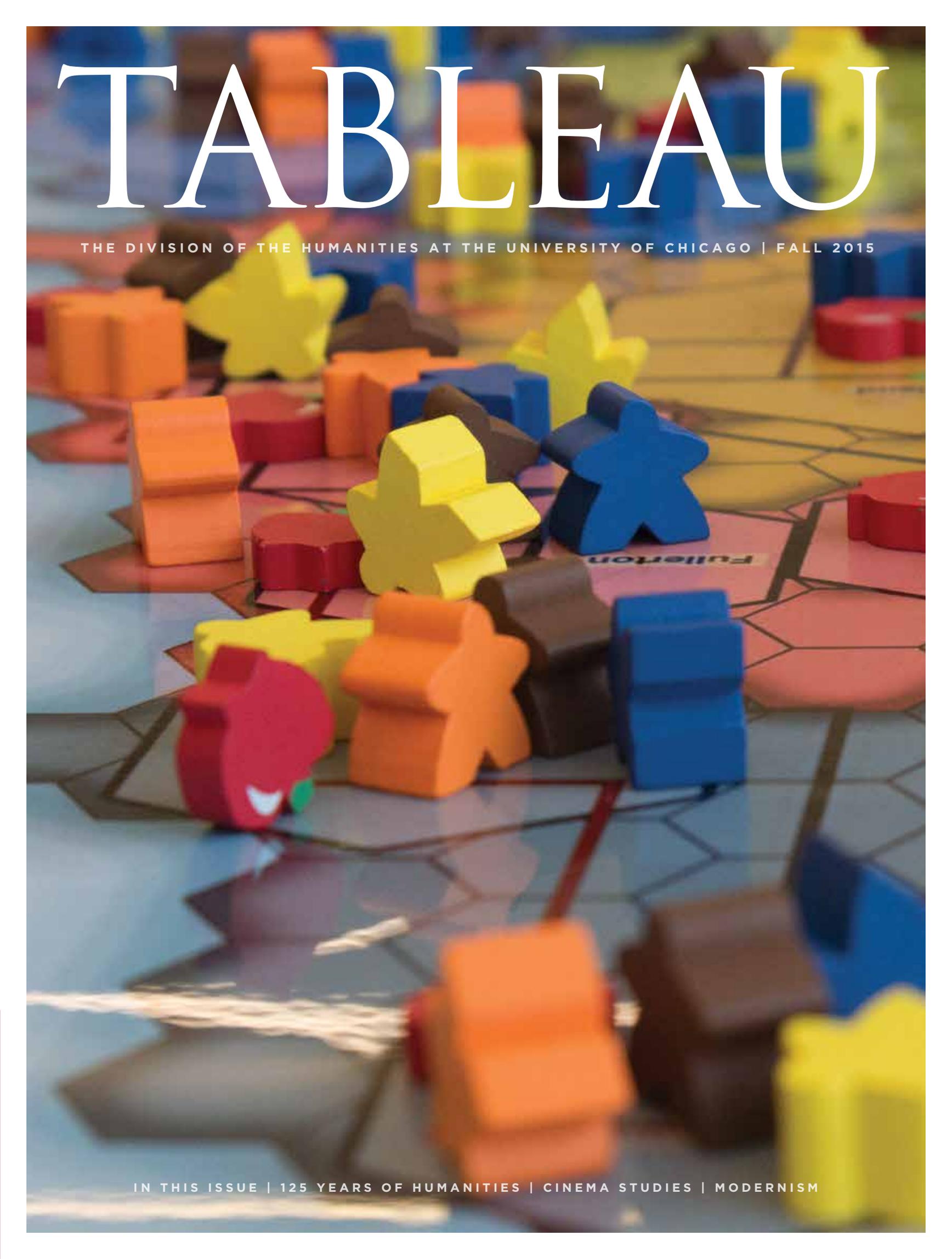


TABLEAU



THE DIVISION OF THE HUMANITIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO | FALL 2015

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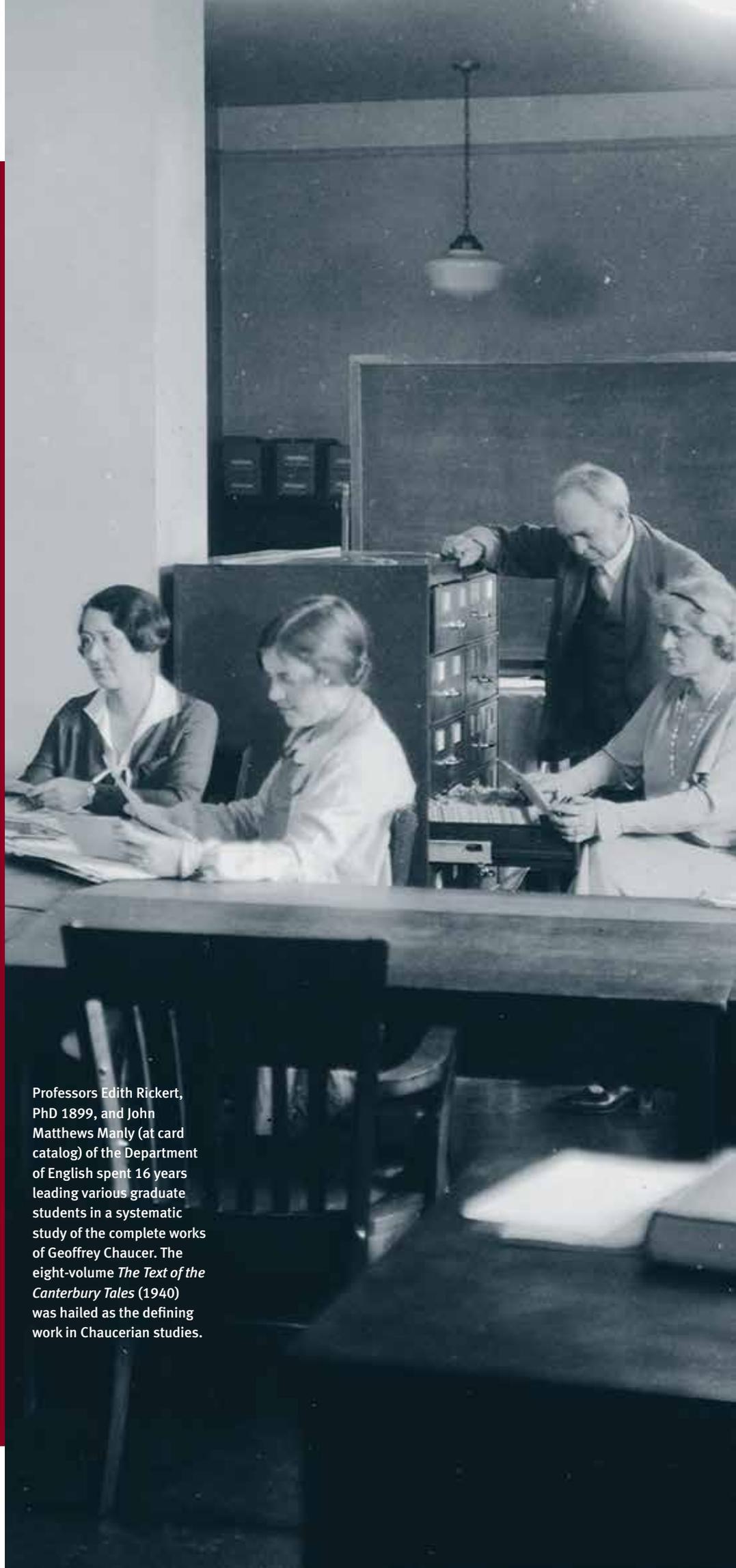
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Tableau (Fall 2015, Volume 17, Number 1) is published biannually by the Division of the Humanities at the University of Chicago for alumni and friends. Editor: Jeanie Chung. Contributing Editors: Sarah Yatzek Farrell, AB'01; Courtney C. W. Guerra, AB'05; Carl Nash, AM'02; Tom Popelka; Adrienne Renberg; Michelle Skinner. Proofreader: Rhonda L. Smith. Designers: Guido Mendez; Michael Vendiola. Contact: Division of the Humanities, 1115 East 58th Street, Chicago, IL, 60637, tableau.uchicago.edu.

ON THE COVER

Hexacago is a suite of board games designed by the Game Changer Chicago project. The game explores economic, environmental, and epidemiological issues rooted in Chicago, using the grid of hexagons to represent different regions and train lines. For more on two graduate students who helped develop Hexacago, see page 17.

Photography by Ashlyn Sparrow



Professors Edith Rickert, PhD 1899, and John Matthews Manly (at card catalog) of the Department of English spent 16 years leading various graduate students in a systematic study of the complete works of Geoffrey Chaucer. The eight-volume *The Text of the Canterbury Tales* (1940) was hailed as the defining work in Chaucerian studies.



Dear Alumni and Friends,

ON MY OFFICE SHELF sit 14 well-worn volumes of *Assyrian and Babylonian Letters*, a monumental work by the early UChicago professor of Assyriology Robert Francis Harper. Despite their age—the volumes were published between 1892 and 1914—Harper’s work remains an indispensable resource for anyone researching the history of the ancient Near East. My edition of *Assyrian and Babylonian Letters* is a cherished personal and professional link to this University.

We are all particularly conscious of our history this fall as the University observes its quasiquicentennial anniversary, marking 125 years of scholarship. In the Humanities, we celebrate this milestone by collecting works from the Division’s history that have transformed our fields. The fascinating result (p. 8) is a compendium of monographs, edited volumes, memoirs, compositions, sculptures, installations, translations, and more from the 1890s up to the present. The list only hints at our faculty’s legacy of important scholarship and creative work, and showcases some of the very best of our collective intellectual enterprise.

Although the list’s scholarly weight is impressive, we refuse to rest on our laurels at the University of Chicago. This fall we welcome 17 new faculty members in nine departments across the Division (p. 12). These scholars inherit our tradi-



Martha T. Roth

tion of excellence but are tasked with carving their own intellectual paths. For example, the field of Assyriology continues to be a strength for this University more than a century after R. F. Harper’s death in 1914. With the hires of new Assyriologists—along with new scholars in Latin American film, medieval Chinese architecture, Italian literature, and more—we demonstrate our continuing commitment to rigorous scholarship in fields old and new.

For most of my 35 years at UChicago I worked on the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary Project, building on the work of scholars like Harper. When the project began in 1921, it was anticipated to take ten years to complete. We finally finished in 2011. For the entire duration of the project, the volumes of the *Assyrian and Babylonian Letters* sat on the editor’s shelf as a reminder of our legacy and as a resource for further inquiry. So too the accomplishments of the University’s first 125 years have prepared us well for a future of excellence, innovation, and eminence in scholarship and teaching.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Martha T. Roth".

Martha T. Roth
Dean of the Division of the Humanities

FROM LEFT: PHOTO COURTESY UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO LIBRARY SPECIAL COLLECTIONS; PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROBERT KOZLOFF

FIRECRACKERS IN SEATS



Actor Alan Cumming drops by *In Conversation With...*, one of the programs Theresa Scandiffio (here and opposite page) coordinates for the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF).

A Cinema and Media Studies alum ignites the public's passion for film.

BY COURTNEY C. W. GUERRA, AB'05

WHY WOULD YOU LET STRANGERS film the most stressful experience of your life?

Theresa Scandiffio, PhD'08, loves to provoke questions like this. As director of adult learning for the Toronto International Film Festival's year-round home at the TIFF Bell Lightbox, Scandiffio brings cinema and visual culture to audiences within and beyond academia.

She often matches particular audiences with particular films, so when screening *Kings of Pastry*—a documentary about a grueling culinary competition—she invited aspiring pastry chefs and would-be documentarians. At the Q&A, one culinary student was aghast that the crew was granted access to such a high-stakes situation. Wouldn't they get in the way?

In response, director D. A. Pennebaker explained that his crew was restricted to a tiny corner of the kitchen for eight hours. "How in the heck," an incredulous film student asked, "can

you make a film under those conditions?"

Pennebaker put up both his arms, mimed a camera, and said simply: "Like this."

Scandiffio smiles as she recalls the aftermath of this exchange. "You could see the students thinking about this small gesture," she says, "and perhaps understanding how crucial hard work and mutual respect are [for creating] a successful project." Just as documentarians transform real life into art, Scandiffio's job is to curate moments like these, connecting cinema luminaries with a wider community and facilitating conversations across genres, disciplines, and even different professions. Her approach is informed by her time in the Department of Cinema and Media Studies (CMS), where her dissertation research explored the films displayed alongside exhibitions in the Field Museum of Natural History in the 1920s–30s. As she studied the museum's holdings in the context of the

You make connections, and you cross-pollinate all of these ideas and make something new.
—Theresa Scandiffio, PhD'08

world's fairs and turn-of-the-century presentation culture, she began considering how scholarly work could play out in a public institution instead of a university campus.

UChicago “had a really incredible array of symposia and public-intellectual kind of events, which would bring this huge cinematic energy to the campus—animating it as this playground,” she explains. Yet only a limited number of people could join in the fun. She felt grateful to work with “these very distinct, passionate scholars” as her dissertation advisers, a group that included CMS Professor **Jacqueline Stewart**, AM'93, PhD'99; **Yuri Tsivian**, the William H. Colvin Professor of Art History and CMS; and the late **Miriam Hansen**, the Ferdinand Schevill Distinguished Service Professor in CMS and English Language and Literature. Having watched her mentors recruit students to join “their army of cinephiles, of seeing the world in this delightfully playful and complex way,” she “started thinking about how film can be mobilized to educate audiences, can incite them into social action, can be really energizing and fun.” As the first person in her family to receive a graduate degree, she is eager to replicate her professors’ evangelical spirits on a much larger scale, rendering it accessible outside academia. This populist perspective motivates her current work.

Scandiffio’s purview at TIFF includes a diverse set of programs designed to capture an equally diverse audience. The *Kings of Pastry* screening was part of Higher Learning, a collaboration with 40 local colleges and universities—including culinary schools. In addition to attending free events and connecting with peers at other institutions, the students, instructors, and film industry professionals who participate have access to TIFF’s film reference library, which Scandiffio also manages. The events



cross disciplinary boundaries: a philosopher might lecture to a postproduction class; artists and practitioners might work with theorists.

TIFF’s more public programs are guided by the same principles of interdisciplinarity and collaborative learning. These subscription series cultivate a “very loyal, engaged audience that comes to everything we program,” Scandiffio says. The resulting camaraderie is meant to replicate the experience of a graduate school class: “You make connections, and you cross-pollinate all of these ideas and make something new.” For budding cinephiles interested in joining the cohort, individual tickets are available too.

Public programming is divided into subcategories that showcase the breadth of cinema’s potential: Books on Film (print/screen adaptations), Food on Film (which caters to both “cinephiles and foodies”), and Reel Talk (a Sunday-morning breakfast series where both the film and featured guests are kept secret until the audience arrives). TIFF’s Master Class events feature well-known filmmakers like David

Cronenberg, Tim Burton, and Guillermo del Toro—whose “expertise and generosity,” Scandiffio says, reminds her of another dissertation adviser, **Tom Gunning**, the Edwin A. and Betty L. Bergman Distinguished Service Professor in Cinema and Media Studies and Art History. Both figures exude a spirit of “curiosity and discovery,” she says, and a personal warmth that accompanies their extensive filmmaking knowledge.

Scandiffio, who believes deeply in TIFF’s mission to “transform the way people see the world through film,” loves the discussions that follow these presentations. Given the events’ varied audiences, there’s often a productive tension between different “camps”—some might be curious about a film’s historical background, for example, while others are more interested in the story, and still others want to learn about its real-world implications. But Scandiffio’s guests harness that plurality of perspectives and find educational opportunities within it.

When *Orange Is the New Black* actress and transgender activist Laverne Cox gave a presentation for TIFF’s In Conversation With... series, “the buzz was palpable,” Scandiffio says. The room collectively came to a new understanding of the human rights issues surrounding gender identity and how they could individually contribute to a broader cause. “The impact of that conversation,” she says, “has the power to grow once it spreads from the cinema and into households, offices, political and social movements.”

During her PhD, Scandiffio studied the Soviet filmmaker and theorist Sergei Eisenstein, whose work offers an apt metaphor for her programming ethos at TIFF. “He used to talk about putting firecrackers under the audiences’ seats to get them excited, and I always think of what our guests can do to incite that kind of energy and excitement.” Done correctly, the effects can indeed be transformative. “If it’s learning more about film and visual culture and the appreciation for the arts, amazing,” she says. “But if there also can be a layer of social justice or some kind of political action, then I feel like we’ve really succeeded.” ■

SEE THERESA SCANDIFFIO’S FILM RECOMMENDATIONS at tableau.uchicago.edu/scandiffio.

WORDS FOR NUMBERS

Four Humanities alumni explain how they forged careers in finance.



BY CARRIE GOLUS, AB'91, AM'93,
AND JEANIE CHUNG

Donald Chae, AM'00, PhD'03, a senior vice president of enterprise productivity at Northern Trust in Chicago, studied music history at UChicago after earning an undergraduate degree in music performance.

How did you get from music history to banking enterprises?

My first several years in graduate school were among the happiest of my life, but at some point I started to question if a life in academia was actually what I wanted to do. My goal was ultimately to move into arts administration. So I said, how can I get a little bit of business experience to complement my background in the arts?

There are a couple of business firms that recruit PhDs; the two best known are McKinsey & Company and the Boston Consulting Group. BCG gave me an offer, and I was really impressed with the people there. I found, to my amazement, that BCG had a spirit of inquiry and curiosity, of thinking outside of the box. I thought it had a real kinship with the University of Chicago. I stayed there four years and did end up with Chicago Symphony Orchestra for a while, then went back to BCG, and now have been at Northern Trust for four years.

Do you use your humanities background in your job?

Everybody needs to learn how to think rationally and construct arguments and marshal data in support of those, and the humanities is wonderful training for that. The humanities really puts an emphasis on the clarity of thought and logic and the ability needed to communicate, and that really is a natural part of certain areas of the business world.

◀ **Breahna Wilson**, AM'13, studied economics as an undergrad and then enrolled in MAPH, where she focused on cultural policy. She works at Laird Norton, a wealth management firm in Seattle.

How did you end up in MAPH?

I was conflicted after I graduated from college. I didn't know if I wanted to further my economics career or do more work in humanities. The MAPH program gave me the resources and time to figure out how to fuse the two.

Do you use your humanities background in your job?

I really lean on the critical analysis portion of my humanities degree. Our clients are people. They have a past, they have a present, they have somewhere that they want to go. Every story is different, and we have to tailor our services to their needs.

FROM LEFT: PHOTOGRAPHY BY FUTOSHI KOBAYASHI; PHOTOGRAPHY BY BILLY HAYES; PHOTO COURTESY MARK MAFFETT

I'm constantly reading between the lines. Other colleagues have struggled with that, and we've lost clients because of it.

Would you recommend your career path to other humanities grads?

I absolutely would. If you're the type of person who is analytical in any way, wealth management can be a great career path. It's very similar to teaching—your clients are basically students. It's not so economics driven as most people think it is.



Samarth Chandra, AB'02, AM'02, MBA'09, vice president at Enhanced Equity Funds in New York, enrolled in MAPH as a fourth-year undergrad majoring in the history, philosophy, and social studies of science and medicine, finishing the year with both degrees; he later returned to UChicago to study analytic finance.

What was your academic focus as an undergrad/MAPH student?

The sociobiology of religion. In my thesis I argued that religious systems promoted a more efficient social structure, helping us live better, longer lives, and therefore we would select into religious systems. It was a very rich subject.

Do you use your humanities background in your job?

Absolutely. The humanities promotes a holistic style of thinking. I'm able to approach any busi-



Mark Maffett, AM'07, an assistant professor of accounting at Chicago Booth, holds undergraduate degrees in analytical finance and accounting and a PhD in accounting.

Your CV is all about accounting and finance, except for your time in MAPH.

It was something I wanted to do, perhaps for more personal than professional reasons. I'd always been interested in philosophy and German literature. I wanted to be able to read more intelligently.

Do you use your humanities background in your job?

In thinking about how institutions and organizations are shaped, a lot of the ideas from critical theory are relevant. Marx obviously is directly relevant. But even Freud is relevant in thinking about how institutions work.

Can you do right-brain and left-brain work equally well?

I'm actually better at the humanities side than the mathematics side—maybe because my benchmark is off, because I'm comparing myself to the average person around here. I wouldn't say I'm particularly gifted at mathematics relative to the

ness decision or problem from a standpoint of context. How did we get here? What are the implications of that history on where we are now?

There's a degree of emotional intelligence that you pick up as well. So much of what we do in my current job is problem solving. I approach that in a different way than my colleagues who have had strictly finance or economics training.

In MAPH you have to be able to champion your ideas. You have to be thesis driven and a clear thinker. All of those things have benefited me incredibly.

If you can read Hegel,
you can work out the math.
—Chicago Booth assistant professor
Mark Maffett, AM'07

Would you recommend your career path?

If you have an interest in the business world, it's something I would absolutely encourage, but you're going to need to get training. After the financial crisis in 2002, recruiting changed. When I was interviewing at Lazard for my first job out of college, they valued a diverse educational background. They were just looking for smart, capable people. That's been, fortunately or unfortunately, refined more these days.

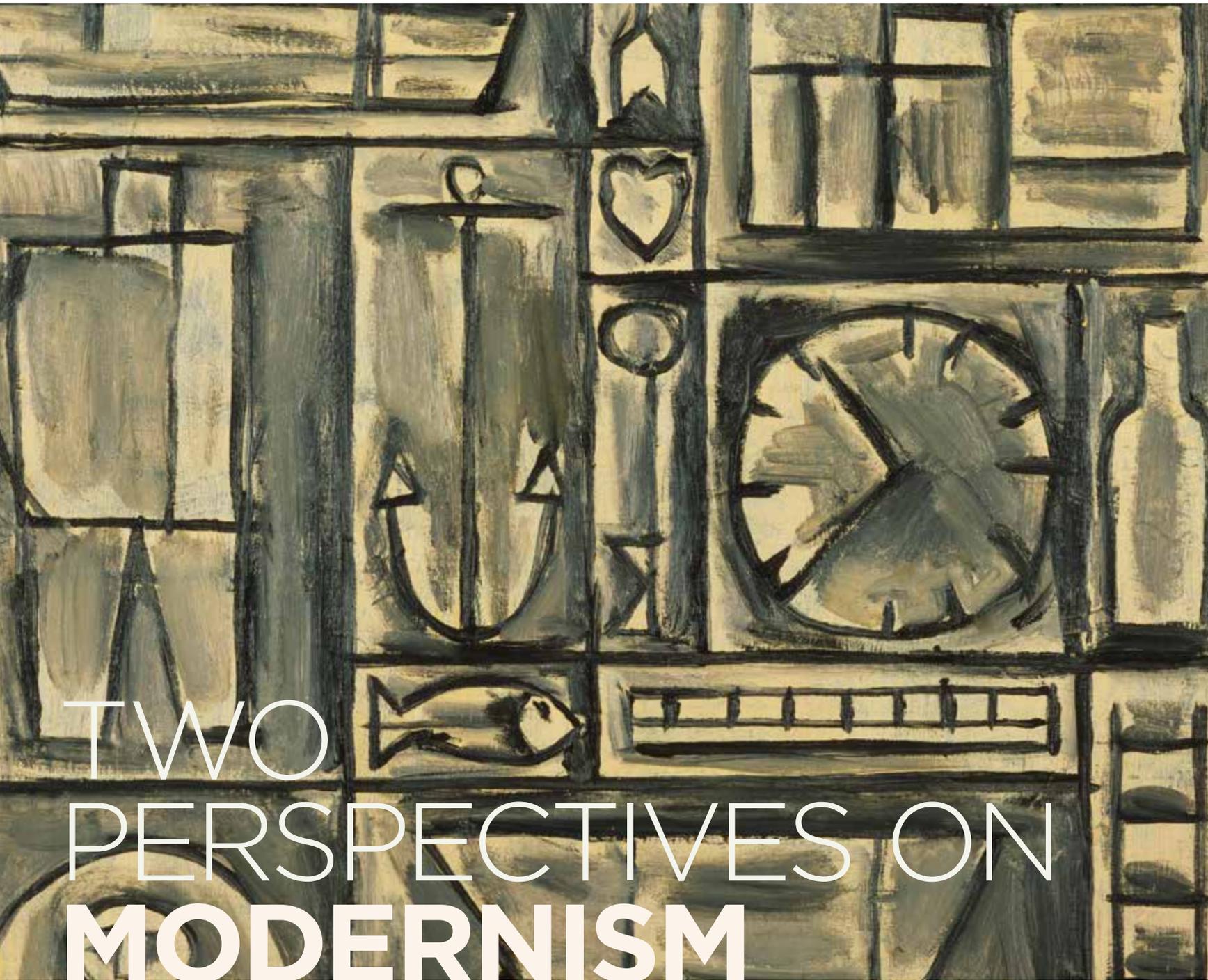
people I interact with on daily basis.

I spend maybe 70 percent of my time writing. We work in teams, so when it divides up, my comparative advantage is on the writing end.

Any specific dos and don'ts?

Don't be afraid of the math. Not everyone who's successful in economics research is a gifted mathematician. If you can read Hegel, you can work out the math. ■

READ MORE FROM ALUMNI IN FINANCE at tableau.uchicago.edu/finance.



TWO PERSPECTIVES ON MODERNISM

Above: One artist Megan Sullivan has studied is Uruguayan Joaquín Torres-García, one of the first abstract artists in Latin America, who created Mondrian-like grids filled with symbols inspired by ancient art, as in this piece: Composition (1931).

AS TOLD TO JEANIE CHUNG

Beginning as a reaction to the growing industrialization of Europe, the modernist movement started in the nineteenth century, primarily in Paris, and spread over decades, disciplines, and continents. English graduate student **Rachel Kyne** and art historian **Megan Sullivan** discuss their particular corners of modernist scholarship and how they relate to others in the field.



Rachel Kyne is a PhD candidate in English Language and Literature. Her dissertation is “Stuck in Time: Modernist Momentums.”

One thing that’s difficult about teaching modernism is that it’s a collection of movements, an assortment of figures and ideas that are radically contradictory and different from each other a lot of the time: dramatically different formal styles from short, compressed poems to long, stream-of-consciousness novels. We say there are certain central characteristics: an obsession with time, an interest in formal experimentation, an obsession with technology, or a fascination with the changing circumstances of everyday life, but in a nonrealist mode. It makes sense once you know how it works, but otherwise it can sound very vague.

For example, I’m involved in a campus working group on modernism, which has been awesome in creating a space where people from wildly different disciplines, with startlingly different ideas of what modernism is, can talk about it. Some of the most regular participants have been from the Music Department, and they have a chronology and a way of writing cultural history by which modernism still hasn’t ended. For them modernism is an open question, whereas in literature, as early as the 1960s people were saying modernism was over.

In my research, I’m looking at long duration and continuity in time without a future: continuation without progress, I call it. Avant-gardes in the 1910s were obsessed with speed, futurity, compression, a kind of revolutionary thrusting of oneself into the future. Then came World War I and the war of the trenches, which was so unprecedented and so unexpected. They really thought that the First World War would be over in four months—at most—and literally everything just bogged down. All these dreams of the future went on hold.

I became interested in World War I as a narrative problem: How do you communicate something where you don’t have a narrative arc, where there’s no climax? How does modernism continue to develop and thrive as an ideology after World War I—and how does it deal with this historical imposition of prolonged waiting and prolonged cultural stasis while people sat in this stalemate and millions of people died?

I begin with Ford Madox Ford, because he was one of the only writers central to the prewar modernist movement to go to the war and come back. And I end with Samuel Beckett, who’s called by some “the last modernist.”

One premise of my work is that modernism has defined itself and sold itself and been treated in criticism as if people arrived and developed cubism all in a flash, for example, when in reality it’s years and years of slow, gradual change.

There are so many resonances with our own moment, because now people say, “I can’t believe how quickly everything’s changing,” and yet people also feel stuck, especially people in my generation. You look at something like the Great Recession. How do people live that sense of waiting for their life to begin? ■



Megan Sullivan is an assistant professor in Art History. Her book in progress is “Universality and Belonging: Abstract Art in South America, 1934–1964.”

What I find so interesting about looking at modern art from Latin America is that it often reveals neglected aspects of a bigger system. It can bring to light things that underpin modernism in Europe that we don’t always focus on: colonialism and postcolonialism, or the nature of the connections between modern art and social modernity.

Modernism in Europe has a relationship to nineteenth-century industrialization, but in the early twentieth century we really don’t have an industrialized Latin America at all. So what do these forms do or mean when you don’t have a certain social or technological grounding for them? How do they change? How do formal innovations function in societies that sometimes still have pockets of feudal relationships of production?

Those are the questions that get me the most excited. My current research deals with Latin American artists who adopted forms of abstract painting that they encountered in Europe. We have to acknowledge that many modernist developments came from Europe, but then they land in a place that has a really different social structure and a different set of meanings. For example, the first chapter of my book is about a group of artists in Argentina in the 1940s, the *Asociación Arte Concreto-Invencción*, who are trying to counter Juan Perón’s nationalist rhetoric with a Marxist idea of an international proletariat, and wanting to think about universality in art via this idea of class.

For them, even if it seems counterintuitive, the most real art was abstraction, because when you have a picture where paint is pretending to be trees and grass and sky, that’s an illusion. They said what you can touch and what you see should be exactly the same. It sounds a bit naïve now, but they wanted to create this art free of illusion that would wake people up to the real economic conditions of their world.

There was a moment when people paid so little attention to modernism outside of Europe that one felt the need to simply be an advocate. Now there’s more and more acceptance of the importance of thinking of modern and contemporary art as global phenomena, which has allowed the scholarship to become more nuanced.

Undergraduates often don’t have the same baggage and prejudices, especially students who haven’t studied much modern art. They’re much more open to Latin American modernism and thinking how it functions, and sometimes I realize that I push too hard on the European comparisons, like, “We can’t think about this unless we know Picasso.”

Maybe this is an indication of a general shift: a generation a little younger than I am not questioning as much whether Latin America could really have modern art. They engage with it on its own terms, which is exciting for me, and I think it’s going to keep affecting the way my teaching evolves. ■

FIND RECOMMENDED READINGS AND ARTISTS at tableau.uchicago.edu/modernism.

There are many ways to write the history of the University of Chicago. In celebration of the University's 125th anniversary, *Tableau* has compiled a timeline of notable works created by Humanities faculty members from the 1890s through the present.



- 1892 Assyrian and Babylonian Letters Robert Francis Harper
- 1894 Constitutions of Argentina and Brazil Elizabeth Wallace
- 1899 The School and Society John Dewey
- 1900 The Web of Life Robert Herrick
- 1903 Masterpieces in Latin Literature Gordon J. Laing
- 1905 A History of Egypt James Henry Breasted
- 1914 Chez Nous Henri Charles-Édouard David
- 1914 Songs and Poems Martin Schütze
- 1915 The Higher Individualism Edward Scribner Ames
- 1918 The Russian Revolution Samuel Harper, AB 1902
- 1921-2011 The Chicago Assyrian Dictionary Project Multiple Authors
- 1922 The Fountain of Time Lorado Taft

ROBERT FRANCIS HARPER

**ASSYRIAN AND BABYLONIAN LETTERS
(UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS, 1892-1914)**

“As Harper’s volumes began to come out, philologists began a halting process of working out the differences between Assyrian and Babylonian dialects. Historians drew at once on the letters in Babylonian dialect, but the documents in Assyrian dialect began to come into real focus only after the 1970s, and only in the last 30 years has a reliable comprehensive translation been possible. What specialists call ‘the Harper letters’ are still bearing fruit for scholars and readers.”

—Matthew W. Stolper, John A. Wilson Professor Emeritus in the Oriental Institute and Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations.

JOSHUA TAYLOR

**LEARNING TO LOOK: A HANDBOOK FOR THE VISUAL ARTS
(UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS, 1957)**

“Learning to look: that is still the most important thing we teach to nearly 1,000 college students in arts Core classes—how to see what is in front of you, how to translate it into words that do justice to that visual sensation, and how thus to lay the groundwork for discovering the visual, material, and historical intelligence posited by works of art.”

—Christine Mehring, Professor and Chair, Art History

125 YEARS OF THE HUM

1890 1900 1910 1920

COMPILED BY JULIANNA JOYCE, AM’15,
AND MICHELLE SKINNER

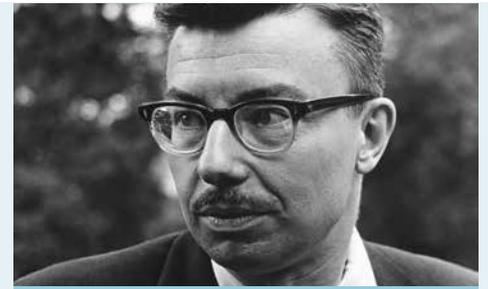


WAYNE BOOTH

THE RHETORIC OF FICTION **(UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS, 1961)**

“The single most important American contribution to narrative theory—a book that continues to be read, taught, and fought about.”

—Bill Brown, Karla Scherer Distinguished Service Professor of American Culture, English Language and Literature, and Visual Arts



MARSHALL G. S. HODGSON, PHD'51

THE VENTURE OF ISLAM **(UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS, 1974)**

“Marshall Hodgson introduced the Islamic Civilization course at the University of Chicago 60 years ago. Since, in his view, there was then no appropriate textbook for his new course, he began to develop a ‘handbook’ for the students. Forty years later, *The Venture* is still used in some sections of Islamic Civilization and its ideas and concepts continue to inform the teaching of Islamic studies here and in many other academic venues.”

—John Woods, Professor, History and Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations

- 1923 *The Enjoyment and the Use of Color* Walter Sargent
- 1924 *Epigraphic Survey* Multiple Authors
- 1927 *The Changing College* Ernest Hatch Wilkins
- 1928 *The Administration of Justice from Homer to Aristotle* Gertrude Smith & Robert J. Bronner, AB 1906, AM'17, PhD'21
- 1929 *Some American Humorists* Napier Wilt, AM'21, PhD'23
- 1932 *The Philosophy of the Present* George Herbert Mead
- 1933 *Language* Leonard Bloomfield
- 1935 *Chinese Calligraphy* Lucy Driscoll, AB 1908, AM 1909
- 1935 *Classic American Graffiti* Allen Walker Read
- 1935 *The Bible* Edgar Johnson Goodspeed, PhD 1898
- 1936 *The Birth of China* Herrlee G. Creel, PhB'26, AM'27, PhD'29
- 1937 *A History of Chicago* Bessie Louise Pierce, AM'18
- 1938 *Our Town* Thornton N. Wilder
- 1940 *The Text of the Canterbury Tales* John Mathews Manly & Edith Rickert, PhD 1899
- 1942 *The Babylonian Genesis* Alexander Heidel, PhD'36
- 1946 *Signs, Language, and Behavior* Charles Morris, PhD'25
- 1946 *The Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man* Multiple Authors
- 1946 *Two Queens of Baghdad* Nabia Abbott
- 1948 *Dreadful Freedom* Marjorie Grene
- 1948 *Prehistoric Men* Robert Braidwood
- 1948 *Spanish-English Dictionary* Carlos Castillo, PhD'23
- 1949 *A Dictionary of Select Synonyms* Carl Darling Buck
- 1950 *Logical Foundations of Probability* Rudolph Carnap
- 1951 *Arrest and Movement* Henriette Groenewegen-Frankfort
- 1952 *Critics and Criticism* Multiple Authors
- 1953 *The Languages of Criticism and the Structure of Poetry* Ronald S. Crane
- 1954 *Thought, Action, and Passion* Richard McKeon
- 1955 *Representative Government in Greek and Roman History* J. A. O. Larsen
- 1956 *Emotion and Meaning in Music* Leonard Meyer, PhD'54
- 1956 *The Gothic Cathedral* Otto Georg von Simson
- 1956 *The Ruodlieb and Tradition* Helena Margaret Gamer
- 1957 *Learning to Look* Joshua C. Taylor
- 1958 *The Human Condition* Hannah Arendt
- 1960 *What Happens in Literature* Edward W. Rosenheim Jr, AB'39, AM'46, PhD'53
- 1961 *Fountains of Florentine Sculptors and Their Followers* Bertha H. Wiles
- 1961 *The Rhetoric of Fiction* Wayne C. Booth, AM'47, PhD'50
- 1961 *A History of Literary Criticism in the Italian Renaissance* Bernard Weinberg, PhB'30, PhD'36
- 1963 *Collected Poems* Elder Olson, AB'34, AM'35, PhD'38
- 1963 *Les Romans de Robbe-Grillet* Bruce Morrisette
- 1964 *Ancient Mesopotamia* A. Leo Oppenheim
- 1964 *Fiction and the Shape of Belief* Sheldon Sacks, PhD'60
- 1965 *Painting in Britain* Margaret Rickert, AM'33, PhD'38
- 1967 *Earth, Water, Sky* Ruth Duckworth
- 1968 *Monuments of Renaissance Music* Edward Lowinsky
- 1970 *Reflexiones sobre la estructura narrativa* Francisco Ayala
- 1973 *Speaking of Siva* A. K. Ramanujan
- 1973 *Some Words of Jane Austen* Stuart M. Tave
- 1974 *The Venture of Islam* Marshall Hodgson, PhD'51



ANITIES

1930

1940

1950

1960

1970

- 1975 Nature and Culture in the Iliad James M. Redfield, LAB'50, AB'54, PhD'61
- 1976 Defining a Linguistic Area Colin Masica, PhD'71
- 1976 A River Runs through It Norman Maclean, PhD'40
- 1977 The Grammatical Categories of the Macedonian Indicative Victor A. Friedman, LAB'66, AM'71, PhD'75
- 1978 Reason and Morality Alan Gewirth
- 1978 The Treasures of Darkness Thorkild Jacobsen, PhD'29
- 1978 Tolstoy's Major Fiction Edward Wasiolek
- 1978 The Value of the Individual Karl Weintraub, AB'49, AM'52, PhD'57
- 1980 Essays on Actions and Events Donald Davidson
- 1980 The Drawings of Giovanni Antonio Da Pordenone Charles E. Cohen
- 1980 "Picturing Vision" Joel Snyder, SB'61
- 1980 The Complete Works of Shakespeare David Bevington
- 1981 Heartland of Cities Robert McC. Adams, PhB'47, AM'52, PhD'56
- 1981 Eugenio Montale Rebecca J. West
- 1982 ARTFL Robert Morrissey, PhD'82
- 1983 Journey to the West Anthony C. Yu, PhD'69
- 1987 Herodotus, the History David Grene
- 1987 Iconology W. J. T. Mitchell
- 1988 The Syntactic Phenomena of English James D. McCawley, SM'58
- 1989 The Reverend Jim Jones John Eaton
- 1989 Professing Literature Gerald Graff, AB'59
- 1990 Autosegmental and Metrical Phonology John A. Goldsmith
- 1990 Before Novels J. Paul Hunter
- 1990 Concerto for Cello, Piano, and String Orchestra Ralph Shapey
- 1990 Symphony Shulamit Ran
- 1991 Autolexical Syntax Jerrold M. Sadock
- 1991 The Gothic Idol Michael Camille
- 1991 Babel and Babylon Miriam Hansen
- 1991 In the Realm of a Dying Emperor Norma Field
- 1992 Sources of Western Zhou History Edward Shaughnessy
- 1992 The Origins of the Slavs Zbigniew Golab
- 1993 Freud, Race, and Gender Sander L. Gilman
- 1993 The Plum in the Golden Vase David T. Roy
- 1994 The Works of Gioachino Rossini Philip Gossett
- 1994 Hot Property Françoise Meltzer
- 1994 Early Cinema in Russia and Its Cultural Reception Yuri Tsvian
- 1995 Who Wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls? Norman Golb
- 1997 Idealism as Modernism Robert B. Pippin
- 1998 Nirvana and Other Buddhist Felicities Steven Collins
- 1998 England in 1819 James Chandler, AM'72, PhD'78
- 2000 Letter to the Sun Marta Ptaszynska
- 2000 Provincializing Europe Dipesh Chakrabarty
- 2000 Sex and Social Justice Martha Nussbaum
- 2000 The Films of Fritz Lang Tom Gunning
- 2000 The World of Prometheus Danielle Allen



SHULAMIT RAN

SYMPHONY
(THOMAS PRESSER, 1990)

"Her music is like her. It's very kind. It's extremely generous. It's emotional and heartfelt and passionate, and that's exactly also how I would describe her."

—Augusta Read Thomas, University Professor of Composition, Music

1970

1980

1990

2000

MIRIAM HANSEN

BABEL AND BABYLON: SPECTATORSHIP IN AMERICAN SILENT FILM **(HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1991)**

“She was in the first generation of scholars to see film viewing as a historically defined and shaped activity, but took this insight in new directions. Like few other books, *Babel and Babylon* does it all: merging original archival research, ambitious and challenging theoretical explanations, and breathtaking formal analysis. A committed politics of liberation runs throughout.”

—Daniel Morgan, PhD’07, Associate Professor, Cinema and Media Studies

- 2001 *The Syntax of Silence* Jason Merchant
- 2001 *Ideology in Cold Blood* Shadi Bartsch-Zimmer
- 2001 *Ancient Greek Love Magic* Chris Faraone
- 2001 *On the Psychotheology of Everyday Life* Eric Santner
- 2001 *The Daring of Derzhavin* Anna Lisa Crone
- 2001 *The Emergence of Sexuality* Arnold I. Davidson
- 2001 *The Ecology of Language Evolution* Salikoko Mufwene, PhD’79
- 2002 *Guillaume de Machaut and Reims* Anne Walters Robertson
- 2002 *Elizabeth I* Janel Mueller
- 2002 *Hellenicity* Jonathan M. Hall
- 2002 *Overcome by Modernity* Harry Harootunian
- 2002 *Toasts with the Inca* Thomas B. F. Cummins
- 2002 *Reasonably Vicious* Candace Vogler
- 2003 *A Sense of Things* Bill Brown
- 2004 *Post-Imperial Brecht* Loren Kruger
- 2004 *Pornography, the Theory* Frances Ferguson
- 2005 *Freud* Jonathan Lear
- 2005 *A New History of German Literature* David Wellbery
- 2006 *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men* Sheldon Pollock
- 2006 *A Spectacular Secret* Jacqueline Goldsby
- 2007 *Echo Objects* Barbara Stafford, PhD’72
- 2007 *Indo-Persian Travels in the Age of Discovery* Muzaffar Alam
- 2007 *Opera and Sovereignty* Martha Feldman
- 2007 *Re-engineering Philosophy for Limited Beings* William S. Wimsatt
- 2007 *How to See a Work of Art in Total Darkness* Darby English
- 2009 *Jewish Cabaret in Exile* Philip V. Bohlman
- 2009 *The Hindus* Wendy Doniger
- 2010 *Unsettling Opera* David Levin
- 2010 *Muhammad and the Believers* Fred Donner
- 2011 *Cruel Optimism* Lauren Berlant
- 2011 *What Was African American Literature?* Kenneth Warren
- 2011 *The Shock of the Ancient* Larry F. Norman
- 2011 *The Unrepentant Renaissance* Richard Strier
- 2011 *Law, Language, and Empire in the Roman Tradition* Clifford Ando
- 2012 *Resounding Earth* Augusta Read Thomas
- 2012 *Don Quixote Among the Saracens* Frederick A. de Armas
- 2012 *Art and Archaeology of the Greek World* Richard Neer
- 2013 *The Landscape Painting of China* Harrie A. Vanderstappen, AM’51, PhD’55
- 2013 *The Matter and Form of Maimonides’ Guide* Josef Stern
- 2013 *The Lives of the Novel* Thomas Pavel
- 2014 *Singing Jeremiah* Robert L. Kendrick
- 2014 *The Work of Music Theory* Thomas Christensen
- 2014 *Elegy for Theory* David Rodowick
- 2014 *Montaigne* Phillippe Desan



JACQUELINE GOLDSBY

A SPECTACULAR SECRET **(UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS, 2006)**

“*A Spectacular Secret* reveals a horror within the American experience that in some sense already lay in plain sight in newspapers, postcards, handbills, and the like—namely, the brutal lynching of hundreds of black Americans to establish and maintain a racially unequal society. Goldsby’s book, however, does more than decry what cannot be defended. Rather, she shows how the challenge to come to terms with or to avoid acknowledging this routine horror of the Jim Crow era has shaped the imagination of key American writers.”

—Kenneth Warren, Fairfax M. Cone Distinguished Service Professor, English Language and Literature

2010

Edgar Garcia, Rachel Galvin, and Salomé Aguilera Skvirsky come to the University as the result of a coordinated search between English and Cinema and Media Studies.



NEW FACULTY

FALL 2015



PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOHN ZICH

LARISSA BREWER-GARCÍA, Assistant Professor in Romance Languages and Literatures, studies early modern culture in Latin America, the Caribbean, and other areas of the African diaspora. Her dissertation, “Beyond Babel: Translations of Blackness in Colonial Peru and New Granada,” examines the influence of translation on the representation of black men and women in Spanish American colonial writings. Her BA is from Columbia University, and her MA and PhD are from the University of Pennsylvania. She spent the previous two years at Princeton, where she held the Cotsen postdoctoral fellowship in race and ethnicity studies.

DARBY ENGLISH, an expert in modern and contemporary art, returns to UChicago after serving as the Starr Director of the Clark Art Institute’s Research and Academic Program. His BA is from Williams College, while his MA and PhD are from the University of Rochester. In addition to his role as the University’s Carl Darling Buck Professor in Art History, he will continue to work as consulting curator for the Department of Painting and Sculpture at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City. He is the author of *How to See a Work of Art in Total Darkness* (2007) and his second monograph, *1971: A Year in the Life of Color*, is forthcoming in 2016.

LEAH FELDMAN joins the Comparative Literature faculty as Assistant Professor after a yearlong fellowship at the Institute for Advanced Study at Central European University in Budapest, Hungary. She completed her PhD at the University of California, Los Angeles, and received a Fulbright fellowship to conduct research in Azerbaijan for her dissertation, “On the Threshold of Eurasia: Intersecting Discourses of Empire and Identity in the Literature of the Russian Empire.” Her BA is from the University of Texas at Austin.

ARIEL FOX, Assistant Professor in East Asian Languages and Civilizations, is a scholar of late imperial China whose work explores the way seventeenth-century literature gave rise to a new economic imagination both local and global in scope. Her dissertation, “Southern Capital: Staging Commerce in Seventeenth-Century Suzhou,” laid the foundation for her current book project, “Commercial Acts: Money, Merchants, and Markets in Late Imperial Chinese Drama.” In addition to her BA studies at Columbia University and PhD from Harvard, she also held yearlong Fulbright fellowships at Peking University and Academia Sinica.

RACHEL GALVIN is a specialist in twentieth- and twenty-first-century poetry of the Americas, as well as a poet and literary translator. She joins English Language and Literature as Assistant Professor after a Mellon postdoctoral fellowship at Johns Hopkins and an NEH/Mellon fellowship at the Newberry Library. She received her PhD from Princeton, where she won the Sidonie Clauss Memorial Dissertation Prize. Her first monograph, *Poetry and the Press in Wartime (1936–1945)*, is under review; her next project is titled “Hemispheric Poetics.” She coedited the essay collection *Auden at Work* (2015), and her translation of Raymond Queneau’s *Hitting the Streets* won the 2014 Scott Moncrieff Prize.

DIASPORIC DIALOGUE

This year the Departments of English Language and Literature and Cinema and Media Studies collaborated to recruit junior faculty members focused on Latino literary and media studies, introducing a new range of research interests to both departments. In English, **Rachel Galvin** traces the assimilation of poetic forms across geographical and cultural boundaries, while **Edgar Garcia**, a postdoc and future Neubauer Family Assistant Professor, examines the overlap between Latino literature and Native American interpretations of texts, particularly nonverbal elements such as pictograms and textual performance.

Frances Ferguson, the Ann L. and Lawrence B. Buitenen Professor and Chair of English, said Galvin’s and Garcia’s work addresses literary forms that “both reflect and alter our sense of geography,” and that they both “speak to the strong current interest in thinking about literature as a phenomenon that shifts our ideas of nations and historical eras.”

Jim Chandler, AM’72, PhD’78, the Barbara E. and Richard J. Franke Distinguished Service Professor in English and chair of CMS, oversaw the English search and coordinated with the cinema search committee “in hopes that the recruitment chances would be mutually enhanced.” He was thrilled that this coordination also brought assistant professor **Salomé Aguilera Skvirsky**, an expert in Latin American cinema, documentary, ethnographic film, and migration studies.

The scholarly connections extend to a third department—Romance Languages and Literatures—that has made significant hires in Latin American studies. **Larissa Brewer-García** studies race in the context of translation and **Victoria Saramago** is a creative writer and scholar of contemporary Brazilian literature. Together, all six will prompt conversations across departments while adding a new dimension to their own. —C.C.W.G. ■

EDGAR GARCIA holds a Provost Career Enhancement Postdoctoral Scholarship in English Language and Literature, after which he will join the faculty as a Neubauer Family Assistant Professor. His research focuses primarily on indigenous and Latino studies as well as American and Latin American literature; he is also interested in poetry, environmental criticism, and historical anthropology. He coedited the anthology *American Literature in the World* (forthcoming 2016), and his writings include scholarly articles, poetry, translations, and a novella. He holds a PhD, an MA, and an MPhil from Yale, a BA in English with a focus on the Middle Ages from Berkeley, and an AA in English from Chaffey Community College in California.

GHENWA HAYEK, Assistant Professor in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, was on the faculty at Claremont McKenna College before coming to UChicago. Prior to that, she held a postdoctoral fellowship at MIT. She studies contemporary and nineteenth-century Arabic literature and is also interested in colonialism, national identity, and urbanity. She recently published her first monograph, *Beirut, Imagining the City: Space and Place in Lebanese Literature* (2014). She holds a PhD and MA from Brown in comparative literature, an MA in twentieth-century literature from Leeds University in the UK, and a BA from the American University in Beirut.

WEI-CHENG LIN, AM'99, PhD'06, returns to his alma mater as Associate Professor of Art History. Previously he was on the faculty at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and at Iowa State University. His first book, *Building a Sacred Mountain: Buddhist Architecture of China's Mount Wutai* (2014), examines a tenth-century religious site. An expert in China's medieval architecture, he also explores the country's contemporary visual arts, as well as its cultural heritage from the early modern era onward. In addition to his UChicago degrees, he holds an MA in art history from the University of Missouri–Kansas City. His BA, in video and cinema, is from National Cheng-Chi University in Taipei.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOHN ZICHI

MARIA ANNA MARIANI, Assistant Professor in Romance Languages and Literatures, formerly taught at the Hankuk University of Foreign Studies in South Korea. Her PhD, in theory of literature, is from the University of Siena, where she also completed her BA, and her MA is from Foreigners University of Siena. Mariani's 2012 book *Sull'autobiografia contemporanea (On Contemporary Autobiography): Nathalie Sarraute, Elias Canetti, Alice Munro, Primo Levi* offers a theory of the genre based on the dialectic between memory and narrative.

JAMES OSBORNE joins the faculty of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations and the Oriental Institute as Assistant Professor. His BA, in ancient Near Eastern studies, is from the University of Toronto, while his master's and doctoral degrees, in archaeology of the Levant, are from Harvard. He is a specialist in the Bronze and Iron Ages of the eastern Mediterranean and Near East and author of the dissertation "Spatial Analysis and Political Authority in the Iron Age Kingdom of Patina, Turkey." He has held postdoctoral fellowships at Brown's Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology and the Ancient World, Johns Hopkins, and the Institute for European and Mediterranean Archaeology at SUNY Buffalo.

SUSANNE PAULUS, Assistant Professor in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations and the Oriental Institute, is an expert in Near Eastern philology and Assyriology with a background in archaeology. She completed her graduate studies at the University of Münster in Germany, where she received a "best dissertation" prize from the faculty for her work on Babylonian inscriptions and graduated summa cum laude. Her research explores the ancient Near East through the lens of its social practices, legal systems, and economy.

HERVÉ RECULEAU, Assistant Professor in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations and the Oriental Institute, explores the geography and environment of ancient landscapes, with a focus on Mesopotamia during the second



John Wee, James Osborne, and Hervé Reculeau bring experience in Assyriology and archaeology to the Oriental Institute and NELC. Not pictured: Ghenwa Hayek and Susanne Paulus.

millennium. His BA is from the Sorbonne, and his graduate degrees, both in Assyriology, are from the École Pratique des Hautes Études in Paris. He comes to UChicago after teaching appointments at the Sorbonne, Freie Universität Berlin, and the Russian State University for the Humanities in Moscow. His first English-language monograph is *Climate, Environment, and Agriculture in Assyria in the 2nd Half of the 2nd Millennium BCE* (2011).

VICTORIA SARAMAGO, Assistant Professor in Romance Languages and Literatures, studies twentieth- and twenty-first-century Brazilian literature; her dissertation is titled “Mimetic Materialities: Spatial Representation in Latin American Mid-20th Century Regionalist Fiction.” Her BA and MA are from Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro in Brazil, and her PhD, in Iberian and Latin American cultures, is from Stanford. In addition to articles and reviews, she has published a dozen short stories and a novel in Portuguese and also edited a fiction anthology.

SALOMÉ AGUILERA SKVIRSKY returns to Cinema and Media Studies, where she was previously a postdoctoral scholar, as Assistant Professor. In the intervening years she was on the faculty at the University of Illinois at Chicago and University of Massachusetts Boston. A scholar of Latin American cinema, she is working on her first book manuscript, “The Aesthetic of Labor: The Process Genre and Latin American Political Cinema.” She completed her BA at the University of Pennsylvania and her MA and PhD at the University of Pittsburgh, where she received several writing awards, including the Eduardo Lozano Memorial Dissertation Prize from the Center for Latin American Studies.

OLGA SOLOVIEVA, Assistant Professor in the Department of Comparative Literature, was a postdoctoral scholar in UChicago’s John U. Nef Committee on Social Thought. She has also held teaching positions at Yale, Smith College, and Georgia Tech. Her first book project, “Christ’s Subversive Body,”

examines the rhetorical usages that the religious notion of Christ’s body has offered at some critical junctures in the history of Western civilization. Her current book projects, “The Russian Kurosawa” and “Thomas Mann’s Russia,” address the reception of Russian literature in the East and West. She received her MA in German and Russian literature from the Freie Universität Berlin and her PhD, in comparative literature and film studies, is from Yale.

JOHN WEE, previously a Provost Career Enhancement Postdoctoral Scholar and Lecturer in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations (NELC) and the Oriental Institute, joins both as Assistant Professor. An expert in the scientific, medical, and mathematical traditions of ancient Mesopotamia and Greece, he has several journal articles and a forthcoming monograph, *Knowledge and Rhetoric in Medical Commentary*, as well as an edited volume of essays, *The Comparable Body*. He holds an MA in classical history and a PhD in NELC from Yale, where he was designated the Samuel K. Bushnell fellow and awarded the William J. Horwitz Prize.

TYLER WILLIAMS joins the faculty of South Asian Languages and Civilizations as Assistant Professor following a yearlong postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Pennsylvania. His dissertation, “From Sacred Sound to Sacred Book: A History of Writing in Hindi,” traces how writing created new community networks. His next book project, “Account Books and Holy Books: Merchant Religious and Literary Culture in Early Modern India,” examines records from Indian merchant communities to explore the region’s economy and its religious cultures. A Hindi scholar, he holds a BA from Berkeley, MPhil and MA degrees from Jawaharlal University in New Delhi, and a PhD from Columbia University. ■

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READ EXPANDED PROFILES at tableau.uchicago.edu/newfaculty2015.

A LOT OF **ANTIQUITY**, A LITTLE **MODERNITY**

Through efforts like the *Chicago Assyrian Dictionary*, the University of Chicago has long distinguished itself in Assyriology. In hiring three Assyriologists as assistant professors with joint appointments in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations and the Oriental Institute, search chair **Christopher Woods** and the committee wanted to ensure that the complementary skills of the new scholars would ensure UChicago’s eminence “for the next decades.”

The committee selected scholars whose work “represents very different intellectual tra-

ditions,” according to Woods, associate professor in NELC and the OI. While **Susanne Paulus** and **Hervé Reculeau** both study socio-economic texts—which comprise the majority of all existing cuneiform writings—Paulus focuses on urban institutions, such as temples and palaces; Reculeau studies the countryside and landscapes. **John Wee**, by contrast, is a specialist in Mesopotamian science and medicine, including astronomical and astrological texts; Woods notes that Wee’s work will “afford all kinds of connections” with other fields, includ-

ing history of science, classics, and ancient East Asian history.

Beyond Assyriology, archaeologist **James Osborne**, who uses contemporary spatial-analysis technologies to enhance his analyses of the ancient Mediterranean world, joins both NELC and the OI. Fast-forwarding a few thousand years, **Ghenwa Hayek** brings NELC her expertise in modern Arabic literature, particularly Lebanese writings that engage with emigration and transnationalism.

—C.C.W.G. ■

OVERTURE

Friendship leads to new venture in composition.

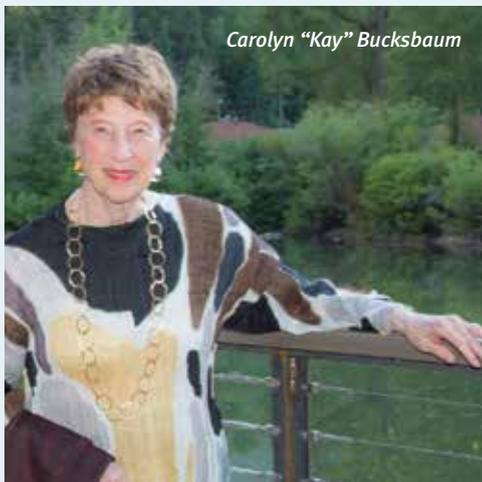


Augusta Read Thomas

The connection between **Carolyn “Kay” Bucksbaum** and **Augusta Read Thomas** grew out of a shared love of music. Out of that friendship, in turn, has grown the beginnings of a new opportunity for composers and music composition at the University of Chicago.

The two women met in the early 1990s, when Bucksbaum’s husband, Matthew, was chairman of the board of the Aspen Music Festival and Thomas was a composer in residence.

“She had great enthusiasm, and she really knew her way around music,” Bucksbaum says of Thomas. They became closer when Thomas relocated to Chicago, where the Bucksbaums lived, to serve as composer in residence with



Carolyn “Kay” Bucksbaum

the Chicago Symphony Orchestra from 1997 through 2006.

After Thomas joined UChicago in 2010 as University Professor of Composition in Music, she conceived an ambitious plan to develop a center for contemporary composition, with a regular program of distinguished composers in residence, postdocs, musicians in residence, and a permanent ensemble. Impressed by Thomas’s vision, Bucksbaum, a member of the Visiting Committee to the Division of the Humanities, wanted to help her make it a reality.

Matthew, who died in 2013, and Kay were longtime friends of the University—establishing the Bucksbaum Institute for Clinical Excellence at the University of Chicago Medicine with a transformative gift in 2011—as well as avid fans of classical music. The Department of Music will use Kay Bucksbaum’s 2015 gift of \$300,000 to host a distinguished visiting composer in 2016–17, followed by a postdoctoral fellow in each of the two subsequent academic years.

The gift benefits the entire UChicago community as well as the visiting composer, who will teach a seminar on a topic of their choice, work with students in the composition program, and oversee performances of their works.

Thomas says the University’s interdisciplinary nature will be a draw for composers, who will have the opportunity to work with UChicago faculty both informally and through the Franke In-

stitute for the Humanities and the Gray Center for Arts and Inquiry. Equally, Thomas expects the visiting composer to be an asset to the UChicago intellectual community.

“People who have spent 30, 40, 50 years sculpting sound at the highest level are very special people,” Thomas says, “and also very interesting for a community like ours, where people have been sculpting science experiments, mathematical theorems, poems, and the like.”

The postdoctoral composers each will teach an undergraduate course, oversee performances of her or his music, and have time to compose new work. Postdoctoral positions such as the ones supported by Bucksbaum are rare, Thomas says, but essential to the future of classical composition.

“If we want artists to make great music, it takes time,” Thomas says. “It takes a lot of people helping and a lot of people believing in the transformative power of music.”

Thomas, Bucksbaum, and Dean **Martha T. Roth** in fact hope that more people believe in that power, and that this gift serves as “seed money,” as both Bucksbaum and Thomas say, for an endowment for the entire center.

As a music lover, Bucksbaum wants to help others enjoy it as well. She and her husband, says Thomas, have been “supporting composers, musicians, and music at large for decades.” —J.C. ■

LISTEN TO SOME OF THOMAS’S COMPOSITIONS at augustareadthomas.com.

WHAT'S IN A GAME?

Graduate students explore games for scholarly interest and social impact

For **Peter McDonald**, play is the thing. A third-year graduate student in English Language and Literature, McDonald's doctoral research focuses on the cultural meaning of play, touching on gambling, video games, the Fluxus art movement—even children's lit classic *The Phantom Tollbooth*. He also gets to spend part of his summers playing and designing games with junior high and high school students—a benefit of being a graduate fellow at the Game Changer Chicago Design Lab.

Founded in 2012 by **Patrick Jagoda**, assistant professor of English Language and Literature, and **Melissa Gilliam**, professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology in the University's Pritzker School of Medicine, Game Changer has grown rapidly. Early support from the Division of the Humanities and the Neubauer Collegium for Culture and Society gave the lab resources to recruit student fellows, and recent \$1 million grants from the MacArthur Foundation and the National Institutes of Health have accelerated its efforts to create and test board games, video games, and transmedia experiences that blur the line between fiction and reality. These games are designed to help 13- to 18-year-olds explore sensitive topics, such as sexually transmitted infections and transgender issues, addressed in the game *Lucidity*, or enliven boring ones, like health care access and AP biology test preparation through *The Black Box*.

The graduate student fellows, according to Jagoda, “are the research and design engine of the

lab,” where they can flex skill sets from their prior professional lives.

Before UChicago, for example, McDonald was a 3-D artist in the gaming industry. As a Game Changer fellow, he's published with Jagoda in *Hyperrhiz*, a journal on new media criticism; helped to create and stage an alternate reality game; and led a project called *Processing Play*, which seeks to understand the basic tactics of existing games in order to design new ones. All of this has surprised him. “I wasn't expecting to do lab work or creative work,” McDonald says of graduate school. He'd never even heard of alternate reality games until he was part of one at UChicago, and was delighted to have the opportunity to publish with a faculty member.

It's not all play in Game Changer. Fellow **Megan Macklin**, a fourth-year Comparative Literature graduate student, runs the program's youth-initiated mentoring component, which encourages high school participants to actively seek out role

models who can help them advance academically and professionally. “We really just want students to be advocates for themselves,” says Macklin, who leans on a background helping low-income students prepare for college.

Macklin has also found inspiration in her Game Changer experiences and plans to dedicate a chapter of her dissertation on young adult fiction to “game metaphors and game structures, because that's something that's really prevalent, especially in contemporary YA,” she says, citing the popularity of *The Hunger Games* as an example.

Like McDonald, who calls the combination of creative work and research he's done through Game Changer a “huge boon,” Macklin hopes to stay in academia. “My relationship to the academy is a teaching one,” she says. “So whatever I do, I hope I'll have that practical hands-on experience working with students.” —Sean Carr, AB'90 ■



Megan Macklin's experience working with college-bound students has helped her at Game Changer.

LEARN MORE ABOUT GAME CHANGER at lucian.uchicago.edu/blogs/gamechanger.

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HUMANITIES DAY 2015

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17

PRESS PLAY

Explore new topics in art, literature, music, linguistics, and more at the University of Chicago's annual Humanities Day. All events—lectures, tours, exhibits—are free and open to the public.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS:

Elektra Shock: Opera and Radical Interpretation

David Levin, Addie Clark Harding Professor in Germanic Studies, Cinema and Media Studies, and Theater and Performances Studies, and Director of the Richard and Mary L. Gray Center for Arts and Inquiry

HUMANITIES DAY

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2015

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humanitiesday.uchicago.edu

