

TABLEAU

THE DIVISION OF THE HUMANITIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

SUMMER 2008



IN THIS ISSUE | HIP-HOP GENERATION | POUSSIN | HUMANITIES' QUANTITATIVE SIDE

Each year, the Division of the Humanities welcomes the public to campus for a day of lectures, performances, and conversations with our faculty. We devote this issue of *Tableau* to the 2007 Humanities Day keynote address by Richard Neer, the David B. and Clara E. Stern Professor of Humanities, Art History, and the College. In his fascinating essay, Neer explicates the complex intellectual debates of the seventeenth century that informed one of Nicolas Poussin's great paintings, *Blind Orion Searching for the Rising Sun* SEE PAGE 8

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Tableau, Summer 2008, Volume 10, Number 1 — *Tableau* is published biannually with Division of the Humanities funds for our alumni and friends. Editor: Stefanie Rothman White. Copy Editor: Joanne Berens, MFA 1993. Also contributing to this issue: Rad Borislavov, PhD candidate in Slavic Languages and Literatures; Jane Charney, master's candidate, International Relations; Natasha Long, MA 2008; Daniel Pratt, MA 2007, PhD candidate in Slavic Languages and Literatures; and Josh Schonwald. Design: Winge Design Studio. To Contact *Tableau*: The University of Chicago, Division of the Humanities, 1115 East 58th Street, Chicago, Illinois 60637, tableau@uchicago.edu.

dear alumni & friends



THIS HAS BEEN AN EXHILARATING FIRST YEAR

as Dean. Many moments of inspiration, challenge, discovery—and of course exhaustion—have culminated in gratification and confidence that the Division, in tandem with the University, is making significant progress toward sustained support for our faculty and doctoral students. A number of new developments on campus will help us maintain our prominent role in shaping academic fields and setting the intellectual agenda in the decades to come.

Most importantly, I am pleased to share that the University's successful completion of the Chicago Initiative fundraising campaign has exceeded its goal, including the endowment of 105 new professorships and 207 graduate fellowships, which will yield direct benefits for our faculty colleagues and doctoral candidates in the Humanities Division. Addition of new, outstanding faculty scholars will impact our intellectual community, enabling us to expand our range of scholarship and to continue to offer the broadest range of pedagogy. Likewise, enhanced graduate student experiences via increased fellowship opportunities, higher teaching stipends, better research support, full health benefits, and enlightened student parent policies will make the University even more attractive to the most capable applicants. Our intention is to allow doctoral students to focus on their classroom work and their research, as well as to provide to them a range of teaching experiences with the goal of shortening the amount of time required to complete a PhD. This goal is supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, which in 2008 awarded the Division six million dollars to provide dissertation completion grants. My hope is that we soon will be able to offer these dissertation completion grants to every PhD student in the Division of the Humanities.

University of Chicago Humanities faculty members were recognized last year with major awards from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Guggenheim Foundation, the Council for International Exchange of Scholars, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the Bavarian Academy of Sciences and Humanities, the British Academy, the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers, the Royal Dutch Academy of Arts and Sciences, and more. Please see Curriculum Vitae, pages 14 and 15 of this issue, for an idea of the magnitude of these honors.

While it is essential to be recognized for our scholarship, it is also important to know that we are making an impact in the classroom. Three Humanities faculty

members were recognized for their leadership in the classroom this year. The 2008 Faculty Award for Excellence in Graduate Teaching was awarded to two colleagues: Frederick de Armas, the Andrew W. Mellon Professor in the Humanities and the College, and Chair of the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures; and Christopher Faraone the Frank Curtis Springer and Gertrude Melcher Springer Professor in the Department of Classical Languages and Literatures and the College. The 2008 Quantrell Award, given for excellence in undergraduate teaching, went to Michael Kremer, Professor in the Department of Philosophy and the College. Finally, one of our graduate students, Andrea Haslanger, a fourth-year PhD student in English Language and Literature, was recognized with the Wayne C. Booth Graduate Student Prize for Excellence in Teaching.

Another hallmark of our institution is the interdisciplinary approach that is so well articulated by our academic initiatives. One such endeavor was spearheaded by new faculty member Lenore Grenoble, the Carl Darling Buck Professor in the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, the Department of Linguistics, and the College, who embraced the Chicago approach with a conference on "Siberian Thaw: Climate Change and Social Change in Siberia" in the spring. Grenoble brought together anthropologists, ethnomusicologists, historians, and linguists to consider the effects of climate change on indigenous people of Siberia. You can read more about this conference on page 2. Page 4 features a progressive new seminar taking place this autumn; it will bring together the Departments of Art History and Romance Languages and Literatures in a venture to explore the commerce of book trade, medieval politics, and the art of manuscripts.

On October 25, members of the community within and outside of the University will again have the opportunity to experience our faculty firsthand with the upcoming Humanities Day, which this year marks its 30th consecutive year. For a hint of what you might expect in terms of engaging scholarship, please see the text of last year's keynote address by Richard Neer, the David B. and Clara E. Stern Professor of Humanities in the Department of Art History and the College, beginning on page 8. We look forward to this annual thought-provoking opportunity for alumni to revisit their classroom experiences and for us to introduce our research to new audiences. For information about the 2008 Humanities Day, please go to <http://humanities.uchicago.edu/humanitiesday/>.

Thank you for your support this year. We have much to be proud of and much to look forward to in the year ahead. ■

Sincerely yours,

Martha T. Roth
Dean of the Division of the Humanities

here & now



CONFERENCE

Cultural Implications of Global Warming

By Jane Charney, master's candidate, International Relations

Linguists, historians, anthropologists, and ethnomusicologists from around the world gathered May 10 for a conference titled, "Siberian Thaw: Climate Change and Social Change in Siberia." They attempted to find ways to understand the effects of global warming on the indigenous people of Siberia. Organized by Lenore Grenoble, the Carl Darling Buck Professor in Slavic Linguistics, the conference was a first step to finding ways to help the people affected by climate fluctuations.



"When you work in a remote village in Siberia, your presence profoundly impacts the local population," Grenoble said. "We must ask what we can do for them together with them."

Grenoble studies endangered languages of Siberia

and North America. She has participated in field work in Siberia and has cultivated relationships with indigenous people, a practice shared by her colleagues. Nadezhda Bulatova of the Institute of Linguistics Research at the Russian Academy of Sciences, for

example, participated in the conference as a link between the situation on the ground and the perceptions offered by academics.

Activists joined in the conversation, too. These participants tended to focus more extensively on Canada and Alaska, because grass-roots campaigns are virtually unknown in the Siberian North. According to Grenoble, there is the lingering Soviet legacy of top-down leadership, as well as restrictions placed on non-governmental organizations by the current Russian government, which views activists as potential threats to sovereignty.

The traditional relationships between language, culture, and the land are threatened by environmental changes related to global warming. Further globalization is threatening Siberian indigenous identity. The combination of newly available resources and navigation routes that result from global warming means that not only will greater economic development occur in the North but also a host of strategic and security issues will arise. Both will inevitably result in an influx of outsiders, which threatens indigenous human and natural ecosystems in the North.

Among conference participants were independent scholar Edward Alexeyev; David Archer, Professor of



Geophysical Sciences and the College; Marjorie Balzer, Research Professor at the Center for Eurasian, Russian and East European Studies at Georgetown University; Gary Cook of the Earth Island Institute; William Fitzhugh of the Smithsonian Institute; K. David Harrison, Assistant Professor of Linguistics at Swarthmore College; Theodore Levin, Associate Professor of Music at Dartmouth College; and Florian Stammer of the Scott Polar Research Institute at the University of Cambridge.

"The idea is collaboration between the various disciplines to see whether we can identify the local needs," Grenoble said. "We all have to give back to the communities where we conduct research."

Funding and support for the conference were provided by the Center for East European and Russian/Eurasian Studies, the Franke Institute for the Humanities, the Norman Wait Harris Fund, and the Program on the Global Environment." ■



EXHIBITIONS

Fidelity, Form, and the Limits of Translation

By Natasha Long, MA 2008

For the first time, the Smart Museum of Art showcased work by student artists alongside professionals in spring 2008. The exhibition, *Adaptation*, featured videos by Guy Ben-Ner; Arturo Herrera; Catherine Sullivan, Assistant Professor of Visual Arts, Cinema and Media Studies, and the College; and Eve Sussman & the Rufus Corporation, included a piece by the University of Chicago student collective ARTV 24103.

In a class taught by Sullivan last fall, nine students including myself created the forty-minute single-channel video piece that was screened beside Ben-Ner's *Wild Boy*.

The group began with adaptation theory, discussing the importance of remaining faithful to the source and the limits of translating one medium into another. For the practicum, Sullivan instructed each student to choose a source, with no limits as to what, and the nine objects selected became the foundations for the piece.

The final project was a bizarre conglomeration of dialogue, characters, and props taken from sources as diverse as *Pride and Prejudice*, Woody Allen's *Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Sex But Were Afraid to Ask*, the 1980s television series *Slim Goodbody*, and Descartes' *First Meditation*. Characters walk from one script to the next, and the Tim Burton-inspired sets recur as motifs.

Each artist in the exhibition displays a different

approach to the topic of adaptation and, collectively, their work offers a provocative introduction to topics of fidelity and form. While Sussman's work, a feature-length film entitled *The Rape of the Sabine Women*, recreates the Jacques Louis David painting in its harrowing final scene, Herrera's interpretation of Igor Stravinsky's *Les Noces* presents the viewer with a highly abstract dance of black and white images.

The experience of writing, producing, and directing as a group was as much about adapting to one another through collaboration as adapting the sources. Individual ideas were subjected to secondary adaptations by others, and the sources manifested in ways participants hadn't predicted. This loss of control was exciting, and the most interesting moments in the student video occur when sources interact and mutate.

The exhibition highlights that all art is rooted in cultural reference and adaptation, and that creativity lies in interpreting the world. Asked about the problem of originality in adaptation, Ben-Ner replied, "I don't know of any other way, in the history of art, that works. Nothing just comes from the mind."

Adaptation closed in Hyde Park in May, and will tour nationally through 2011. The student-created video will not be part of the touring exhibition, but remains on view at the Smart Museum. ■

Catherine Sullivan, still from the multichannel video installation *Triangle of Need*, 2007. Courtesy of the artist, Galerie Catherine Bastide, Brussels, and Metro Pictures, New York.



TRENDS

HipHopistan

DJ Rekha, MC Kabir, Yogi B and Natchatra, Chee Malabar, and AbstractVision are musicians with international reputations, and if you want to buy their recordings in Chicago, you need to head to Devon Avenue. Yogi B and Natchatra, a group of Malaysian Tamil rappers, performed for 20,000 at a recent show in Toronto. DJ Rekha (aka Rekha Malhotra) draws thousands for her appearances at clubs in New York, London, and Chicago.

These artists performed at "HipHopistan: The Land of Hip-Hop," April 17–19, a mixture of discussions and concerts believed to be a first. Coinciding with the annual meeting of the Association for Asian-American Studies, the event explored the linguistic and pan-ethnic expressions of various South Asian and South Asian–American hip-hop artists, said event organizer Samip Mallick, Outreach Coordinator in the South Asian Language and Area Center.

"Not much research has been done on South Asian hip-hop," Mallick said. "For five or ten years, American hip-hop artists have been using South Asian sounds, but for South Asian hip-hop artists, it's relatively new."



Added Kaley Mason, a postdoctoral fellow in ethnomusicology, who studies South Asian music and moderated a HipHopistan panel discussion: "It's really an amazing, unprecedented event. I don't think South Asian hip-hop has ever received this type of forum in North America. When we think of South Asian musical practices in North America, or Europe, it's mainly the classical Indian traditions or Bollywood song and dance sequences."

HipHopistan is only one among a series of conferences, performances, and classes at the University focused on exploring the contributions of the hip-hop generation to politics and culture. Bakari Kitwana, artist-in-residence at the Center for the Study of Race, Politics, and Culture, taught a class on "The Politics of the Hip-Hop Generation" during the spring quarter. Kitwana, the author of *The Hip-Hop Generation*

... hip-hop is a very real and powerful social movement, meriting a place for its study in the halls of academia.

here & now



continued from page 3

and *Why White Kids Love Hip-Hop*, imagined the class as an interdisciplinary exploration of hip-hop culture and race in America through textual study and discussion. As Katie Buitrago of the *Chicago Weekly* noted, Kitwana's appointment is evidence that "hip-hop is a very real and powerful social movement, meriting a place for its study in the halls of academia."

Hip-hop performers have also visited the campus for both concerts and conferences. DJ Kool Herc, credited with helping to birth the movement, spoke at Hyde Park's Experimental Station in early June, and the relationships of hip-hop to politics has been frequently addressed on campus: artists, academics, and analysts gathered at the University April 5 for a conference on "The Hip-Hop Generation: Race, Gender & the Vote," while feminism and hip-hop were debated during panel discussions in 2005. ■

NEW ACQUISITIONS

The Tale of Two Manuscripts Reunited

For "Love's Books, Love's Looks: Textual and Visual Perspectives on the *Roman de la Rose*," a course offered by Daisy Delogu, Assistant Professor of Romance Languages and Literatures, and Aden Kumler, Assistant Professor of Art History, this autumn, will engage students in a cross-disciplinary exploration of *Le Roman de la Rose*, a fourteen-century French love poem recently acquired by the Regenstein Library.

The graduate seminar will center on what is considered "the single most influential vernacular text of the late French Middle Ages," Delogu said. "The manuscript presents a potential interest to scholars of manuscript culture and literary studies worldwide."

Kumler added: "This manuscript will make an ideal centerpiece for a wide range of teaching projects including classes examining the commercial book trade in Paris, the politics of luxury in the Middle Ages, and the history of medieval illuminated manuscripts."

Delogu and Kumler's seminar, which is part of the Franke Institute for the Humanities' Center for Disciplinary Innovation curriculum, will offer a chance to explore *Le Roman* as a literary and visual construct.

The Regenstein Library's acquisition of the manuscript reunited it with another fourteen-century manuscript: *Le Jeu des échecs moralisé* (*The Moralized Game of Chess*), which was separated from *Le Roman de la Rose* in 1907 and which the Library had acquired in 1931.

In the late 1230s, Guillaume de Lorris wrote the first section of *Le Roman de la Rose*, an allegorical poem on the art of love. Jean de Meun later completed the poem between 1270 and 1280. The copy acquired by Chicago dates from about 1365—nearly 100 years before the invention of the printing press. More than forty illuminations adorn the manuscript, created by the Master of Saint Voulte, who added hand-colored, painted, and gold-leaf embellishments to manuscripts.

The Library's manuscript of *Le Jeu des échecs moralisé* also was created in France about 1365, and includes illuminations by the Master of Saint Voulte as well. *Le Jeu* was originally written in Latin in the thirteen century by Jacobus de Cessolis, an Italian Dominican friar. Written at a time of political instability, his work was read centuries later as a guide to proper behavior, both because of the readily understood nature of the metaphor and the references to biblical and classical literature that buttress the argument.

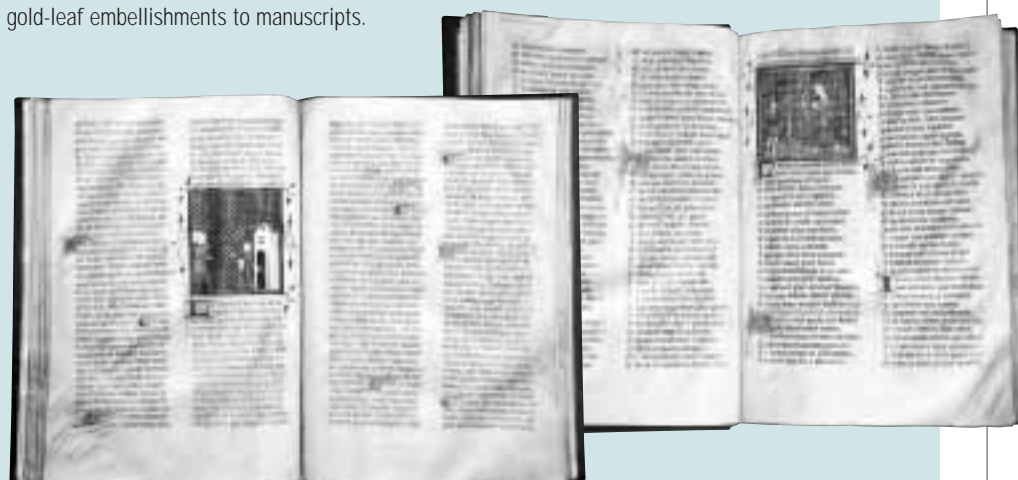
"Bringing the two parts of this book back together will enable discoveries that would not be possible if they remained apart," said Alice Schreyer, Director of the Special Collections Research Center at the Library.

Christina von Nolcken, Associate Professor in English Language and Literature, Medieval Studies, and the College, added: "The reunion of parts of a medieval manuscript proves a rare and wonderful opportunity. This is especially the case today, when scholars tend to work with manuscripts rather than with individual texts."

Digital versions of both manuscripts are available at <http://roseandchess.lib.uchicago.edu>. ■

Left: Jacobus de Cessolis. *Le Jeu des échecs moralisé*. Anonymous compilation of translations by Jean Ferron and Jean de Vigny. France, ca. 1365. 13 illuminations by the Master of Saint Voulte. University of Chicago MS 392.

Right: Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun. *Le Roman de la Rose*. France, ca. 1365. 40 illuminations by the Master of Saint Voulte. University of Chicago Library MS 1380.





LECTURE SERIES

Challenging the Exclusivity of the Literary Canon

Franco Moretti Explores Quantitative Studies for the Humanities

By Rad Borislavov, PhD candidate in Slavic Languages and Literatures

The work of Franco Moretti has galvanized discussions about the object and methods of literary studies for more than twenty years. Not beholden to the pitfalls of interminable interpretation and suspicious of the selective reading perpetuated by the literary canon, Moretti, the Danily C. and Laura Louise Bell Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Stanford University, has ventured into fields as different from his area of expertise, the nineteenth-century European novel, as popular culture and film in an attempt to place humanities research on a broader foundation. His week-long visit to the University of Chicago as the annual Frederick Ives Carpenter Lecturer in early March 2008 symbolized the importance of his numerous contributions to the field of literary studies that have challenged disciplinary boundaries and contributed greatly to our understanding of the European novel by, among other things, expanding the available means of studying it.

Moretti presented his latest research in three lectures, participated in the Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Cultures workshop, and met with students. The first lecture, "Theory of the Novel, History of the Novel," outlined differences and similarities in the rise of the novel in Western Europe and China as a vacillation between the two extremes of "mere" narrativity and its aestheticization. The second lecture,

"Bourgeoisie: On Henrik Ibsen," centered on the bourgeois as a character in Ibsen's drama and posed the question of "the historical position of Ibsen's work within the overall trajectory of the European bourgeoisie." This lecture, Moretti explained, drew on a chapter from a forthcoming book on the bourgeois in European literature. The last lecture, probably

Moretti has long argued for a "more rational literary history," one that would not fall prey to the vagaries of subjective taste nor limit itself to the complacent self-sufficiency of existing canons.

the most ambitious, "Quantitative Data: Formal Analysis, Reflections on 7,000 titles, British Novels 1740–1850," discussed alternative ways of describing and accounting for literary change by tracing fluctuations in the length of novel titles. Moretti made it clear, however, that this method of statistical analysis, made possible in large measure by recent



advances in digitizing texts, could be applied to other formal features of the novel and other genres.

Challenges to the exclusivity of the literary canon, however, are not new. What is specific about Moretti's approach? Iconoclastic, to say the least, with a heady mixture of Marxism, quantitative analysis, and evolutionary theory, Moretti has bucked the trend in literary studies, which have been dominated by a variety of theoretical approaches offering insightful readings of texts and discourses, but exhibiting hardly any interest in literary history as he understands it. Moretti has long argued for a "more rational literary history," one that would not fall prey to the vagaries of subjective taste nor limit itself to the complacent self-sufficiency of existing canons. If one is to believe Moretti, the influx of raw data and its quantification by statistical methods would open up the literary field by making it "historically longer, geographically larger, and morphologically deeper." Morphology, or form, is an important term in Moretti's vocabulary because his approach calls for a more rigorous literary scholarship, one which makes use of the traditional toolbox of literary studies—literary devices and form—but whose insights are derived from the processing of a large amount of previously neglected data. In short, the study of literature should not spurn explanations—quite the opposite, it should edge

closer to the scientific theory of falsifiability by focusing on demonstrable causal relations and by building hypotheses that can be proved and disproved. Moretti is quick to add, however, that literature can also serve as a corrective to methods accepted in the sciences and thus recognizes that their

juxtaposition can be mutually illuminating.

At the conclusion of the last lecture, James Chandler, the Barbara E. and Richard J. Franke Distinguished Service Professor of English Language and Literature, asked about the prospects for institutional success of a Moretti-inspired school of literary criticism. Moretti was moderately optimistic but also pointed out that it was his intellectual formation in the 1960s that eventually led him to his interest in quantitative studies. A new generation of literary scholars, he continued, already working at the intersections of quantitative studies and literary form, will bring a different set of assumptions and innovative ideas to bear on the old problem of literary history. ■



Left: eighth blackbird Below: David Gordon

AWARDS

Bringing Home a Grammy

Doctoral Student's Piece on Winning Album

By Josh Schonwald

When David M. Gordon, a second-year doctoral student in Music, composed *Friction Systems* in 2002, he could not imagine his piece would be recorded, much less be part of a Grammy-winning album.

The piece, nearly fifteen minutes in length, is on eighth blackbird's *strange imaginary animals*. It's not a surprise that eighth blackbird, an ensemble-in-residence at the University, won a Grammy on February 10 in the Best Chamber Music Performance category—the sextet has been impressing critics with its pioneering contemporary classical music since 1996—but it is surprising that a student composition was on the ensemble's award-winning album.

As virtuoso, pioneering performers, eighth blackbird has its pick from the world's best-known classical composers. The group plays student compositions, but rarely tours with, or records them. Gordon's piece was not only on the album, it also has been praised

In working with musicians with abilities "bordering on the superhuman," Gordon was able to compose a complex piece with little concern for it being "too difficult."

for its unique sound by the *Chicago Sun-Times*, *Gramophone*, and the BBC's *Music Magazine*.

"David has an extraordinary way of working with sound," said Shulamit Ran, the Andrew MacLeish Distinguished Service Professor in Music and the College. "He uses conventional acoustics and unusual instruments and really interesting rhythmic patterns and phrases to create a highly unusual sound. It's unique. It's a sound world all his own." Ran, one of Gordon's advisors, said she could not think of another composer whose music resembles the sound world of his work. "He has a very personal voice."

Gordon said writing for eighth blackbird was an amazing experience. In working with musicians with abilities "bordering on the superhuman," he was able to compose a complex piece with little concern for it being "too difficult." In the piece, then called *Dramamine*, Gordon used complex rhythms,



non-standard tunings, and unusual instrumental techniques. "It was very exciting to do," he said.

It was equally exciting for Gordon to get feedback from virtuoso musicians. "When you work with student musicians and ask them whether certain techniques are possible, you're never 100 percent certain if the answers they give you are accurate. With eighth blackbird, you can know for certain that whatever they tell you is absolutely correct."

Writing a track on a Grammy-winning album in the best Chamber Music Ensemble is quite a bit different than winning, say, Best Rock Album. It is certainly not instant fame and fortune, though Gordon does earn a small royalty from performances and disc sales. Still, Gordon, who has nearly completed his PhD, said he believes *Friction Systems* will have a lingering impact: "It certainly raises the exposure of my work like never before. Every disc they sell, lets another person hears my work." ■

TRAVEL DIARY

Views of Prague Castle

By Daniel Pratt, MA 2007, PhD candidate in Slavic Languages and Literatures

As a graduate student in the Slavic Department, I am required to learn at least two Slavic languages to an almost native level of fluency. I have chosen Russian and Czech, two complex and fascinating languages. In summer 2007, I received two scholarships to study in both Russia and the Czech Republic: a Foreign Language and Area Studies grant, administered through the Center for East European, Russian/Eurasian Studies, and the Prochazka Fund grant, established by the Prochazka family to foster Czech and Slovak studies at the University of Chicago.

A day-long journey took me to the heart of Siberia: Irkutsk, a former city of exile, would become my home for nine weeks. Its political history, quality of Russian teaching, and proximity to Lake Baikal, the deepest lake in the world, intrigued me.

During the week, I studied Russian at the State Linguistic University of Irkutsk and visit the museums in the city, and on the weekends, I made trips to the lake. Baikal is a unique ecosystem with many endemic flora and fauna, such as fresh-water seals and *omyl*, a fish much like salmon that is excellent smoked. The lake has been the subject of eco-preservation in the last few years, and the successful result has been water clean enough to drink directly from the lake.

"... I explored Prague and immersed myself in the dialects of several towns where Hrabal, considered among the foremost Czech writers of the twentieth century, once lived."

After studying in Irkutsk for nine weeks, I flew to the Czech Republic, where I had received permission from the estate of Bohumil Hrabal to access his manuscripts at the National Archive in Prague, which is located on a hill, just outside the center of Prague, in the Strachov monastery. The reading room is an old study, complete with gilt cherubs, frescoes of Biblical stories, and a view of Prague castle. I spent a month doing research during the week, and on the weekends I explored Prague and immersed myself in the dialects of several towns where Hrabal, considered among the foremost Czech writers of the twentieth century, once lived.



The research has proved priceless to me, and I presented some of my findings at two conferences this year. It would be hard to overstate the value of the two summer research trips to my preliminary dissertation research. I have improved my Russian to a significantly higher level and gathered materials that will serve as the basis of my dissertation. Moreover, I was able to experience a unique culture and ecosystem in Russia and broaden my understanding of one of the greatest Czech writers. ■

DONOR NEWS

Readers with a Passion

Berlin Gift Creates Professor of the Development of the Novel

A generous gift of \$2 million from Randy and Melvin Berlin to the Division of the Humanities will create the Division's first professorship devoted to studying the novel. The Department of English Language and Literature will use the endowment to hire a prominent scholar working on the development of the novel in any period, or across periods.

"It will enable us to hire a scholar whose concern with literary form will show students how and why the novel as a genre has retained its remarkable vitality," said Bill Brown, the Edward Carson Waller Distinguished Service Professor and Chair of English Language and Literature.

"The Berlins are passionate readers who fully appreciate the density and complexity of great literature," said Brown. "They recognize the power with which books pose particular questions and the patience it takes to see how those questions get resolved. Talking with them about books—about Austen or James or Nabokov—has been a distinct pleasure."

Melvin Berlin, the retired chairman of Berlin Packaging, LLC, and Randy Lamm Berlin, AM 1977, a retired attorney, are longtime supporters of the humanities, with a passion for supporting the University's central mission to train doctoral students.

Randy Berlin is Chair of the University's Humanities Visiting Committee. For the past three years, she has taught law and literature at Loyola University Chicago School of Law, where, she continues "to proselytize for the humanities as an essential enrichment to the life of the mind."

As to the focus of their gift, Randy Berlin said, "We chose to focus our professorship narrowly on the development of the novel in English because other specialists teach the Greek, Roman, and European classics and poetry. But there is no chair for a professor who specializes in the study of masterpieces of the novel in the English language, of which there are so many glorious examples. Our intention was to plug that gap." The professorship will be named the Randy L. and Melvin R. Berlin Professor of the Development of the Novel in English Language and Literature in their honor.

During her graduate studies at Chicago, Ms. Berlin took classes with one of the world's leading scholars of the novel, the late English professor Sheldon Sacks, PhD 1960. She said that her encounter with his neo-Aristotelian method of criticism and organization of the novel was revelatory.



Randy and Melvin Berlin

"... there is no chair for a professor who specializes in the study of masterpieces of the novel in the English language... Our intention was to plug that gap."

"It was a new method of thinking about the subject and altered forever the way I read and teach and think about literature today," she said. "At the least, I hope to give future students the opportunity to replicate my experience in understanding the masterpieces of the form and how the novel developed over time. Melvin and I feel a chair devoted to study of the novel will contribute to that end." ■

RICHARD NEER

is the David B. and
Clara E. Stern Professor
of Humanities in Art
History and the College.

This article is a revised
version of the keynote
address presented
at Humanities Day, the
University of Chicago,
on 27 October 2007.

BLIND ORION SEEKING THE SUN

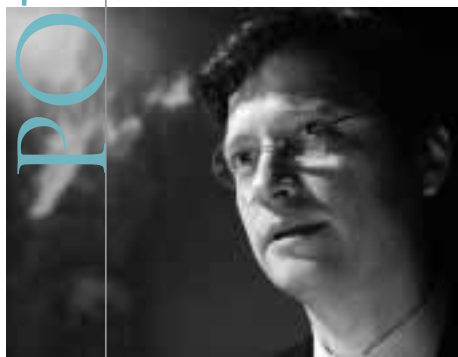
A painting by the French artist Nicolas Poussin, *Blind Orion Searching for the Rising Sun*, and the scholarly responses to it elucidate two important things. First, they elucidate a distinctive historical conception of picture-making, a distinctive set of ethical dilemmas that confronted certain people in the past when it came to making, and looking at, and thinking about, paintings. Second, the picture and its scholarship elucidate some of the distinctive resources and limitations of humanistic pursuits, as opposed to, say, those branches of knowledge with a legitimate claim to the status of science. It's a useful springboard for reflection on the sort of things that brought us here today, I mean the humanities. >>



It's sort of a cliché to say that the lofty rationalism of Descartes' method has a pictorial counterpart in the equally lofty rationalism of Poussin's pictorial compositions. In each case, you organize the world according to regular principles worked out in advance. Descartes, by beginning not with the senses but with his own cogitations, logically bootstrapping his way to a premise and then built from there; Poussin, by eschewing the pungent realism of someone like Caravaggio or a Dutch still life, instead created ordered pictorial worlds that exemplify rational proportions, even as they tell stories about high-minded thoughtful types of people.

Blind Orion isn't like that at all. It's one of Poussin's last works. He finished it in 1658, when he was in his mid-sixties. In a couple of years, persistent trembling in his hands would force him to give up painting forever. It is for all intents and purposes a unique picture in the canon of early modern painting—nobody else painted this story. As a result, it presents us with a lot of problems. But first, the picture, and the story.

POUSSIN



The giant hunter Orion—whose constellation still hangs in our night sky—strides into the background from stage right. He's been struck blind for having attacked the daughter of the king of the island of Chios, and has to find the rising Sun, in whose rays he will find a cure. Here he seems to be making his way to the crest of a hill, behind which is a light-filled valley. Helping him in his quest is a little man perched atop his shoulders. This is Cedalion, an assistant at the forge of the smith-god Hephaestus. Cedalion seems to be asking directions from a man standing in the shade of a large tree. Immediately above and in front of him is a dark cloud, its edges gilt by sunlight: trails of vapor lead off to the right, suggesting that the cloud has been moving from right to left, floating before Orion. Leaning on the cloud is Orion's lover, the goddess Diana, a figure of studied nonchalance.

In a picture that has as its central drama the quest for the sun, commentators have been remarkably incurious about the source of light.

One can scarcely imagine anything more remote from the rigid proportions of your standard Poussin than the radical disproportion of this picture, with the bizarre giant alongside the little men, the lush and yet mysteriously blasted natural setting. In fact, the painting has long been admired exactly because it's so unlike the stereotype of Poussin as a chilly rationalist. Early commentators celebrate its wild and romantic landscape. They differ markedly in this regard from the dominant readings of our own time, which have focused on its fit, or lack thereof, with versions of the same myth in classical literature. The trouble is that Poussin's picture conforms to no extant account of the story. Any effort to subordinate the picture to literature are doomed to failure; it just doesn't match.

In this situation we need to look more closely. It happens that discussions have overlooked a significant detail. In a picture that has as its central drama the quest for the sun, commentators have been remarkably incurious about the source of light. Where's Orion going—where is the sun? The overwhelming sense, on first approaching the picture, is that the light is shining from the left background into the right foreground. It silhouettes the men who sit on the crest of the hill and causes the edges of Diana's cloud bank to glow. To my knowledge, every commentator who mentions the light source locates it in the left background, somewhere beyond or behind the clouds. This impression is all but irresistible, especially given the way the light catches the edges of Diana's cloud bank. It looks almost as though the sun were *behind* the cloud, causing a nimbus to form around its extremities. At the same time, a hole in the screen of trees at left reveals the sky brightening to white in farthest distance on that side, while the trees in the light-filled valley, directly above the heads of the silhouetted men on the hillcrest, cast long shadows that angle distinctly into the foreground. The commentators are presumably responding to these clues.

But this impression just *can't* be correct. Although the illumination of the background does suggest that the sun rises in the left distance, the disposition of shadows in the foreground indicates plainly that the light enters from somewhere in front and to the left of the picture plane. Each tree stump in the foreground is like a sundial, casting a long shadow into the right background. Orion himself casts a similar shadow, while the illumination of his shoulders would be inexplicable if the sun were in the background. You can't walk facing the sun and at the same time have the light at your back. Even the stand of trees at left middle ground, so far from being backlit, actually catches the sun. It's extraordinarily odd—in a picture that's all about finding the light source, when you actually look for the sun, it's exceptionally difficult to place. There seems to be no way satisfactorily to reconcile the lighting of the foreground with that of the back-

Top: Richard Neer; Above: Nicolas Poussin's *Blind Orion Searching for the Rising Sun*

ground, and it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Poussin has been inconsistent.

But if that's the case, the effect is unlikely to be accidental. Not only is the location of the sun of unique importance to this story, but Poussin is known to have been unusually fastidious in the disposition of his light sources. For instance, his picture of the Last Supper was a showpiece of consistent illumination: Poussin exercised considerable ingenuity in representing the play of shadows cast by an oil lamp with three separate wicks. This painter was famous for his coherent integration of multiple light sources. He knew just what he was doing.

So Orion is not, or not simply, walking toward the sun. There are at least *two* notional suns in this picture, one outside the frame in the space of the beholder, shining onto Orion's back, and the other in the distance, behind the hills. Recognition of this inconsistency clarifies the narrative action considerably. Cedalion, perched on Orion's shoulders, and the "little fellow" gesticulating below, are each pointing in different directions. The guy on the ground seems definitely to be sending Orion into the valley. Cedalion points off to the left, but the exact angle of his gesture is uncertain. Although his right arm is parallel to Orion's left, the twist of his body suggests that he is not pointing into the valley but to stage left, or maybe not (the ambiguity is permanent). The result is a scene of exceptional pathos: Orion, huge and sightless, marches purposefully in the wrong direction, while his guide, the craftsman who should be his eyes, bickers with a bystander over where to go. It is this spectacle that the goddess Diana watches so impassively.

I recognize that the notion that Poussin included two suns in his picture may seem impossibly contrived. Faced with such a conundrum, the first thing we do is look for a text. In fact, the notion of multiple suns has important precedent. For instance, in a handbook called *Morosophie*, published in 1553, Guillaume La Perrière wrote a little poem that reads

To believe there could be multiple suns
in the skies
Is strange, really crazy;
Just so, to believe in many gods
Is heresy, and loathsome.

Maybe that's what Poussin's alluding to? Is he taking a stand against paganism? Well, how would we decide? One criterion to use is: is there anything *in the picture* that suggests that its point is to label paganism as a loathsome heresy? And here you'd have to say, No. It's a pagan myth, after all. The whole picture is "crazy" with its giant and its little guide. And anyway, Orion's problem is not that he believes in multiple suns; if anything, his whole problem is that he wants to find the one true sun.

But once you start looking for multiple suns they start turning up everywhere. Here's another. In the sixteenth canto of *Purgatorio*, Dante writes

Rome, that reformed the world, was accustomed
To have two suns, which one road and the other,
Of God and of the world, made visible.

It might be tempting to read off Poussin's meaning from this passage. Orion, victimized by his own lust, massively corporeal, stands at a crossroads between salvation and the world. The allusion to Nebbia and Guerra might be adduced in support of such a reading. But, here again, there's nothing in the picture to suggest that these suns are individually symbolic of divine and earthly light, that the setting is Rome, or even that there are two roads. There is nothing pictorial that suggests any specific debt to, or even knowledge of, the *Purgatorio*.

If, however, we leave Florence for Rome, and the fourteenth century for the seventeenth, and Italian for French, then we find an even stranger description of multiple suns. On the twentieth of March, 1629, the citizens of Rome witnessed an extraordinary meteorological event: the appearance of five separate suns in the afternoon sky. This prodigy occurred shortly after Poussin's arrival in the city as a young painter. Technically known as *parhelia*, or sun-dogs, the multiple suns ignited scholarly controversy. A fierce Jesuit named Christoph Scheiner, who spent most of his leisure hours tormenting Galileo, witnessed the event from the vineyards of Frascati outside Rome. He communicated it in detail to the powerful and well-connected Cardinal Barberini, who in turn sent a letter to the great Provençal intellectual Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc. Peiresc was the hub of a huge circle of intellectuals. He produced a pamphlet describing the event which he disseminated throughout Europe by means of his friend Pierre Gassendi, one of the great figures of early modern science. It was a scholarly call-to-arms—who could explain the prodigy? The call did not go unanswered. Gassendi himself wrote a treatise on the subject, which first appeared in 1630 and was reprinted in 1656 and then again in 1658 (the year of Poussin's *Orion*) as part of larger collections. (Samuel Beckett, actually, mentions *parhelia* in his poem "Whoroscope," calling it "Gassendi's sun-red crystalline cloud," and referring us in a footnote to this very book!) The topic likewise exercised the great Dutch scientist Christiaan Huygens, who was working on it in the 1660s, as well as a host of lesser figures.

René Descartes eventually got his hands on one of Peiresc's pamphlets. To say that the news was significant would be an understatement. Descartes dropped everything and set out to provide a *physical* explanation of *parhelia*. His work on this topic became the germ of a broader study of meteorological phenomena, which in turn gave rise to what would become *Discourse on the Method*—the very book in which Descartes laid out his rationalist technique for defeating skepticism. Although nowadays read in isolation, the *Discourse* was originally the preface to three studies of optics, geometry, and meteorology. These

three divisions correspond to what we can figure out rationally in our heads (geometry), the way we relate to the external world (our senses, optics) and the external world itself (the weather). Meteorology was the last of these studies, representing the climax of the whole project: Descartes' method in its application to natural phenomena. And the last chapter of the *Meteorology*, the culmination of the culmination, is an explanation of the multiple suns of 1629. It's no exaggeration to say that *parhelia* changed the world.

What was at stake in these sun-dogs? I mean: Why did multiple suns, specifically, generate such huge excitement? The epigraph to Peiresc's pamphlet, a passage from the first *Georgic* of Virgil, provides a gloss:

Who dares to call the Sun
A liar? It is he who often warns
of secret [*caecos*] conspiracy
And treachery and hidden swelling of war.

In a time of insurgent skepticism and nascent empiricism, the possibility of a lying sun was both a problem and an opportunity. A problem, because it demonstrated in startling fashion the power of contemporary doubts about sense perception. The very vocabulary of rationalism was predicated on the veracity of the sun: reason was *la clarté naturelle*, "natural light," a cognitive counterpart to the self-evident clarity of sunshine. The possibility of doubling a single candle flame by pressing on one's eyeballs was an old chestnut of skepticism, but a sun that appeared multiple under ordinary conditions was an altogether greater worry. It was in fact a cliché in its own right. Well before 1629, Michel de Montaigne had raised the possibility of multiple suns in the *Apologie pour Raymond Sebond*. In a long and thoroughly skeptical account of the fallibility of the senses, he quoted from the *Aeneid* (4.470) to make his point:

This same deception that the senses
convey to our understanding they receive
in their turn. . . . What we see and hear when
stirred to anger, we do not hear as it is.
Et solem geminum, Et duplices se ostendere
Thebas [Twin suns appear, and a double city
of Thebes] . . . To a man vexed or afflicted
the brilliance [*clarté*] of day seems darkened
and gloomy. Our senses are not only altered,
but often completely stupefied by the
passions of the soul.

The line from Virgil is itself a celebrated reference to the moment in Euripides' *Bacchae* (II. 918-19) at which the drunken and fear-maddened Pentheus sees double: "Oh look! I think I see two suns, and twin Thebes, the seven-gated city." Montaigne, however, is less concerned with passing disturbances of perception than with its root fallibility. It is this altogether more significant aspect of the problem that the *parhelia*

dramatized: the incident of 1629 brought a theoretical fancy to life.

Precisely the significance of this topos for skepticism made it an opportunity for the rationalists of the seventeenth century: explaining the bizarre occurrence would be a significant victory both for the nascent science and for whomever could solve the conundrum. If Cartesian *méditation* amounts to stating the skeptical argument in order methodically to defeat it, then the impetus of that enterprise lies in parhelia, as its demonstration consists in rationalizing the phenomenon. The lying, plural sun represents the conjunction of the extraordinary with the everyday: it forces a confrontation between the world of the Cartesian closet, in which the philosopher is prey to radical doubt about balls of wax and malicious demons, and the world of ordinary conversation, the world of weather and sunshine, in which it can be possible to hold such questions at bay.

There is no reason to suppose that Poussin had specific knowledge of Gassendi's or Descartes' discussions of parhelia. But he was resident in Rome when the incident occurred in 1629, and the main actors were known to him personally: Cardinal Barberini was a patron, as was his retainer Cassiano dal Pozzo, and Poussin himself corresponded with Peiresc. It is very likely that Poussin knew of the prodigy, even if he did not witness it personally. But the Orion landscape does not refer directly to this incident: Scheiner reported five suns, and the picture seems to imply only (if that's the word) *only* two. The point bears repeating: the painting does not illustrate the event of 20 March 1629. Similarly, Montaigne does mention two suns, but only in passing—would Poussin really have noticed the remark?—and he also mentions two cities of Thebes, which of course do not appear in the picture. The importance of these textual precedents lies not in providing sources for Poussin's meditation but in defining the significance of duplex suns. The *Apologie pour Raymond Sebond*, the prodigy of 1629, and the scientific responses all suggest that parhelia were one especially important way in which skeptical doubt presented itself in the second quarter of the seventeenth century. They are, therefore, no more and no less than *circumstantial evidence* for the possibility that Poussin *might* himself have attached metaphysical importance to such a phenomenon. This claim is a deliberately weak or minimalist one, but at least it rests on visual evidence. The multiple sun was part of the conceptual vocabulary that Poussin had at his disposal. What Poussin made of it, however, is not to be understood by reference to scientific treatises but to the pictures themselves.

Painting as a Way of Life

What is the point of making such pictures—each one learned, recondite, with all the intricacy of a cuckoo clock? However fussy and intricate they may be, they all insist upon the practical, lived experience

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of the vicissitudes of representation: people suffer and die, cities fall. To exemplify the abstract in the everyday is the special usefulness of such an image. The result is a pragmatic, as opposed to theoretical, mode of philosophizing.

For all their complexity, there is nothing methodical, in the Cartesian sense, about such paintings. Comparison with Peiresc's diagram is telling. The diagram lends itself to textual decipherment: the cryptographic method of academic iconology would be perfectly appropriate in that instance. Each element in the picture corresponds to an element in the text, such that the image func-

tions as (mere) illustration.

But the Orion picture operates in an entirely different register. It is worlds away from the diagram, still further from Gassendi's and Descartes' explanations, just as the earlier dramas of idolatry and sin are anything but scholastic. The purpose of such pictures is not to illustrate a text in the interests of an abstract and universal science.

Rather, Poussin's paintings offer moral philosophy on the fly, occurring in the everyday contemplation of spectacles of extraordinary suffering, of humans who fail to see correctly, if at all. The narratives are edifying, to be sure, but they are edifying of beholders: they teach us how to look.

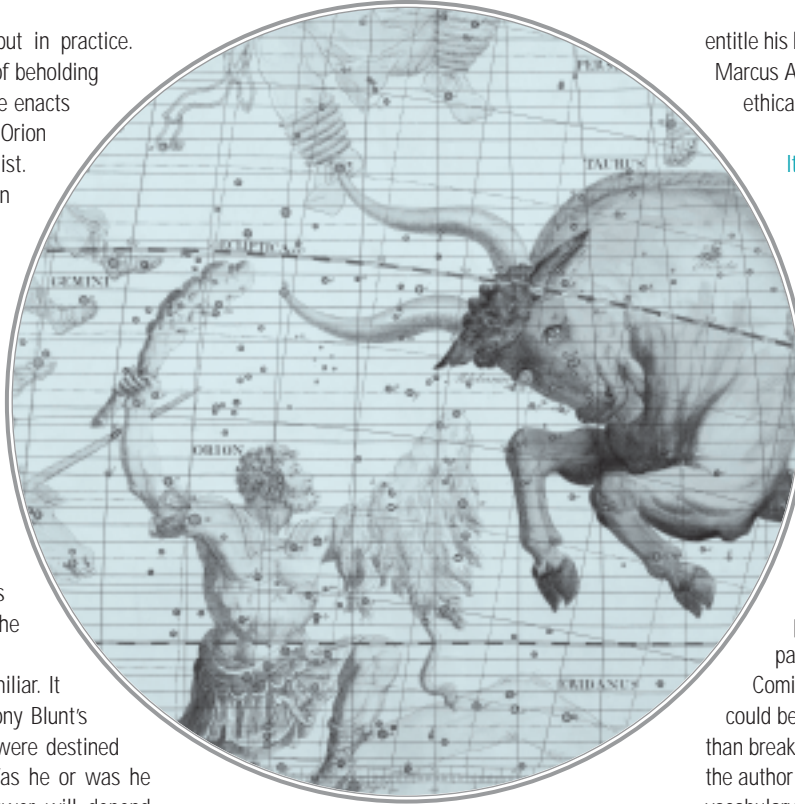
The Orion landscape invites the beholder to seek vainly for the sun, and thereby to make the giant's dilemma his or her own.

The high view-point may have something to do with this—how tall must we be in order to get just this view of the scene? I won't press that one. But I do want to insist that Poussin is out to make the problem of depiction and of imitation, with all its risks and rewards, the beholder's own. He thereby constitutes *looking at pictures* as an ethical concern in its own right. Looking at pictures models looking at the world; and the pictures themselves narrate the pitfalls and rewards of such beholding. In this way, Poussin solicits a mode of viewing attentive to the ethical stakes in representation: an ethically heightened seeing that amounts to a lived or pragmatic cultivation of the self, what Michel Foucault called "conversions of looking."

The difference with Cartesian science, and with the diagram, thus consists in two points. First, Poussin's picture is narrative in a way the diagram is not: they represent dilemmas of skepticism and representation

as they are lived, not in theory but in practice. Second, the picture stages the act of beholding itself, such that reading each picture enacts its narrative. To hunt the sun in the Orion landscape is to mimic the protagonist. The diagram does not stage looking in this way, and its beholding is precisely *not* a problem for Descartes or Peiresc or Gassendi. Indeed, part of the point of the various illustrations in Descartes' treatises is to model an unproblematic or doubt-free mode of seeing, as if to enact the rationalization of vision in *La Dioptrique*. For Descartes, in the first *Meditation*, it is exactly *painting* that models deceptive appearances. For Poussin, by contrast, looking at a painting is not an obstacle to knowledge but the very crux of an ethical discourse.

In a sense these claims are familiar. It was, after all, the burden of Anthony Blunt's argument that Poussin's paintings were destined for philosophical contemplation. Was he or was he not a *peintre-philosophe*? The answer will depend upon how one takes philosophy. One great lesson of Montaigne is, in Pierre Hadot's words, that "philosophy is something other than a theoretical discourse." Montaigne's skepticism was nothing if not lived. It was an ascetics, a care of the self, pertinent only in its



mutual implication of these three branches of philosophy, Descartes constituted knowledge as something distinct from comportment and self-fashioning. "[T]he extraordinary thing in Descartes' texts is that he

entitle his book the *Meditations*: an explicit allusion to Marcus Aurelius. The *Discourse* opens in a distinctly ethical register:

It is not enough to have a good mind, rather the main thing is to apply it well. The greatest souls are capable of the greatest vices as well as of the greatest virtues, and those who go forward only very slowly can progress much further if they always keep to the right path, than those who run and wander off it.

Only a few pages later, however, Descartes makes a sharp distinction between *la méthode* and the classical tradition of philosophical ethics. "I compared the moral writings of the ancient pagans to the most proud and magnificent palaces built on nothing but sand and mud." Coming from a committed foundationalist, there could be no more damning characterization. Rather than breaking decisively with the classical tradition, the author of the *Meditations* retains the traditional vocabulary while recasting it decisively. He does not dispense with ethics, but he does subordinate it to knowledge or *connaissance*. The first *Meditation* names itself as "action" as opposed to "deliberation." But the action in question consists in pedagogy as the terminus of meditation. One does not know the truth by being pure and moral; one is pure and moral by knowing the truth.

Poussin stands at the cusp of this transition. He mobilizes the identical topos to the new science—the problem of multiple suns. But he does not distinguish the skeptical or epistemological problem from the ethical one. On the contrary: throughout his career he posits depiction and beholding as the very stuff of ethics even as, with the Orion landscape especially, he is fully alive to their epistemology. Physics, logic, and ethics remain intertwined, even as the vocabulary remains constant. There is a useful contrast with Peiresc's diagram, reused by Descartes. The diagram effectively sunders physics and logic from ethics. For all that an interrogation of sense perception is integral to a healthy life—a way to fend off madness, as Descartes puts it in the first *Meditation*—Descartes' solution leaves the ethical to one side. Even the *Discourse on the Method* adopts a confessional mode, but in the chapter on *Meteorology* the explanation is purely logical and physical. For Poussin, by contrast, the identical dilemma is nothing if not ethical. The multiple suns in the Orion landscape stage as tragedy what the diagram stages as knowledge. ■

The Orion landscape invites the beholder to seek vainly for the sun, and thereby to make the giant's dilemma his or her own.

everyday enactment; it took place in and as quotidian self-examination, in and as writing, in and as the decoration of one's study, the education of children, the contemplation of one's thumbs. As Hadot suggests, the *Essais* are a supreme example of the survival, into modernity, of the Antique ideal of philosophy as a way of life. But Blunt and most modern commentators have not understood the *peintre-philosophe* in this manner. For Blunt, as for iconology generally, philosophy means abstraction, and for a picture to have philosophical significance it must illustrate *un discours théorique*. The resulting art history sacrifices both art and history to method. In its properly historical sense, the phrase *peintre-philosophe* implies an ascetics of painting—painting as a way of life—that takes the contemplation of images as the very practice of a love of wisdom. Making and beholding pictures is a substantive ethical act.

In a late interview, the great French philosopher Michel Foucault suggested that an essential feature of the Cartesian revolution in philosophy was the dissociation of ethics from physics and logic. Where the Antique and medieval worlds had assumed the

succeeded in substituting a subject as founder of practices of knowledge, for a subject constituted through practices of the self." Foucault identified two key elements in this transition. The first was the de-coupling of ethics and self-formation (*ascesis*) from rationality.

Evidence substituted for asceticism at the point where the relationship to the self meets the relationship to others and the world. The relationship to the self no longer needs to be ascetic to get into relation to the truth. Before Descartes one could not be impure, immoral, and know the truth. With Descartes, direct evidence is enough. After Descartes we have a non-ascetic subject of knowledge.

The second element was the recasting of philosophy's task from asceticism to epistemology, from a care of the self to a grasping of the world. Foucault called this second element the change from a subject of ethics to a subject of knowledge.

The rupture should not be overstated. Hadot justly criticized Foucault for making an excessively stark distinction between Cartesian and Stoic philosophy. Not for nothing, he observed, did Descartes

Left: René Descartes by Baudran.

Above: The Constellation of Orion and Taurus the Bull by James Thornhill, circa 1725.

curriculum vitae

The following is a list of awards, grants and fellowships received by University of Chicago faculty in 2007 and 2008. Please help us keep informed of your accomplishments: tableau@uchicago.edu.



Art History

Wu Hung, Harrie A. Vanderstappen Distinguished Service Professor of Art History, East Asian Languages and Civilizations, and the College, received a Faculty Award for Excellence in Graduate Teaching from the University of Chicago. He was also appointed a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. In addition, he received the Distinguished Teaching of Art History Award from the College Art Association, a fellowship from the Franke Institute for his research "Another Story of Ruins: Presence and Absence in Chinese Art and Visual Culture," and a faculty award from IBM.

Rebecca Zorach, Associate Professor of Art History and the College, has been awarded the Paul Mellon and Ailsa Mellon Bruce Senior Fellowship from the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts at the National Gallery of Art.

Classics

Christopher Faraone, Frank Curtis Springer and Gertrude Melcher Springer Professor in the Humanities and in the College, is the recipient of a fellowship from the Institute for Advanced Studies at Princeton (fall 2008) and a fellowship from the Getty Research Center (spring 2009). Faraone also received a grant from the Loeb Classical Foundation in support of his 2008–09 research leave.

Bruce Lincoln, Caroline E. Haskell Professor of the History of Religions in the Divinity School, and the Committee on the History of Culture, and Associate Member of Anthropology and Classics, received the 2007 Frank Moore Cross Book Award for *Religion, Empire and Torture: The Case of Achaemenian Persia with a Postscript on Abu Ghraib* (2007) from the American Schools for Oriental Research.

Emanuel Mayer, Assistant Professor of Classics and the College, received a fellowship from the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Studies at Harvard University.

Mark Payne, Assistant Professor of Classics and the College, received a fellowship from the Franke Institute for his research "The Animal Part: Humans and Animals in the Lambic Tradition."

East Asian Languages & Civilizations

Donald Harper, Professor in East Asian Languages and Civilizations and the College, has been awarded fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation and the American Council of Learned Societies in support of his 2008–09 research leave to pursue work on "Occult Texts and Everyday Knowledge in China in the Age of Manuscripts: Fifth Century B.C. to Tenth Century A.D."

Michael Raine, Assistant Professor of East Asian Languages and Civilizations, the Committee on Cinema and Media Studies, and the College, received a fellow-

ship from the Franke Institute for his research "Modernism, Materiality, and Cultural Mimesis: Japanese New Wave Cinema, 1955–1964."

Edward Shaughnessy, Lorraine J. and Herrlee G. Creel Distinguished Service Professor in Early Chinese Studies in East Asian Literatures and Civilizations and the College, received a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

English Language & Literature

Jacqueline Goldsby, Associate Professor of English Language and Literature and the College, received the William Sanders Scarborough Prize of the Modern Language Association for her book *A Spectacular Secret: Lynching in American Life and Literature*, which was also a finalist for the Lora Romero First Book Publication Award of the American Studies Association. She also received a gift from ComEd in support of her "Mapping the Stacks" project.

Loren Kruger, Professor of English Language and Literature, the Committee on African Studies, and the College, was a recipient of a research fellowship from the U.S. Department of State's Fulbright-Hays Faculty Research Abroad Program.

W. J. T. Mitchell, Gaylord Donnelley Distinguished Service Professor of English and Art History, was a recipient of a fellowship from the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute.

Jennifer Scappettone, Assistant Professor of English Language and Literature and the College, received a fellowship from the Djerassi Resident Artists Program. She also has been awarded a grant from the Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation to support research she will be conducting in Venice, Italy.

Mark Slouka, Professor of English Language and Literature and the College, received a Guggenheim Fellowship.

Germanic Studies

Christiane Frey, Assistant Professor of Germanic Studies and the College, received a fellowship from the Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel.

David Wellbery, LeRoy T. and Margaret Deffenbaugh Carlson University Professor of Germanic Studies, Comparative Literature, and the College, was elected a corresponding member of the Bavarian Academy of Sciences and Humanities.

Linguistics

Susan Gal, Mae and Sidney G. Metzl Distinguished Service Professor of Anthropology, Linguistics, and the College, was named a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

John Goldsmith, Edward Carson Waller Distinguished Service Professor of Linguistics, Computer Science, and the College, and Senior Fellow of the Computation Institute, was named a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and a fellow of the Linguistics Society of America.

Jason Merchant, Associate Professor of Linguistics and the College, received a fellowship from the Onassis Foundation.

Jerry Sadock, Glen A. Lloyd Distinguished Service Professor of Linguistics, was named a fellow of the Linguistics Society of America.

Alan C. L. Yu, Associate Professor of Linguistics and the College, received a fellowship from the Franke Institute for his research "Rescuing Fleeting Voices: A Study of the Sounds of a Dying Language."

Music

Philip V. Bohlman, Mary Werkman Distinguished Service Professor of the Humanities and of Music and the College, received the Derek Allen Prize for Musicology from the British Academy for *The Music of European Nationalism: Cultural Identity and Modern History*.

Martha Feldman, Professor of Music and the College, received the Ruth A. Solie Award for best multi-author collection of essays, with Bonnie Gordon of the University of Virginia, for *The Courtesan's Arts: Cross-Cultural Perspectives*. She also was also appointed the Ernest Bloch Lecturer at the University of California, Berkeley.

Philip Gossett, Robert W. Reneker Distinguished Service Professor of Music and the College, received the Otto Kinkeldey award for best monograph by a senior scholar for his *Divas and Scholars: Performing Italian Opera*. Gossett also received a two-year grant from the Packard Humanities Institute to prepare a multi-volume set of the *Works of Gioachino Rossini* and was awarded the Serena Medal by the British Academy for "eminent services towards the furtherance of the study of Italian history, literature, art and economics."

Marta Ptaszynska, Helen B. and Frank L. Sulzberger Professor in Composition of Music and the College received numerous commissions, including: *Magic Doremic*, opera for young audiences, the National Opera in Warsaw, January 18, 2008; *Lumen*, Cleveland Chamber Symphony, March 30, 2008; *Concerto for Flute, Harp, and Orchestra*, International Harp Society, May 18, 2008, Katowice, Poland; *Hymn of the Universe*, for choir and organ, Rockefeller Chapel commission for the Gala Celebration of the new organ, June 7, 2008; and a percussion orchestra work in progress, Poznan Academy of Music and Philharmonic, scheduled to premiere December 16, 2008, Poznan, Poland.

Shulamit Ran, Andrew MacLeish Distinguished Service Professor of Music and the College, and the Artistic Director of Contempo, was named to a three-year term as vice-president for Music of the American Academy of Arts and Letters. *Legends for Orchestra*

CD of Ran's works performed by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Maestro Daniel Barenboim, with *Violin Concerto* performed by Ittai Shapira and the BBC Concert Orchestra, was released on Albany Records in December 2007.

Anne Walters Robertson, Claire Dux Swift Distinguished Service Professor of Music, and the College, received the H. Colin Slim Award for best article by a senior scholar of the American Musicological Society for "The Savior, the Woman, and the Head of the Dragon in the Caput Masses and Motet" in the *Journal of the American Musicological Society*. She also received the Wilbur Lucius Cross Medal from the Yale University Graduate School Alumni Association for outstanding achievements in scholarship, teaching, academic administration and public service and was named a Fellow of the American Academy of the Arts and Sciences.

Howard Sandroff, Senior Lecturer of Music and the Director of the Computer Music Studio, received the ASCAP/US Award from the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP).

Kotoka Suzuki, Assistant Professor of Music and the College, has been awarded a fellowship by the Howard Foundation in support of her 2008–09 research leave.

Near East Languages & Civilizations

Nadine Moeller, Assistant Professor of Egyptian Archeology in Near Eastern Languages and Literature, was awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities Digital Humanities Grant to develop new digital imaging techniques at Tell Edfu.

Farouk Mustafa, Ibn Rushd Professorial Lecturer in Modern Arabic Language in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations and the College, was the recipient of the Saif Ghobash-Bonipal Prize for Arabic Literary Translation from the Society of Authors.

Dennis Pardee, Professor of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, the Oriental Institute, Committee on Jewish Studies, and the College, gave a lecture on "Ugaritic and the beginnings of the West-Semitic literary tradition," as part of The Schweich

Lectures series at the British Academy in November 2007.

Tahera Outbuddin, Assistant Professor of Arabic Literature in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations and the College, has been named a 2008 Carnegie Scholar by the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

Matt Stolper, Professor of Assyriology and the John A. Wilson Professor of Oriental Studies in the Oriental Institute was awarded a Getty Foundation, and National Endowment for the Humanities Preservation and Access Grant to continue the recording of the Persepolis Archive.

Theo van den Hout, Professor of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, the Oriental Institute, and the College, was named Corresponding Member of the Royal Dutch Academy of Arts and Sciences and gave his first lecture as member in November 2007.

Christopher Woods, Assistant Professor of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations and the College, received a fellowship from the Franke Institute.

John Woods, Professor of History, Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, and the College, was the recipient of the Faculty Award for Excellence in Graduate Teaching from the University of Chicago.

Philosophy

Arnold Davidson, Professor of Philosophy, Comparative Literature, the Divinity School, the Committee on Conceptual and Historical Studies of Science and the College, was appointed Visiting Professor at the University of Pisa.

Josef Stern, Professor of Philosophy, Jewish Studies and the College, received a fellowship from the American Council of Learned Societies.

Romance Languages & Literatures

Kelly Austin, Assistant Professor of Romance Languages and Literatures, Comparative Literature, and the College, received a Postdoctoral Research Leave Fellowship from the American Association of University Women Educational Foundation.

Rebecca West, William R. Kenan, Jr. Distinguished Service Professor of Romance Languages and Literatures, the Committee on Cinema and Media Studies, and the College, was named a Visiting Professor at Yale University.

Slavic Languages & Literature

Robert Bird, Associate Professor and Chairman of the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures and the College, received the Outstanding Academic Title award from *Choice Magazine* for his work *The Russian Prospero: The Creative University of Viacheslav Ivanov*.

Victor Friedman, Andrew W. Mellon Professor in Slavic Languages and Literatures, Linguistics, and the College, has been awarded a number of fellowships and grants to support his 2008–09 research leave, including an Individual Advanced Research Opportunity grant from the International Research and Exchanges Board; a Fulbright Scholar grant from the Council for International Exchange of Scholars; a fellowship from the Guggenheim Foundation; and a Fulbright-Hays Faculty Research Abroad Program Fellowship from the U.S. Department of Education.

Yuri Tsivian, Professor of Slavic Languages and Literatures, Art History, Comparative Literature, Cinema and Media Studies, and the College, was appointed Visiting Professor at Harvard University for 2007–08. He also received the Digital Innovation Fellowship from the American Council of Learned Societies.

South Asian Languages & Civilizations

Steven Collins, Professor and Chair of South Asian Languages and Civilizations and the College, has been named the Chester D. Tripp Professor in the Humanities.

Sascha Ebeling, Assistant Professor of South Asian Languages and Civilizations and the College, has been awarded a Research Fellowship for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching from the Humanities Division and the College. This fellowship, which provides him with a year of research leave in 2008–09, is made possible by a generous

grant from the Mrs. Giles Whiting Foundation.

Jason Grunebaum, Senior Lecturer in Hindi in South Asian Languages and Civilizations has received a fellowship from the Djerassi Resident Artists Program.

Valerie Ritter, Assistant Professor of South Asian Languages and Civilizations and the College, received the Senior Short-Term Fellowship from the American Institute of Indian Studies.

Ulrike Stark, Assistant Professor of South Asian Languages and Civilizations and the College, received a fellowship from the Franke Institute.

Visual Arts

Tania Bruguera, Assistant Professor of Visual Arts and the College, exhibited *Delayed Patriotism* at Performa 07 in New York City. Her works were also exhibited at the Moscow Biennale.

Laura Letinsky, Professor and Chair of Visual Arts, Professor in the Committee on Cinema and Media Studies, and the College, exhibited *Dirty Pretty Things* at Brancolini Grimaldi in Italy and *To Say It Isn't So* at the Yancey Richardson Gallery in New York City and at Monique Meloche in Chicago.

Jason Salavon, Assistant Professor of Visual Arts and the College had *Currents* on display at the Columbus Museum in Columbus, Ohio.

Catherine Sullivan, Assistant Professor of Visual Arts, the Committee on Cinema and Media Studies, and the College, exhibited *Triangle of Need* at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and is part of a Smart Museum video installation exhibition, "Adaptation," on display. Sullivan also was featured as a subject in PBS's "Art:21" documentary series.

in memoriam



Nancy Pearce Helmbold

1918 – 2007

A West Texas native, Classics Professor Emerita Nancy Pearce Helmbold had a tremendous gift and love for languages — she translated Spanish language calls for the FBI in San Antonio and Japanese nautical documents for the Navy during the U.S. occupation of Japan in the late 1940s. But more than anything, Helmbold had a gift for teaching Latin. “She was an outstanding Latin teacher,” said Elizabeth Asmis, Professor in Classics, “She loved being in the classroom and teaching at every level.”

Helmbold had a great interest in Virgil, St. Augustine’s *Confessions*, the love poetry of Catullus, and she contributed to the journal *Classical Philology*. But Professor of Classics Peter White, her longtime colleague, said “she never set out to make a reputation as a publishing scholar. Her life truly was devoted to teaching Latin.”

During her years at Chicago, Helmbold taught Latin to legions of students, at every level, until she was in her early eighties. “She never wanted to stop teaching,” Asmis said. Students who kept pace with their famously demanding instructor were effusive with praise. “I have never been so pushed and prodded, stung and bitten, coaxed and cajoled — soothed and then pushed forward again,” wrote Dawn Quitno, in nominating Helmbold for a teaching award in 1989. “Nancy Helmbold should go on teaching Latin for eternity.”

Born December 16, 1918, in Abilene, Texas, Nancy Pearce was the second of three daughters of a type-writer salesman. A talented student, she attended the University of Texas at Austin, where she majored in liberal arts. While studying for a PhD in East Asian languages and literature at the University of California, Berkeley, Helmbold took a few Latin courses for fun. Noticing her Latin prowess, her teachers steered her towards the study of the classics.

After receiving her PhD from Berkeley in 1957, Helmbold served as a visiting assistant professor at Mount Holyoke College and the University of Oregon. She joined the Chicago faculty in 1963. ■

Peter K. Jansen

1934 – 2007

Among German scholars, Peter K. Jansen was highly regarded for his work on the eighteenth-century German writer Heinrich von Kleist. “Jansen earned a permanent place in the scholarship on Heinrich von Kleist, for whose story, *The Foundling*, Peter discovered an important source,” said Eric Santner, Professor and Chair of Germanic Studies. In addition to his scholarship, Jansen was also an accomplished literary translator, who taught the theory and practice of translation at Chicago. His translation of three plays by the Austrian writer Thomas Bernhard has been used in performances in England and Canada. “Clearly theater was one of Peter’s loves,” said Santner, “and he often traveled far and wide to see new experimental theater.”

Born in Essen, Germany, in 1934, Jansen studied at universities in Austria, France, and Germany before coming to the University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign, where he completed master’s and doctoral degrees in German literature. His dissertation examined the use of irony in the writings of the nineteenth-century dramatist Georg Büchner. After working at both Illinois and Indiana University, he joined the University of Chicago faculty in 1968.

During his more than three decades at Chicago, Jansen’s research focused heavily on German drama of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. But Jansen was perhaps best known as a teacher. “He had an encyclopedic knowledge of German literature,” said Vreni Naess, AB 1961, the longtime administrator for Germanic Studies. “And students loved him.”

Susan Hohl, a student of Jansen’s, added: “As a teacher and as a person, his was a rare blend of generosity of intellect, elegance, and a quiet graciousness that inspired.” ■

Joseph M. Williams

1933 – 2008

Joseph M. Williams, Professor Emeritus of English Language and Literature and Linguistics, wrote or edited more than ten books, including a sweeping history of the English language, but he is perhaps best-known for the 1981 book, *Style: Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace*. The book, now in its ninth edition, introduced a new approach to writing pedagogy. *Style* differed from other writing manuals, from Fowler’s *The King’s English* to Strunk and White’s *The Elements of Style*, because it carefully analyzed reader perceptions and responses to a rhetorical style.

“Joe was interested in the reader’s perspective — what writing would do to a reader,” said Gregory Colomb, a professor of English at the University of Virginia and Williams’ longtime collaborator. Williams and Colomb pored through cognitive science research, decision theory, risk theory, attribution theory — all to gain insight into the reader. “Joe believed that if you understood how readers would predictably respond to particular features of a text, you could then help writers achieve their goals. He was committed to using his research to teach better writing.”

Williams also helped create the University’s writing program, affectionately known as “The Little Red Schoolhouse” and a communications consulting firm, Clearlines, which worked with law firms, government agencies, foundations, and major corporations.

Born on August 18, 1933, in Cleveland, Ohio, Williams received a bachelor’s degree in 1955 and a master’s degree in 1960 from Miami University in Ohio. He earned his PhD in English and linguistics from the University of Wisconsin–Madison in 1966. Williams joined the Chicago faculty in 1965 as an assistant professor. He remained at Chicago until his retirement in 1999.

Williams received many awards throughout his career, including the University’s Quantrell Award for undergraduate teaching excellence in 1987 and the Golden Pen Award in 2006 for lifetime contributions to legal writing from the Legal Writing Institute.

“Joe’s truest aim was always to help writers,” said Colomb. ■

happenings

A Selection of
Past, Present, and
Future Events on
Campus and in the
Neighborhood



upcoming

Installed in 1928 and restored in 2008, **Rockefeller Chapel's** magnificent E.M. Skinner Organ boasts over 8,000 pipes. Following a seven-year hiatus and a historic, three-year, \$2.1 million restoration, Chicago's largest organ is in play again. **Tea and Pipes**, weekly recitals on Tuesdays from 4–4:30 p.m. while school is in session. <http://rockefeller.uchicago.edu/upcomingEvents/>.

Court Theatre opens its 2008–09 season with the Chicago premiere of **Caroline, or Change**, the deeply personal story from Pulitzer Prize-winner **Tony Kushner** (Angels in America). Drawn from the playwright's own childhood, this acclaimed musical is set in a stifling basement laundry

forms of activism that drew on, and also influenced, movements and events throughout the art world. **Looks Like Freedom** features artwork and documents by Barbara Jones-Hogu, Bob Crawford, the Hairy Who, and the Chicago Women's Liberation Union Graphics Collective. It is on view through October 5 at the University's new DOVA Temporary Gallery, 5228 S. Harper Avenue. www.looks-like-freedom.com

University of Chicago Presents will join the international music community in marking the 100th anniversary of the birth of world-renowned French composer **Oliver Messiaen** (1908–1992) with its first-ever music festival, October 2–11.



room in Louisiana in 1963, and blends blues, gospel, and traditional Jewish melodies in a breathtaking score. Chicago's own E. Faye Butler will perform the title role. <http://courttheatre.org>

Timed to coincide with the fortieth anniversary of the turbulent 1968 Democratic National Convention, **Looks Like Freedom: Art, Politics, and Urban Space around 1968, Chicago**, was curated by students from art history professor Rebecca Zorach's winter course "Chicago 1968." The class researched political and artistic events and their intersections in and around 1968, a period in the city's history often associated with confrontation of police and Vietnam protesters. Out of this tumultuous environment grew creative

The ten-day, eleven concert series will honor Messiaen's prolific legacy with some of the world's leading artists, composers, and scholars. chicagopresents.uchicago.edu.

A new joint initiative of the University of Chicago and the University of California at Berkeley will give digital humanities a boost. **Project Bamboo** explores ways in which humanities faculty use digital technology in both teaching and research. Funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the eighteen-month planning and community design program, unprecedented in terms of size and scope, hopes to discover where a coordinated, cross-disciplinary development effort can best foster academic innovation. Phase one of the project included workshops held

in Berkeley, Chicago, Princeton, and Paris, including more than 100 participating institutions. The group anticipates releasing a blueprint for implementing its plan in 2009. www.projectbamboo.org.

William Martin, PhD candidate in Comparative Literature, will make the first English-language translation of the influential Polish writer, literary critic, and film theoretician **Karol Irzykowski** (1873–1944). Martin received a 2008 National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship for Translation to translate Irzykowski's 1903 *Paluba* (*The Hag*). The five-part meta-fiction weaves digressions on art of writing the novel with psychological portraits of a peasant, his obsession for his long-deceased wife, and his adoptive father and member of the nobility. Martin is also translating a novel by Michał Witkowski.

save the date!

The 2008 University of Chicago Humanities Day

Marking an ongoing thirty-year tradition, the University of Chicago opens its classrooms each fall quarter to alumni, friends, and the intellectually curious for a day of free public lectures and spirited Chicago-style inquiry with some of the world's leading scholars.

Humanities Day offers explorations into linguistic, literary, and cultural traditions through faculty lectures, film screenings, visual art exhibitions, and live music performances representing a broad spectrum of topics.

Jacqueline Goldsby, Associate Professor of English Language and Literature, is slated to deliver the 2008 keynote address **"A Reader's Renaissance: Black Chicago's Book Review and Lecture Forum, 1933–1953."**

This one-day celebration takes place on the University's Hyde Park campus; admission is free, however seating is limited and registration, which can be done online, is required. <http://humanities.uchicago.edu/humanitiesday/>

For information on upcoming Humanities programming please visit <http://humanities.uchicago.edu/calendar/>

A Selection of Past, Present, and Future Events

happenings



Following last year's critically-acclaimed inaugural event, world-class headliners and local emerging artists will converge in Hyde Park September 27 for the second **Annual Hyde Park Jazz Festival**. Featuring fifteen hours of free, non-stop jazz for the serious and casual listener alike, performances will take place on indoor and outdoor stages located in cultural venues throughout Hyde Park. Catch artists such as, Dee Alexander, Grayna Auguscik, Zach Brock, Orbert Davis, Nicole Mitchell, Willie Pickens, Reginald R. Robinson, Two for Brazil, and many more. www.hydeparkjazzfestival.org.

past happenings of note

Slavoj Žižek presented the 2008 Romberg Lecture titled, "**The Spectrality of the Real: A Lacanian Approach**," on March 7, sponsored by Germanic Studies and the Division. Žižek joins popular culture and Lacanian psychoanalytic theory to explain politics and popular culture. Žižek, known for his belligerent, revolutionary style and polymathy has divided opinion within the academy and developed a cultish following. View a recording of the lecture at http://lucian.uchicago.edu/blogs/news/files/2008/03/zizek_512k.mov.

Lawrence Rothfield, Associate Professor of English, Comparative Literature, and the College, and Faculty Director of the Cultural Policy Center, led a delegation of experts in law, foreign affairs, archaeology, and the military in a presentation at the National Press Club in Washington, DC, April 9 for policy makers and the media. The briefing followed the release of ***Antiquities Under Siege: Cultural Heritage Protection After the Iraq War*** (AltaMira Press, 2008), which examines ongoing looting of archeologicla sites and threatens to destroy the traces of

Mesopotamian, Judeo-Christian, and Islamic cultures buried in the desert of Iraq. Rothfield and his co-authors offer a series of recommendations for U.S. and international policy-makers and NGOs and identify new



procedures and strategies that can protect artifacts at risk in future battles. <http://cultural-policy.uchicago.edu/books/AuS.html>.

For information on upcoming Humanities programming please visit <http://humanities.uchicago.edu/calendar/>

ON THE COVER *Pull*, Video, 0:55, 2005 Courtesy of the artist, Julia Oldham, MFA 2005

"I translate insect behavior into choreography that I perform in front of the camera, and in the editing process I manipulate speed and sound to emphasize rhythm and pattern. The resulting videos are concerned with playful anthropomorphization; they are meditations on the fantasy that humans and insects have a shared set of experiences, accessible through awkward, hybridized dance steps." — JO

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