that discussion!