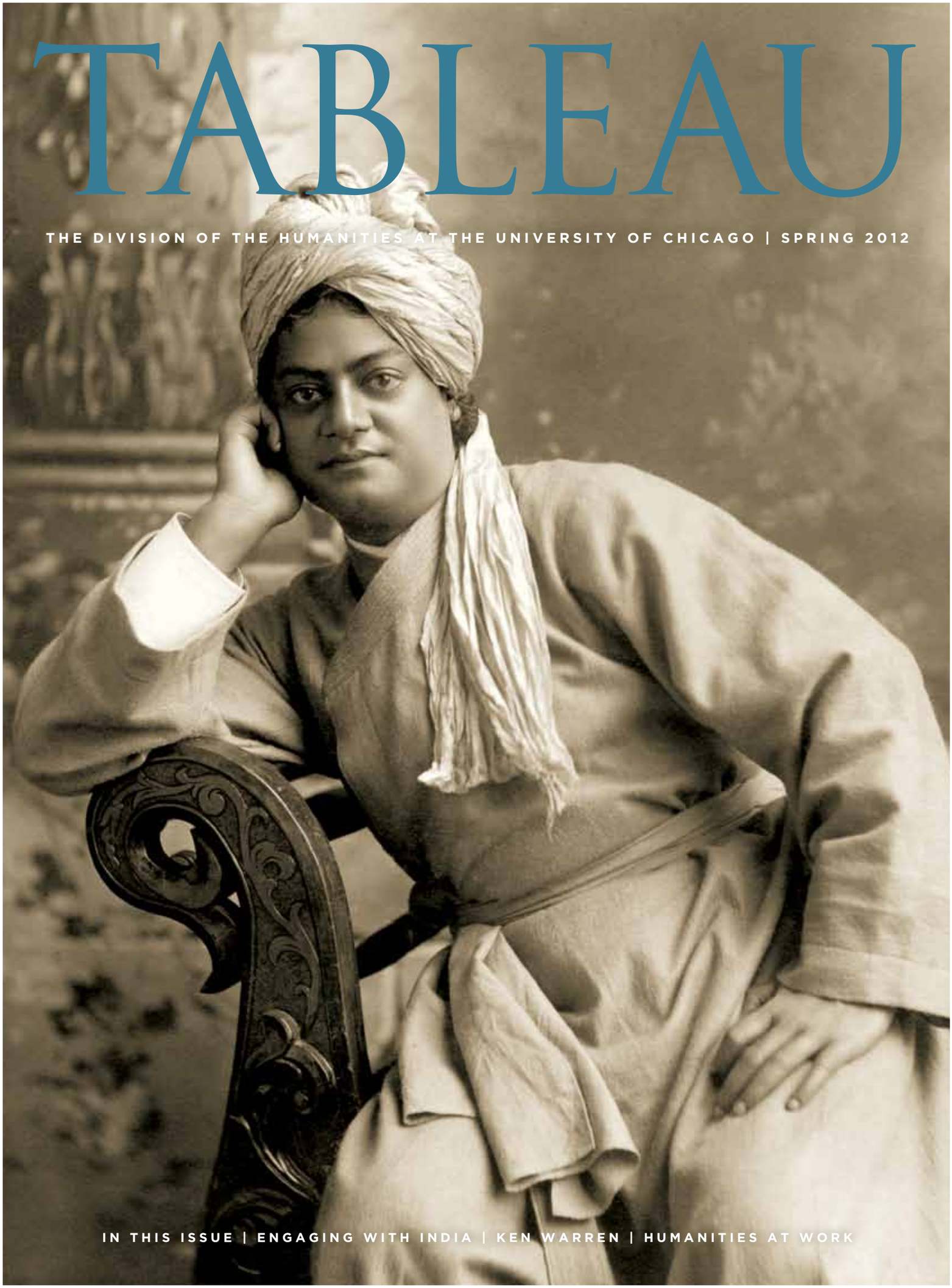


TABLEAU

THE DIVISION OF THE HUMANITIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO | SPRING 2012

IN THIS ISSUE | ENGAGING WITH INDIA | KEN WARREN | HUMANITIES AT WORK

Tableau (Spring 2012, Volume 13, Number 2) is published biannually by the Division of the Humanities at the University of Chicago for alumni and friends. Editor: Elizabeth Station. Contributing Editors: Courtney C. W. Guerra, AB'05; Hannah Hayes; Nicholas Lopez, AB'03; Carl Nash, AM'02; Miranda Swanson, AM'01. Proofreader: Rhonda Smith. Photography: Lloyd Degrane, Chris Kirzeder, Jason Smith, Dot Ward, Maria Warren. Design: Winge Design Studio. Contact: Division of the Humanities, 1115 East 58th Street, Chicago, IL 60637, tableau@uchicago.edu.

ON THE COVER

The legacy of Swami Vivekananda (1863–1902) has inspired a visiting professorship in Indian studies. Read more on page 13.

A film by visual arts assistant professor Catherine Sullivan, *Ice Floes of Franz Joseph Land*, helped inaugurate a gallery in the new Logan Center for the Arts (page 11).

Dear Alumni and Friends,

Research in the humanities gives us the tools we need to articulate deep truths about our current, past, and future social selves. What does it mean to be a human being? What has it meant historically? What will it come to mean? The students and faculty in all our departments dedicate themselves to the thoughtful consideration of humanity's place in the world, and I hope you enjoy sampling some of these investigations here in *Tableau*.

The impulse of innovation and discovery that sustains the scholarship of our distinguished faculty members is exemplified by English professor Kenneth Warren, who recently received a Humanities Visiting Committee grant to support his ongoing literary examination of our country's racial history (see pages 2–3). An alumnus in South Asian Languages and Civilizations, Philip Lutgendorf, has taken on a very different topic, documenting India's social history through the lens of tea (see pages 6–7). The division's assistant professors in philosophy ponder ancient and modern thinkers and develop new ways of understanding the human mind; we introduce them on pages 8–9 and with interviews at tableau.uchicago.edu.

Graduate students come to the University of Chicago to develop their analytical skills, bringing diverse backgrounds to our community. In this issue, we share the stories from veterans of the US military who were motivated to study in the humanities after their service to our country (see pages 4–5). After graduating, many of our students pursue careers beyond the academy. To illustrate the range of careers, a new series, "Humanities at Work," highlights their experiences (see page 10). Finally, three PhD students talk about their discoveries as scholars here and in our online edition.

With this issue of *Tableau*, we return to printing the magazine twice a year, now with a fresh, colorful design. We are pleased to bring you news about the opening of the Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts, the Sawyer Seminar devoted to investigating "Around 1948," and a new visiting professorship in Indian studies (see pages 11–13). You can find expanded content for many articles on our website.

I am grateful for your partnership in promoting and celebrating the humanities. If you have feedback or news to share, I would love to hear from you. As always, thank you for your interest and support.

Sincerely yours,

Martha T. Roth

Dean of the Division of the Humanities

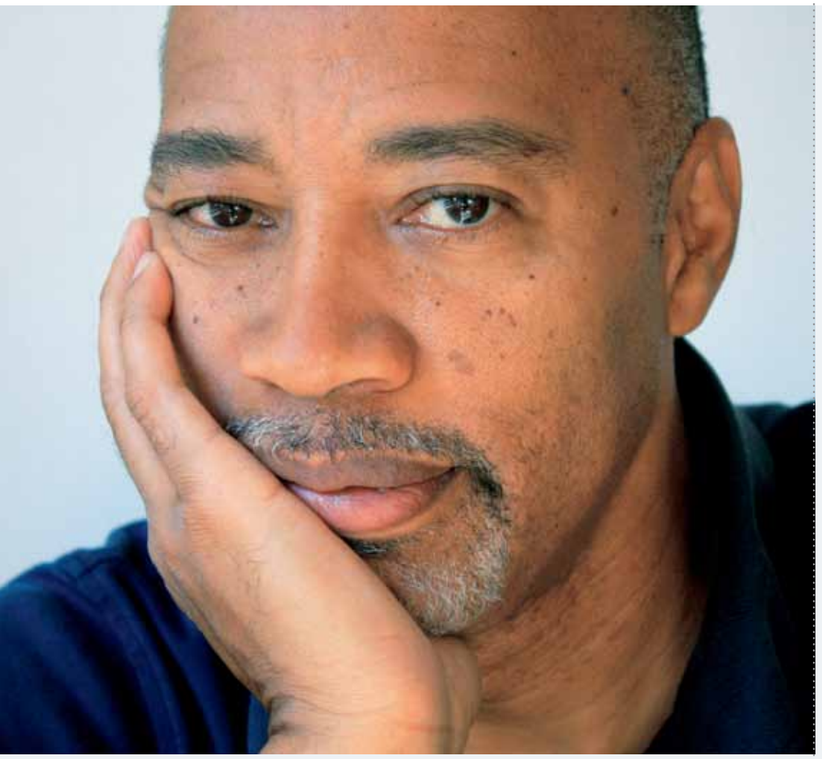
SAVE THE DATE

Humanities Day

Saturday, October 20, 2012

Richard Strier, the Frank L. Sulzberger Distinguished Service Professor in English language and literature, will give the keynote address: "Shakespeare's Prejudices: Shrews and Jews."

Watch past Humanities Day lectures at humanitiesday2011.uchicago.edu/video.



WHO IS KEN WARREN?

A scholar redefines African American literature and helps make *Invisible Man* visible.

INTERVIEWED BY CARRIE GOLUS, AB'91, AM'93

IN HIS LATEST BOOK, *What Was African American Literature?* (2011), Kenneth Warren argues that African American literature belonged to a specific historical period that began in the 1890s and ended in the 1960s. "Like it or not, African American literature was a Jim Crow phenomenon," Warren wrote in a *Chronicle of Higher Education* essay based on his book. "African American literature is history." Some readers did not appreciate this notion, as evidenced by the pages of vitriolic web comments: "Patently absurd and insulting," was one reaction.

In contrast, Warren's role as adviser to Court Theatre's production of *Invisible Man* in early 2012—the first time Ralph Ellison's novel had been adapted for the stage—was far from controversial. Reviewers and theatergoers loved the play: "A remarkable, 205-minute, must-see, three-act dramatic achievement," raved the *Chicago Tribune*'s reviewer.

Warren is the Fairfax M. Cone Distinguished Service Professor in English language and literature and the former deputy provost for research and minority issues. A member of the UChicago faculty since 1991, he is the author of *Black and White Strangers: Race and American Literary Realism* (1993) and *So Black and Blue: Ralph Ellison and the Occasion of Criticism* (2003).

Do you remember the first time you read *Invisible Man*?

Oh yes. I went to high school in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and black writers weren't really being taught. So I began to read some of this literature on my own. It's a powerful story—the story of a young man with a great deal of ambition, but not a lot of wisdom, trying to find his way into adulthood. That really spoke to me.

At the time I knew I probably wanted to study literature in college, but I don't think I realized I would end up spending so much time on *Invisible Man*.

What was your contribution to the Court Theatre production?

My first concrete involvement was attending a staged reading about a year ago. I was a bit skeptical about any kind of stage adaptation until then. But the reading drove home how powerful the characters' speeches are, even with the actors just sitting there. Ellison had a great ear for spoken language.

I read two versions of the stage-play adaptation and had discussions with the director [Christopher McElroen] and the writer [Oren Jacoby]. The main task was how to cut the novel down to a manageable size, and how to work the scenic transitions to move the narrative forward.

It received very good reviews.

Deservedly so—especially since the playwright and director were working under strict constraints imposed by the literary executor of Ellison's estate. All the language in the play had to be Ellison's. The playwright could not take a speech by one character and put it in the mouth of another, so there was no possibility of using composite characters. Obviously scenes would have to be cut, but the order could not be rearranged. And if that weren't enough, there were specific scenes that had to be included.

Why do you think Ellison never completed his second novel?

In *So Black and Blue*, I speculate that *Invisible Man* is so powerful because Ellison was so attuned to the social, political, and aesthetic situation of the Jim Crow era. He published it at the cusp of the post–Jim Crow era, two years before the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision.

Ellison was strongly committed to the idea that the novel, as a form, needed to process and understand the present. And I feel that he never figured out how to do that in the new political order emerging around him.

Is that how you came up with the idea that African American literature ended with the Jim Crow era?

It was related, yes. I started thinking about the appropriations of Ellison's work by a variety of scholars and activists. I wondered, what is it about Ellison that makes him seem so available?

If we feel that *Invisible Man* speaks to us in the current moment, well, that might be an inaccurate assessment. However much racism continues, it is not the same problem as it was under Jim Crow.

Could you explain why the end of Jim Crow also ended African American literature, according to your definition?

Imaginative African American literature first begins to emerge in a moment of great disenfranchisement in the South. Beginning in the early 1890s, state constitutions were rewritten to effectively move the black population out of political life. African American writers, quite self-consciously, wanted to act as a voice for a politically silenced population.

Under those conditions, many of the writers—and I do try to provide significant examples of this in *What Was African American Literature?*—are themselves wondering, if they were successful at overturning the political conditions that made this literature so important, what would be the status of this literature?

Under Jim Crow, one could see why someone writing a poem and getting it published in a major journal could count as an argument against the Jim Crow system. And in counting against Jim Crow, the publication of that poem had implications for people who didn't write, who didn't read. We are no longer at that moment, when the success of a particular black individual could call attention to the falsity of racist beliefs and affect all blacks, regardless of their class status.

> "Racism 'is not the primary vector of inequality.'"

Were there any authors who made the transition that Ellison didn't—that is, who wrote some books that you would consider to be African American literature and also wrote some you would not?

Toni Morrison's first novel, *The Bluest Eye* (1970), was written at this transitional moment that I'm talking about. Perhaps that one work falls within the historical protocol of African American literature. But the work that she does afterward is not part of this literary project.

Why are some people so offended by your argument? What do they hear when you make it?

Sometimes they hear the claim that racism no longer persists as a problem. It does, and it needs to be addressed. However, it is not the primary vector of inequality.

I argue that it's important to address racial bias, but attacking racial bias is no longer a project that's a challenge to the system. It is part and parcel of the system. All major institutions understand that it's part of their role to guard against bias, to seek out a diverse population.

I'm not saying they all do this well, or that there isn't opposition. But the operating norm for major institutions in this country is that a diverse workforce is a good thing.

In 2010, you ended your second term as deputy provost for research and minority issues, a role that you helped create. How is the University doing on diversity issues?

Overall, Chicago is a more diverse institution than five or ten years ago. At the faculty level, these numbers are highly volatile, because the numbers are relatively small. Three or four new hires make a banner year; two people leaving is a bad year. But the trend has been quite positive.

You were recently awarded a Humanities Visiting Committee research grant. What did you use it for?

I've submitted a collection of critical essays for publication on Sutton E. Griggs, an African American writer from the turn of the century. It's part of a larger project to bring the five relatively obscure novels that he published from 1899 through 1908 into a set of critical editions and draw some attention to them.

I also helped put together an interdisciplinary conference, called Jim Crow America: A Problem in Historicization, in April 2012. Our goal was to explore the benefits and limitations of viewing this period as differing significantly from the forms of subordination that came before and after.

BY SUSIE ALLEN, AB'09

GOING INTO THE FIELD

Three veterans trade military service for graduate studies in the humanities.

BY THE TIME HE WAS 32, Eric McMillan had served in Bosnia, deployed twice to Iraq, and commanded a company of 167 soldiers during a year of intense combat in the Iraqi province of Diyala.

"I would walk in the door at 0600 hours and the whole building would snap to attention," he says. "I was used to being a military officer."

Three months after his honorable discharge, McMillan, AM'10, traded the life of an Army captain for the life of a student in the division's Master of Arts Program in the Humanities (MAPH) program—a transition that wasn't without the occasional moment of culture shock.

"I lived, breathed, slept a war, twice. Lost men. Was involved in a lot of really heavy fighting. Made the kinds of morally ambiguous and complex decisions that people will probably never face in their entire lifetime," he says. Spending a year with students who hadn't done the same "just felt so weird," he admits.

Active duty military personnel make up a small percentage of the US population—less than one percent. When soldiers return to civilian life, and particularly to academic life, they are likely to find themselves surrounded by people who haven't shared their experiences.

"Most people have no idea, and they know they have no idea, what you did," says MAPH alum Robert Greene, AM'11.

Yet for Greene, McMillan, and fellow veteran Josh Cannon, now a PhD student in Near Eastern languages and civilizations, academia has its benefits, too. Cannon is pursuing his childhood dream of becoming an archaeologist, while Greene and McMillan had the opportunity to reflect on and write about their military service.

"If you've been more or less institutionalized by the Army for ten years, which is what I was, your grasp on being able to effectively analyze that whole set of experiences gets skewed a bit," says McMillan, who is working on a novel inspired by his time in Iraq. He came to MAPH because he knew he wanted to write about his participation in the war, and "I had to put my experience through a whole bunch of different lenses in order to step back and get the distance I needed to tell the story."

"TO MOST PEOPLE, a veteran is a veteran is a veteran. Their reaction is, 'You served. Thank you for your service,'" says McMillan. Many civilians don't realize how different the same war can be for each soldier.

Cannon, a former Marine, is quick to admit his experience was "very different than a lot of my peers." Cannon studied Arabic at the Defense Language Institute, and during his two tours in Iraq he did varied work as a translator. Sometimes he would spend his days listening to intercepted wireless communications, trying to uncover insurgent attacks in the making. At other times, he would act as an interpreter for his commander.

"I spent a year of my life chatting with Iraqis," says Cannon, who "cherished" his role as a listener. Because he spoke Arabic—a rarity among American military personnel—he was able to build relationships with many of the Iraqis he met, who welcomed the opportunity to discuss their frustrations about the war.

He quickly became the beneficiary of Iraqi hospitality. When Cannon mentioned he was hoping to find a copy of Homer's *Iliad* in Arabic, he didn't have to look for long. "I got, like, four copies," he says with a laugh.

Though he saw relatively little combat, Cannon's time in Iraq was far from relaxed. During a mortar attack on his compound, "I remember getting mad," he recalls. "Instead of being scared that stuff's falling from the sky and exploding, I thought, 'Why are they trying to kill me? If I would have met this person, I would have chatted to him in Arabic, and I would have tried to be his friend.' I took it too personally, obviously."

Both McMillan and Greene saw intense combat during the surge in 2007—McMillan as a commander and Greene as an infantryman.

In the rare downtime between patrols and raids, Greene read novels by Dostoyevsky, as well as works by writers from the Middle East. The Egyptian novelist Naguib Mahfouz quickly became a favorite. "When you read the literature of a culture you're unfamiliar with, they immediately cease to be as alien to you," he says.

McMillan struggled with the impossible moral quandaries he faced as a commander. "You have two primary responsibilities—one is to the men, and the other is to the mission. That's the fine dance of it. Sometimes no matter what you do, somebody is going to get killed.

"Your men will train really hard. You're going to plan as carefully as you possibly can. You're going to make sure that they execute as methodically as they can. But still, you don't control everything out there," he says. "Internally, the thing that you have to learn is how to accept that in order to do your job."

DURING HIS TIME IN MAPH, Greene found comfort in "the quiet life of reading and talking about books. … It was a very quiet, enjoyable, invigorating year."

For his thesis, he began to work on a novel based on his military experiences ("horrible albatross, pain in my you-know-what," he says of the writing process). He has also completed a creative nonfiction account of his time overseas, *Nightcap at Dawn: American Soldiers' Counterinsurgency in Iraq*, written in collaboration with several of his fellow soldiers. The book, published in April 2012, explores the war in Iraq from the point of view of enlisted personnel trying to learn counterinsurgency strategy in the middle of the conflict.

Writing about the war has been "a double-edged sword" for Greene. It can be difficult to relive the experience, but "sometimes it's good to go back to think about things."

Cannon, now in the final stages of writing a master's thesis about a Bronze Age site in Turkey, has discovered that his military experience serves him well in his graduate work. The physical discomfort associated with archaeological excavations—no sleep, bad weather, bland food—never ruffled him.

In fact, he was surprised to discover he found reassurance in the similarities between fieldwork and military life. "When we went to Iraq, we called it 'going into the field.' The terminology was even the same," he says. On one excavation, he noticed the director always locked their equipment in a small room that instantly reminded him of the rooms where intelligence information was stored. "I found myself slipping into this mentality: 'I am a Marine, I know where the Secure Compartmentalized Information Facility is, we're in the field' … There was this comfort of, 'I used to do this a lot.'"

> "When you read the literature of a culture you're unfamiliar with, they immediately cease to be as alien to you," says Greene.

McMillan was able to keep a cool head, even when his fellow students were stressing over papers and exams.

"When I looked around at my fellow students, who were stressed out about this paper, or the other paper, I was like, 'Well, it's gonna get done. I know it's gonna get done,'" he says. "Nobody's shooting at you today. It's a good day."

FOR MORE PHOTOS and reflections from veterans, visit tableau.uchicago.edu.

Eric McMillan (center) in Diyala Province, Iraq, 2007.

An alumnus traces the rise of chai, India's "proletarian beverage *par excellence*."

BY ELIZABETH STATION

THE TRIUMPH OF TEA

FRESH OUT OF COLLEGE and on his first trip to India, Philip Lutgendorf quickly became addicted to chai—"a rich dairy concoction that is heavy on the dairy, usually heavy on the sugar, and also heavy on the tea." That was in 1971. Returning as a graduate student to study Indian epic narrative and performance, he says, "I fell into the habit of taking chai, and I always thought that it was an inescapable and immemorial part of Indian life."

Fueled by the chai he drank at street-side stalls and at home in his Iowa kitchen, Lutgendorf (AB'71, AM'82, PhD'87) became a professor of Hindi and modern Indian studies at the University of Iowa. He also produced two highly regarded books. *The Life of a Text* (1991) examines popular performance of the poet Tulsidas's retelling of the epic tale of the *Ramayana*, and *Hanuman's Tale* (2006) looks at popular worship of Rama and Sita's devoted monkey helper.

For years, Lutgendorf assumed that tea drinking was "as Indian, and perhaps as old, as the Vedas," or ancient Hindu scriptures. But when his interest in food, drink, and material culture led him to investigate the topic, he was surprised to discover that chai as Indians drink it today has a relatively recent history. "In many places in north India—places we now think of as being the tea belt and the real heartland of tea popularity—the drink was only introduced in the 1960s and '70s or even later," he says. "That made me think, 'Well, there's an interesting story here to be told.'"

Lutgendorf landed a Fulbright-Hays faculty research award in 2010–11 to gather material for a book on the social history of chai in India. The early years of that history are well documented. Before British rule, the Mughal courtly elite consumed tea in small, medicinal quantities. "It was a rare substance," he says, "almost certainly imported from China, perhaps via Iran." As the British developed the tea habit and expanded their global empire in the late eighteenth century, they were eager to break China's monopoly on tea production. In the 1830s, they began cultivating an indigenous tea plant in the hills of Assam and Bengal, in northeast India, and used indentured labor to build a vast system of plantation agriculture. By 1888, India surpassed China as the main exporter of tea to the West, but it was the British—not Indians—who craved the drink.

Tea producers saw no need to cultivate a domestic market in India until the Great Depression, when British consumption fell and advances in production generated a tea surplus. In 1936, the Indian Tea Market Expansion Board launched an aggressive marketing campaign to get ordinary Indians hooked on the drink. Free samples of brewed tea were proffered in railway stations and public markets; promotional posters and literature demonstrated the "correct" (that is, English) way to brew and serve tea. The campaign's rhetoric was not subtle; in his archival research, Lutgendorf found promotional materials that "assume the triumphalist tone of Christian missionary tracts, suggesting that the quintessentially English beverage will rescue its Indian consumers from 'lassitude' and vice, and will inculcate in them such desirable traits as punctuality, decorum, and good sanitation."

South Asia's first mass marketing effort lasted two decades, but it had limited success, in part due to political opposition. Mohandas Gandhi and other nationalists criticized tea as a foreign and imperialist product. After independence in 1947, tea estates and wholesaling companies slowly passed from British to Indian hands. The major tea companies, now owned by Indians, sought to convince consumers that tea drinking was not only *swadeshi* (of the country) but also "conducive to both individual and national health and civility."

Technology played a crucial role in bringing affordable chai to the masses. Simpler machinery made the processing of CTC leaf (cut/crushed, torn, and curled) tea cheaper by the late 1950s. Factories could now produce "quick brewing teas of deep color and robust flavor, that could stand up to copious draughts of milk," writes Lutgendorf, and that tasted strong and delicious whether boiled, simmered, or blended together with sugar and spices by a housewife or street vendor.

Today, about 80 percent of the tea produced in India is consumed in the country. Small, sweet, milky cups are sold and served at all hours of the day in homes, offices, shops, and on the street. Chai prepared in this manner is now "the proletarian beverage *par excellence*," Lutgendorf writes, the daily fuel of office workers and informal-sector laborers and "the *de rigueur* hospitality offering to visitors." Global chains like Starbucks sell their own version, although it "doesn't taste anything like the chai you get in India," says Lutgendorf. "Chai in America tastes like pumpkin pie."

To chronicle the triumph of tea, Lutgendorf scoured Indian archives for materials in Hindi and other languages; he also did ethnographic research. "A lot of important developments in the popularization of tea are simply not documented in print sources," he says. "You have to go to oral history." In Calcutta, he visited well-loved tea shops and interviewed the proprietors. And in Mumbai, he trekked to parks where elderly people stroll and congregate in the early morning, to collect their stories about how tea was introduced in their family, village, or area. "I would just walk up as if from Mars and say, 'Excuse me, I'm a foreign researcher,'" he says, laughing. "And most of the time people were very, very friendly and quite willing to talk."

Lutgendorf considers his research on chai to be a "tea break" from his scholarship on the great Indian epics. (He also teaches and writes on Indian cinema.) Over the next several years, he will be preparing a new translation of the Hindi version of the *Ramayana* for the Murty Classical Library of India and Harvard University Press.

Meanwhile, tea provides a refreshing change of pace and "an intriguing 'lens' through which to focus on other changes associated with 'modernity' in twentieth-century India." The spread of tea accompanied changes in lifestyle, rural-to-urban migration, and urbanization, he notes; it paralleled the rise of middle-class culture, marketing, and consumerism.

When Lutgendorf explains that chai is, "in the *longue durée* of Indian history, a very recent development," he says that most Indians respond with the same surprise he felt when he first began his study. "They get this puzzled look and say, 'What did we drink before?'" With time, he found the answer: "Chai really didn't replace anything. It created a new niche for itself as a very inexpensive social beverage that could be freely shared."

TO VIEW A CHAI RECIPE from Philip Lutgendorf and a slide show of early tea advertising, visit tableau.uchicago.edu.

Images courtesy of Philip Lutgendorf; the Priya Paul Collection, New Delhi, and tasveerghar.net; and the Hiteshranjan Sanyal Memorial Archive, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta.

IN THE ENGINE ROOM OF **REALITY**

In the pipeline (from left): Schechtman, Willer, Callard, Laurence, and Frey.

Philosophy's junior faculty members discuss their work, inspiration, and approach to teaching at UChicago.

BY COURTNEY C. W. GUERRA, AB'05

WHAT DOES A PHILOSOPHER DO? Put simply, one might say "think," but deeper examination of this answer reveals nearly inscrutable complexity. As philosophy department chair Candace Vogler points out, "I don't know what it would mean to master this field—I can imagine having scholarly mastery over a body of text, but the *philosophy* part? It doesn't happen." Yet the challenges of this intricate discipline don't seem to discourage the nine assistant professors in the department, who pursue a wide array of research topics and delight in their ability to bounce ideas off one another.

Being part of a large junior-faculty cohort is "fantastic," says **Anton Ford**, whose research seeks to define the fundamental expression of human agency; he goes on to explain that "it's just nice to have colleagues of your generation." **Marko Malink**, who studies the logic of Aristotle, agrees: "you often have the same questions and the same issues," although that could arguably be said for scholars at every stage of their careers.

A member of the faculty since 1994, Vogler feels a duty as chair to carry on the tradition of mentorship that helped shape her own career. "The happiest world at Chicago is one in which we 'grow up' our faculty at the University. I got 'grown up' at Chicago, and I think it's a great place to be a junior faculty member." Despite "the enormous range" of research interests within the department, she emphasizes that the department's strength also stems from its collegiality: "We all respect each others' work and contributions tremendously." Assistant professor **Chris Frey** concurs, praising the department as "a cohesive, collegial place where a plurality of views is allowed to flourish."

Frey, whose dual interests concern Aristotle's conception of life and contemporary theories of perception, studied physics as an undergraduate. He is one of several assistant professors who began their education in math and science—less of a disciplinary leap than one might expect. As Frey notes, "the best scientists and mathematicians often have a philosophical interest themselves." **Anubav Vasudevan**, another former physics major, now studies the relationship between judgments of probability and statements of categorical fact. This shift was partially rooted in his sense that philosophy was the more fruitful field in which to build a career: "no matter what I end up doing, I can think about it philosophically and enjoy it." **Anat Schechtman** made a similar calculation when transitioning from a double major in math and philosophy to full-time philosopher. Initially drawn to the field for its "formal game" aspect, she now studies Descartes and other early modern thinkers. **Kevin Davey** holds master's degrees in mathematics and physics, which inform his investigations into the ways that a theory of probability affects understanding of the physical world.

> "When you finally arrive, we've been looking for you—*you* personally," says Vogler.

While some of the department's newer members came to the field via their scientific inclinations, others were inspired by reading philosophy as teenagers—even if their subsequent work bears little resemblance to those early encounters. **Ben Laurence** specializes in political philosophy and the concept of an ideal political community, but his introduction to the discipline came through Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil*. As an adolescent Laurence was "terrified" by the ideas it presented, but also fascinated: "this incredible image came into my mind when I read it—that he had gotten behind the world of appearances and was in something like the engine room of reality." Similarly, Ford first became interested in philosophy as a teenager when he discovered the writings of Emerson, Plato, and Nietzsche in his parents' collection of old college texts.

This inquisitive and self-driven spirit pervades the department, encouraged and perpetuated by a highly selective hiring process. It is not at all uncommon for a junior search to remain open for "years and years," Vogler explains, because the department hasn't found the right fit: "So when you finally arrive, we've been looking for you—*you,* personally—for however long we've been running searches in that field." She is committed to ensuring that the department supports individual faculty interests, and her younger colleagues are noticeably appreciative of the latitude. Collaborative teaching is widespread, allowing the faculty to explore new ideas together and benefit from each others' experience; several professors are coteaching classes in 2012–13, and others made a point of coordinating the syllabi for their first classes in the College Core to ensure they were covering the same material. This cross-pollination extends beyond the department, as with **Malte Willer**'s research in philosophy of language and philosophical logic, which has led to interdisciplinary collaborations with linguistics faculty as well.

Adapting to their new roles as instructors can be a struggle for assistant professors in any discipline, since, as Vogler observes, "very few academics are specifically trained in teaching." The challenge is compounded by the fact that, as junior scholars, they are simultaneously trying to produce their own body of scholarship. As a group, they are realistic about the tension; when they are asked how they balance their service responsibilities with their own scholarship, laughter fills the room as one responds, "badly" and another jokingly asks, "Balance?" Yet in spite of this, they remain enthusiastic when discussing their individual teaching obligations—which, as Vasudevan puts it, sometimes hardly feel like obligations at all: "You have so much flexibility, and you can often teach courses that are at least tangentially related to something you're working on."

The vibrancy of classroom discussion, and its ability to invigorate the professors' own projects, is a common refrain, perhaps best expressed by Davey: "We have a lot of freedom in what we can teach, and we have a really extraordinary student body—I doubt there are many other universities that can measure up to ours in that regard." Outside the classroom, the faculty members are committed to helping one another succeed. As Willer puts it, "even though they're doing something completely different, your colleagues can get engaged with your work in such a way that your work gets better—I think that's extremely valuable and hard to find."

*Neubauer Family Assistant Professor **Agnes Gellen Callard**, AB'97, who studies ancient philosophy and ethics, was on leave in 2011–12 and was not interviewed for this article.*

TO LEARN MORE about the assistant professors' research interests and their introduction to the world of philosophy, read interviews with each at tableau.uchicago.edu.

HOW DID YOU GET THAT AWESOME JOB?

Alumni offer ten tips for breaking into journalism.

NEDA ULABY, AM'98

Arts reporter, National Public Radio

Ulaby began her journalism career the old-fashioned way: after graduating from college, she worked in the classified advertising department at the Topeka Capital-Journal. *While doing graduate work in film theory (then part of the English department), Ulaby kept freelancing and eventually took a full-time job as managing editor at the* Windy City Times. *She fell in love with radio when she participated in an NPR training session through the National Gay and Lesbian Journalism Association.*

1 Be prepared to start over.

Ulaby's first job at NPR was a one-month position as a production assistant—and she had to fight to get that: "There was lots of e-mailing back and forth and cajoling and suggesting and hinting," she says. She left a job overseeing four staff reporters at the *Windy City Times* to take a temporary position "opening Susan Stamberg's mail."

2 Put in the hours.

In addition to working as a production assistant, Ulaby reported stories on her own time. "You have to be a machine," says Ulaby. "I was working twelve or fourteen hours every weekday, and at least one weekend day, for two and a half years."

3 Choose your friends wisely.

The early years at NPR were difficult: "It feels a bit like hazing," she says. "The process weeds out the people who don't want to do it—who don't *need* to do it." To survive, Ulaby suggests, find mentors within the organization. At the same time, build a network of friends outside the job, so you don't get too wrapped up in workplace drama.

4 Follow through on ideas.

Too often, Ulaby says, young people who want to break into radio will suggest promising stories, then won't follow through. "If you can't finish the great story ideas that you've thought of—just like I couldn't finish the great dissertation that I thought of—it might be time to start experimenting with a different line of work," she says. "Perhaps academe."

EUGENIA WILLIAMSON, AM'06

Staff writer, *Boston Phoenix*, and associate editor, *The Baffler*

Williamson enrolled in the Master of Arts Program in the Humanities (MAPH) partly because she was considering a career in textbook publishing and McGraw-Hill, which had an office in Chicago at the time, required a master's degree. After writing a thesis on Jonathan Franzen's The Corrections, *Williamson graduated and landed a job at the company. "Then they had some kind of weird hiring freeze and the office closed," she says.*

5 Give it away—at first.

After graduating from MAPH, Williamson paid the bills by temping so she could take two unpaid internships: as research assistant for Rob Elder, a former *Chicago Tribune* journalist who was writing a book, *Last Words of the Executed* (2010); and as writer in residence at *Venus Zine*, a magazine about women in popular culture. She also cofounded the website Literago, where she wrote book reviews and did author interviews. "For free," she says.

6 Write on spec.

Williamson's big break was an unsolicited review of Patti Smith's memoir *Just Kids*, which was published in the *Boston Globe* in 2010. This led to a regular gig as a books columnist for the *Globe*. Meanwhile, Williamson was contributing music reviews to the *Boston Phoenix*, where she eventually landed a full-time staff job.

7 For women: take a stand.

"I think there's a lot of space for women writers who have strong opinions and critical acumen," Williamson says. In the world of small magazines especially, "it feels a bit like a boys' club. I want to see more women in there. Come on, girls!"

HANK SARTIN, AM'88, PHD'98

Senior editor, *Time Out Chicago*

In 1993, while Hank Sartin was a PhD student in English, a mutual friend mentioned to the Windy City Times *editor that Sartin was researching Bugs Bunny (among other film topics). This led to his first published article, "Bugs Bunny: Queer as a $3 Bill." In 1999, Sartin left Wayne State University, where he was teaching film studies, to pursue a career in journalism.*

8 Write to the assignment.

Write clean copy and stick to the assigned word count. "Speaking as an editor," he says, "it's astonishing how often someone gives you double the length you asked for." He showed his first article to four people he trusted before turning it in. As a result, he says, the article was published with very few changes, "which is unusual for writers."

9 Send a thank-you note.

After the Bugs Bunny piece was published, Sartin sent a follow-up note to the editor, thanking him for the opportunity and asking to be kept in mind for future articles. This led to an assignment for another feature—so Sartin sent another thank-you note—and eventually a paid weekly gig as a film reviewer that lasted five years.

10 Cobble it together.

When he left Wayne State, Sartin "threw himself on the mercy of Chicago," he says. He wrote articles for the *Chicago Free Press* and the *Reader*, led film discussion groups, and took a three-year appointment as writing adviser for MAPH. A regular television column for *Time Out* eventually led to a staff position as film writer: "I finally got a full-time job in journalism at 40."
—Carrie Golus, AB'91, AM'93

LISTEN TO RADIO STORIES, see photos, and read favorite articles by the three journalists at tableau.uchicago.edu.

A NEW ERA FOR THE ARTS

The arts and humanities began a new chapter in March, when the University's Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts opened its doors to students, faculty, and the public.

THE STRIKING STRUCTURE, located at 915 East 60th Street, formally celebrates its grand opening October 11–13, 2012. Meanwhile, arts programming is already under way, with select classes and more than 40 performances, exhibitions, and conferences scheduled for the center's six-month preview period.

Designed as a "mixing bowl for the arts" by architects Tod Williams and Billie Tsien, the Logan Center provides bright new spaces for artists and scholars to work, perform, and collaborate. The 184,000-square-foot building—located just west of historic Midway Studios—will serve as a bridge between the University campus, surrounding communities, and civic and cultural institutions citywide.

The departments and programs in cinema and media studies, music, theater and performance studies, and visual arts all have homes in the new facility.

"The arts at the University of Chicago have for many years now been bubbling energetically. The Logan Center will give public face to this energy, and it will enrich the conversation and collaboration in our community as it enables the production of great art," says Jessica Stockholder, chair of the Department of Visual Arts.

FOR INFORMATION about events, tours, and hours, visit arts.uchicago.edu/logan.

HOW IT STACKS UP

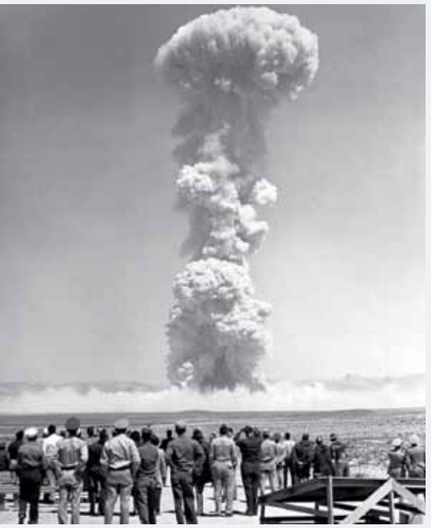
The Logan Center's eleven-story tower houses a café, screening room, classrooms, performance labs, rehearsal space, and a rooftop deck.

The building also features a digital media center, an exhibition gallery, workshops, studio space, two theaters, and a 474–seat performance hall.

Completed on time and on budget, the $114 million facility was made possible by a $35 million gift from the family of Reva and David Logan.

SAWYER SEMINAR
FOCUSES ON GLOBAL CHANGES

Certain years stand out as moments that shaped the course of history. But when viewing history through multiple lenses, the question "What might have been?" opens broad vistas, particularly when considering political alignments in tumultuous times.



Around 1948 (clockwise): US military tests nuclear devices in the desert; Mao Zedong proclaims the founding of the People's Republic of China; Eleanor Roosevelt with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

THE YEARLONG SEMINAR Around 1948: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Global Transformation examines cultural and political changes immediately following the Second World War. Coordinated by the Franke Institute for the Humanities and funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation's Sawyer Seminar program, the project proposes to look at the time "around 1948" from multiple disciplines.

"It was a moment that seemed to us so rapidly evolving," says Deborah Nelson, associate professor in English language and literature and a member of the seminar steering committee. "People were in migration, and institutions that had formerly appeared incredibly durable were suddenly incredibly fragile."

Boundaries changed as new nations emerged or partitioned. Issues such as human rights took on a global frame.

While the postwar era is commonly viewed as a time of rebuilding after the destruction of the war, the seminar looks beyond the order imposed by Cold War logic. Much of today's political world took shape around this time, and the scholars involved in the project are examining political and cultural transformations while questioning whether certain alignments might have evolved differently.

"One of the phrases from the grant proposal was 'the paths not taken,'" says Nelson. "We wanted to revisit the issues people cared about, many of which were dropped or reconfigured during the Cold War."

The seminar grew out of the idea, posited by Franke Institute director and English professor James Chandler, AM'72, PhD'78, that 1948 was a seminal year.

Chandler pulled together a steering committee in late 2009 that included Nelson and English department colleague Leela Gandhi, as well as Christine Stansell and James Sparrow from history and Lisa Wedeen, a professor in political science.

"We were very much looking at ways in which to find interdisciplinary approaches to shared histories," says Gandhi. "We need social scientists to tell us historically what happened in 1948, and we need people in the humanities to talk about what might have happened."

The seminar launched in October 2011 with film screenings and a two-day conference that centered on the end of the war, Year Zero: The World Unmade. In winter quarter the focus moved to "traumatic cosmopolitanism," studying the massive movements of refugees and others who were returning from war or transplanted either voluntarily or unwillingly.

Nelson and Sparrow taught a graduate course on this topic through the Center for Disciplinary Innovation, another Mellon Foundation project at the Franke Institute. "The courses became a way to really dig deeply within an area," says Nelson.

Gandhi and Wedeen are teaching a spring course focusing on postcolonialism in the Middle East and Asia. "What excites me the most is taking the opportunity to think about how much Western knowledge owes to non-Western histories," says Gandhi. "At this particular moment [around 1948], events both in the West and elsewhere are crucial to what we are today."

Lectures, workshops, and panel discussions throughout the spring quarter have explored the emergence of new nation-states, the politics of nonalignment, and socialist experiments. The final conference, After 1948: Realignments in Politics and Culture, was held April 26–27 and brought participants from Chicago and beyond. *—Hannah Hayes*

TO LEARN MORE about Sawyer Seminar events, visit around1948.uchicago.edu.

"Thoughts live; they travel far."
—Swami Vivekananda (1863–1902)

ENGAGING WITH **INDIA**

Thanks to a $1.5 million gift from India's Ministry of Culture, UChicago has established a new chair in Indian studies commemorating the legacy of the Hindu spiritual leader Swami Vivekananda.

Dean Martha Roth and the Ministry of Culture's Sanjiv Mittal (above) sign the agreement establishing the visiting professorship; students at the January celebration (right).

BEGINNING IN 2013, the Indian Ministry of Culture Vivekananda Visiting Professorship will be awarded to distinguished scholars from various disciplines with an interest in the fields of study most relevant to the teachings of the swami, such as Indian philosophy, politics, and social movements. The professorship, to be administered by the Division of the Humanities, will include a one-quarter teaching commitment and an annual public lecture.

To celebrate the agreement, Indian and University officials came together January 28 to sign a joint memorandum of understanding. The event —held at International House and transmitted live on the web—featured classical Indian music and dance performances and remarks from India's finance minister Pranab Mukherjee and Ambassador Nirupama Rao.

The steady infusion of visiting scholars will further strengthen South Asian studies at UChicago, said Dean Martha Roth, who hosted the signing ceremony. "The professorship also aligns wonderfully with a number of other recent University initiatives," she added, including a new scholarship program for Indian MBA students, an exchange that sends students in social-service administration to Mumbai, and active plans to establish a University of Chicago Center in Delhi.

"Just as the Indian Ministry of Culture is today making an investment in us," said Roth, "we are making a long-term investment in our engagement with India."

The naming of the chair honors Vivekananda's ties to the city of Chicago. The Hindu leader "stole the show" when he spoke at the 1893 World's Parliament of Religions in Chicago, said Dipesh Chakrabarty, the Lawrence A. Kimpton Distinguished Service Professor in history and South Asian languages and civilizations. In 2011, an art installation on the main staircase of the Art Institute of Chicago commemorated his lecture, which is cherished as "a proud moment in Indian history," according to Ambassador Rao.

Vivekananda traveled the world making spiritual disciples and spreading a message of religious and intellectual tolerance. With the visiting professorship, the Indian government "will help us keep alive the legacy of his struggle," said Chakrabarty, "to 'unite the East and West,' not 'above the tumult of controversy,' for knowledge is pushed along by controversies, but by staying right in the middle of that tumult and working through it, as the swami strived to do all his life." *—Elizabeth Station*

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IN THEIR OWN WORDS

PhD students launch **lives as scholars**

"THE IMPORTANT THING is finding a text, or texts, you love, or a problem that matters deeply to you, and to work on that," says comparative literature PhD candidate V. Joshua Adams, AM'02, when asked what advice he'd give to incoming graduate students. Adams knows from experience, having spent the past several years focused on the nuances of lyric poetry.

For an inside look at graduate studies in the Humanities Division, *Tableau* contributor Katherine Muhlenkamp chatted with Adams (right) and two other PhD students: Jose Antonio Arellano (left) in English language and literature and Caroline Schopp (center) in art history. All are recipients of named fellowships, all are fervently immersed in their research, and all are getting the most out of their time at the University. Here's a preview of the interviews, which appear in full online at tableau.uchicago.edu.

"Rather than appeal to poetry's special status, I suggest that poetry occupies itself with problems that all of us have by virtue of being persons with minds."—*V. Joshua Adams*

"I think Melville made a calculated decision to set up a narrative arc and then, as it were, wreck it."—*Jose Antonio Arellano*

"I have always loved that art history presents the possibility for shaping an academic career that involves curating."—*Caroline Schopp*

EVERY GIFT TO THE GRADUATE FUND FOR THE HUMANITIES directly supports graduate student fellowships, research, and travel. To make a gift, visit alumniandfriends.uchicago.edu/give. To learn more about how you can support the Division of the Humanities, please contact Katie Malmquist at 773.834.5321 or kmalmquist@uchicago.edu.