

Fachbereich Englisch: An evening with storyteller Richard Martin and his tales

On a Wednesday evening in March, some students of the 12th and 13th classes together with Mrs Pröll and Mr von Pradzynski went to the Hubertussaal at Gostner's Hoftheater to listen to folk tales, which are hundreds or even thousands of years old, which storyteller Richard Martin has collected from all over the world to tell them to his audience.

When the light dims and it becomes silent in the theatre, Richard Martin is standing on stage by his speaker's desk with a candle on it and a pair of cymbals in his hands. He lights up the candle, rings the bells and then starts telling the first tale. It's a ritual and it makes everything even more exiting and atmospheric.

He is a very friendly and humorous person who has a strong voice and with this voice he draws in everybody's attention. The audience listens intently and the only thing you hear is his voice – that's how quiet it is.

Richard Martin narrates tales of love, the everlasting struggle between women and men, how to get happy and but also tales to make you think, for example, about a blonde politician and a pig. The one which I remember in particular is about mystic sea creatures, which seem to be seals but under the full moon come out to the beach, take off their seal skins and start dancing in the moonlight. A man living near the beach eyes them dancing there and is intrigued by one woman in particular. She is so beautiful that the next time they are dancing on the beach, the man secretly steals her sealskin. When the dancing people see the man, they put on their skins and run into the water, but the woman can't find hers so she has to stay outside. The man is very happy and marries the woman. He hides the skin so she can't go back into the water and stays with him. Years pass by and they have two children. And, wouldn't you know it: One day the kids find the hidden seal skin while playing. They bring it to their mother and when she sees it she puts it on immediately. She tells her husband and children that she can never be totally happy living outside the water and that she has to go back into the ocean and live there with *her* family. Then she runs into the water and vanishes, leaving her shocked family behind.

Richard Martin is a great storyteller who does his job with great passion and charisma. He takes you with him through his tales as if they were happening at that very same moment. And don't be afraid, there isn't a word anyone of us doesn't understand!