

Preface

We celebrate our fifth birthday with a special digest issue that brings together a selection of articles from past issues that focus on the body, its identities and rhythmic capabilities. From Symons's infatuation with flamenco, to non-normative masculinity in *Monsieur Phocas*, to decadent Hollywood, to the medico-literary in Lombroso and Nordau, to staged historicism: we have travelled a long way since our first issue on Arthur Symons in 2018. The current special issue is in anticipation of Goldsmiths' grand return to an in-person conference on *Decadent Bodies* this summer which includes a screening of Jack Smith's *Flaming Creatures* (1963), keynotes by Ana Parejo Vadillo and Martin O'Brien, a petite exhibition of decadent art objects, and a performance night at IKLECTIK. The conference runs 28-29 July; for the programme click [here](#). Co-organized by the British Association of Decadence Studies and the Departments of English and Creative Writing and Theatre and Performance at Goldsmiths, the conference will transport us out of the Zoom ether and into a physical space. Not that the digital world is a bad thing. We in the virtual editorial office of *Volupté* are passionate about our download stats and like to tap and stroke our phones as much as the next aesthete, but as we blow out the candles on our photoshopped cake, we know that decadence is best experienced in the full flesh.

... or in free, voluptuous, Open Access form. This issue of *Volupté* is the last solstice issue. From now on our bi-annual publication dates will coincide with the spring and autumn equinoxes in March and September. We have an exciting line-up of forthcoming issues. Next up in September 2022 is an issue on Vernon Lee, guest-edited by Sally Blackburn-Daniels and Patricia Pulham. And in March 2023, Robert Stilling guest-edits an issue on Decolonizing Decadence, a theme that complements a new project on Transnational Decadent Pedagogies at the [Decadence Research Centre](#). He asks two important questions: 'What would it mean to "decolonize decadence", to decentre, "undiscipline", and displace literary and artistic imaginaries so enmeshed with Western myths of progress, decline, and racial degeneration? How can Decadence Studies and studies of aestheticism engage with concepts such as coloniality or highlight indigenous voices or epistemologies that might imagine decadence and aestheticism otherwise?' The deadline of the [call for submissions](#) for this issue (V6.1) is open until 15 September 2022.

We continue to publish creative work on decadence and new translations, and every autumn we will include the winning submission of the BADS Translation Prize, supported by the Decadence and Translation Network, alongside the winners of the BADS Essay Prizes. We especially encourage proposals and submissions from Early Career Researchers, writers, artists, and translators. In this issue we are delighted to be able to showcase two brand-new translations by Stephen Komarnyckyj and Karólína Rós Ólafsdóttir. Stephen provides us with the first translation into English from Ukrainian of Lesya Ukrainka's prose piece, 'Your Letters Always Smell of Withered Roses' (composed around 1900 but unpublished in her lifetime), and Karólína introduces us to a little-known Icelandic goth poet, Davíð Stefánsson, whose poetry collection *Svartar Fjadrir* [*Black Feathers*] made a huge impact on its publication in 1919. If any publishers are interested in more translations of Ukrainka's and Stefánsson's work, please get in touch.

Finally, my personal thanks to the stellar *Volupté* team: Alice Condé, Jessica Gossling, and Robert Pruett-Vergara, who will see the journal into its new equinoctial form, and to Sasha Dovzhyk, Maura Dooley, and Richard Scott, who advised on translation matters. As always, and perhaps even more so in this troubled year, we wish our readers a soft summer.

Jane Desmarais
Editor-in-Chief
21 June 2022