



2011

2011-12 Series - Convergence of Cultures

University Center for the Humanities

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**University Center
for the Humanities**

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Convergence of Cultures
2011-2012 Season



Welcome

Welcome to the new University Center for the Humanities. Members of the advisory board and I are grateful for your energy and ideas as we have worked to “Place the Humanities at the Center,” the theme of our pilot year. The Center is now open as a gathering place for meetings and talks as well as for informal conversation. We invite your participation in lectures, events, discussions, and work groups, that are all free and open to the public.

The theme for this year is “Convergence of Cultures,” and in this brochure you will find humanists from a variety of disciplines who will be speaking to us about the merging of people and ideas in the Americas, the Middle East, and around the world. The Center is partnering with colleges, schools, departments, programs, centers, organizations, and institutes across the University and the Kalamazoo community to foster new relationships and to stimulate intellectual and social connections around significant issues in the humanities.

The new space at 2500 Knauss Hall is open for your use, and the Center is open to your ideas.

Katherine Joslin
Founding Director



Who We Are

Katherine Joslin, Founding Director

Professor of English

Jason Aiello, Coordinator

Graduate student, Department of Comparative Religion

Advisory Board

Blain Auer (Comparative Religion), Peter Blickle (Foreign Languages), Lofton Durham (Theatre), Paul Farber (Teaching, Learning, and Educational Studies), Katherine Joslin, (English), Timothy Light (Comparative Religion/Professor Emeritus), Natalio Ohanna (Spanish), Michael Pritchard (Philosophy/Ethics Center), Joseph Reish (University Libraries), David Rudge (Biological Sciences/Mallinson Institute), and Mary-Louise Totton (Art).

In Memoriam

Catherine Julien, Distinguished Professor of History and Member of the Advisory Board of the University Center for the Humanities. She was hired in 1996 and was honored as the WMU Distinguished Faculty Scholar in 2004. As an archaeologist and ethnohistorian her scholarship focused on the cultures of South America that were in place before 1700. She was an expert on the Inca Empire, which was the largest pre-Columbian civilization in the Americas, including some 13 million people and stretching from what is now Ecuador to Chile. This year's theme honors Catherine Julien's work.

Mission and Goals

Mission of the Center

The mission of the Center is to recognize and support the humanities. As a gathering place for dialogue, the Center acts as an incubator for the exchange of ideas among faculty, emeriti, alumni, undergraduate and graduate students, and people in the wider community.

Goals of the Center

- Nurture an engaged academic and civic community
- Support faculty and student research and writing
- Foster collaborative and interdisciplinary work
- Sponsor lectures, conferences, workshops, and digitization projects
- Recruit, retain, and recognize humanists
- Enhance global understanding

“Hand”
Al Levergne



Convergence of Cultures 2011-2012 Season



Amanda Katherine Rath

Amanda Katherine Rath is a Fellow of the Department of Southeast Studies and Lecturer for the Curatorial Studies Program at Goethe University, Frankfurt. Her published works include articles on internationally known artists from Indonesia. She received her PhD in Art History from Cornell University and an MA in Asian Studies from the University of Hawaii.

“Improvisation Within Scenes of Constraint: Contemporary Art of Yogyakarta, Java, Indonesia”

September 22, 2011 5:30 p.m. 2008 James W. and Lois I. Richmond Center for Visual Arts

Amanda Katherine Rath will discuss the careers, works, and critical concepts of some of the most prominent and internationally recognized contemporary artists of Indonesia who live and work in the college town and cultural hub of Yogyakarta in Central Java, Indonesia. Her visit coordinates with the exhibition *Installation Arts: Indonesia*, curated by Mary-Louise Totton of the Gwen Frostic School of Art (September 7 - October 8, 2011).

Amanda Katherine Rath's visit is co-sponsored by the Haenicke Institute for International Studies and the College of Fine Arts.

David Carrasco

David Carrasco is the Neil L. Rudenstine Professor of the Study of Latin America, with a joint appointment in the Divinity School and in the Department of Anthropology in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences at Harvard University. He is a Mexican American historian of religions with a particular interest in religious dimensions in human experience, Mesoamerican cities as symbols, immigration, and the Mexican American borderlands. He holds a PhD from the University of Chicago.

“Borderlands and Cultural Encounters: Stories and Rhythms of Latin(o) American Lives”

October 27, 2011 4:00 p.m. 2008 Richmond Center

This multi-media presentation focuses on the cultural encounters between Spanish, Aztec and African peoples that formed the Mexican Americas. Using the perspective of the ‘borderlands’ as his interpretive lens, Carrasco will narrate stories of the ‘conquest of New Spain’, the bilingualism of La Malinche, the apparitions of the Virgin of Guadalupe at the indigenous site of Tepeyac, and the growing devotions for Dia de los Muertos in Latino cultures.

David Carrasco's visit is co-sponsored by the Departments of History, Comparative Religion, and Spanish, and the College of Arts and Sciences.



Richard Arum

Richard Arum is a professor in the Department of Sociology with a joint appointment in the Steinhardt School of Education at New York University. He is also director of the Education Research Program of the Social Science Research Council. He received a Masters of Education in Teaching and Curriculum from Harvard University, and a PhD. in Sociology from the University of California, Berkeley.

“Updated Findings on College Learning in the United States”

November 3, 2011 5:00 p.m. 2000 Schneider Hall

Extending the findings on the first two years of college in *Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses* (Chicago University Press, 2011), the lecture will present the analysis of the complete four years of student longitudinal data (Fall 2005-Spring 2009) and will also look at how these students are faring in the current U.S. economic crisis.

Richard Arum’s visit is co-sponsored by the Haworth College of Business, the Lee Honors College, the Office for Assessment and Undergraduate Studies, and the Office of the Provost.



Claudia Stevens

Claudia Stevens is nationally recognized as a performance artist, playwright and musician. Her creative work confronts issues of justice and the responsibility of the artist; the interconnections of gender, religion and science; and ethics and arts in the context of the Holocaust. She holds a DM from Boston University.

“Pigeon”: a Theatrical Performance and Discussion

November 8, 2011 7:00 p.m. Dalton Center LH

“Pigeon” is Claudia Stevens’ new monologue play-with-music and audience participation about the famed environmentalist, and champion of animal rights, Dame Miriam Rothschild. Set in 1984, the play depicts Rothschild with a group of visiting American students, sharing ideas with them as she prepares to give an important lecture, “Animals and Man,” at Oxford.

Claudia Stevens’ visit is co-sponsored by the Center for the Study of Ethics in Society, the College of Arts and Sciences, and the College of Fine Arts.



Jim Torczyner

Jim Torczyner is the founder of the McGill Middle East Program in Civil Society and Peace Building that is rooted in his innovative rights-based community practice model. He has served on the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council and the editorial board of the International Journal of Social Welfare and currently heads a four-country study of the Middle East. He has been honored with the Gold Medal of the Jordan Red Crescent and the Canadian Bureau of International Education Award. He holds a PhD from the University of California at Berkeley.

“Fifteen Years Creating Engaged Citizenry in the Middle East: Building Strong Communities in Jordan, Israel and Palestine through Rights Advocacy”

January 26, 2012 4:00 p.m. 2008 Richmond Center

Jim Torczyner will talk about the McGill Middle East Program in Civil Society and Peace Building and its emphasis on the empowerment of children, youth and women in processes that affect their lives. He will discuss the unlikely path to empowerment that MMEP has taken, and the power of partnership and solidarity in the struggle for social change.

Jim Torczyner’s visit is co-sponsored by the College of Health and Human Services, the College of Arts and Sciences, the Department of Foreign Languages, and the Haenicke Institute for International Studies.



Art Caplan

Art Caplan is the Emmanuel and Robert Hart Director of the Center for Bioethics and the Sidney D. Caplan Professor of Bioethics at the University of Pennsylvania. He is the author of numerous publications, appears frequently as a guest in the national and international media, and writes a column on bioethics for MSNBC.com. He holds a PhD in the history and philosophy of science and seven honorary degrees from colleges and medical schools.

“The Inevitability of Rationing and How to be Fair About It”

February 23, 2012 4:00 p.m. 2008 Richmond Center

Some argue that we can avoid rationing health care. Dr. Caplan will use demographics that prove this view is simply wrong, and will take up practical questions. If we must ration, how ought we do so? And if we do so, who should ration and what principles ought they to follow?

Art Caplan’s visit is co-sponsored by the School of Medicine, the College of Health and Human Services, the College of Fine Arts, and the Center for Ethics in Society.



Sonya Bernard-Hollins

Sonya Bernard-Hollins, a graduate of WMU, is a journalist and freelance writer for local, state and national newspapers and magazines such as *Black Enterprise*. She is the author of *Here I Stand: A Musical History of African Americans in Battle Creek, Michigan* and is the editor and publisher of *Community Voice*.

“Discovering Merze Tate: How to Uncover the Hidden Treasures in Your Archives and Bring them to Life”

March 22, 2012 4:00 p.m. University Center for the Humanities

Ms. Bernard-Hollins will talk about her search for information on African American graduates of WMU and how she discovered Merze Tate, a 1927 graduate of WMU and donor to the University. Her original sources research include archives in public and university libraries, private collections, media outlets and oral histories.

Merze Tate Exhibit

March 1-30, 2012 University Center for the Humanities

The Merze Tate exhibit consists of photographs, letters, and tickets that document her travels and accomplishments. MP3 players will be available with narration about Tate's life.



Jen Bervin

Jen Bervin's work brings together text and textile in a practice that encompasses artist books, poetry, large-scale art works, and archival research. Her books include *The Dickinson Composites* (Granary Books 2010), and her works are in the Getty Museum, Yale and Stanford Universities, Bibliothèque nationale de France, and the British Library.

“Small Infinities—Emily Dickinson's Manuscripts”

March 28, 2012 4:00 p.m. Meader Rare Book Room

Jen Bervin will focus on visual and verbal conjunctions in Dickinson's manuscripts and look at how they intersect with earlier formal gestures in her herbarium, embroidery sampler, letters, and editions of books that she read, marked or altered. Bervin's large-scale art works will be on exhibit at the Kalamazoo Book Arts Center, where she will read from her own poems on March 29, 2012, at 7 pm.

Jen Bervin's visit is co-sponsored by the Carol Ann Haenicke Collection of American Women's Poetry of Waldo Library, Friends of Waldo Library, the Women's Caucus, the Department of English, the Gwen Frostic Reading Series, and the Kalamazoo Book Arts Center. She is a WMU Visiting Scholar, nominated by Professor Nancy Eimers in the Department of English.



Other Events

The University Center for the Humanities is also providing funds and other support for:

Western Michigan University Medical Humanities Conference (Registration Required)

Director: Fritz Allhoff, Department of Philosophy.

Humanities for Everybody

Coordinator: Susan Hoffmann, Department of Political Science.

The Environmental Studies Gwen Frostic Speakers Series

Organizer: Denise Keele, Environmental Studies and Political Science.

Installation Arts: Indonesia

Curator: Mary-Louise Totton, Gwen Frostic School of Art

Fred Anderson, Visiting University Scholar

Coordinator: Sally Hadden, Department of History

Anne-Fausto Sterling, Visiting University Scholar

Coordinator: Bilinda Straight, Department of Anthropology

For more information about these
and other events, please visit:
www.wmich.edu/humanities

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University Center for the Humanites

Jen Bervin

March 28, 2012

4:00 p.m.

Meader Rare Book Room, Waldo Library



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University Center for the Humanities

Western Michigan University

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