

BOSTON UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR THE HUMANITIES NEWSLETTER

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BUCH Director Susan Mizruchi

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

This has been an exciting year for the Humanities Center, as we've continued many of the valuable programs launched under James Winn's directorship and initiated new ones designed to expand the Center's reputation beyond the College of Arts and Sciences and BU.

This was my first time running the Fellows' Seminar, and the intellectual energy on display at our weekly meetings was a pleasure to see, as was the transformation of each group from a disparate collection of faculty and graduate students into a democratic community of scholars. Equally impressive was the emergence each semester of a common theme, though neither seminar was originally organized this way. The theme of our fall seminar was the importance of place, as we explored the enduring history of Jerusalem with Michael Zank, the value of Trinidad to an understanding of the writings of V.S. Naipaul with Sanjay Krishnan, and the global reception of Ottoman portraiture with Erin Hyde. This spring semester, German culture has been the unifying subject, beginning with Heather Barrett on Faustian themes in the writings of Louisa May Alcott, James Schmidt on the German Enlightenment, Paul Edwards on African-American Performers in Modern Germany, and Christopher Martin on fantasies of "prolongevity" in Early Modern Germany.

In a new departure, we held a fall symposium, "Teaching in Divisive Times," right after the November Election to address some of the challenges of our political moment, which we followed up with a spring event, "Scholarship in Divisive Times." Both symposia featured speakers representing different disciplines and career stages, ranging from the English Ph.D. candidate Pardis Dabashi, to the historian Jonathan Zatin, to the Dean of CAS, Ann Cudd. What each event revealed, perhaps most importantly, is the great diversity of viewpoints in our academic community.

(Cont. on next page)

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Kim Sichel
History of Art & Architecture
Walther Hopp
Philosophy
Christopher Maurer
Romance Languages
Deanna Klepper
Religion
James Siemon
English
James Uden
Classical Studies
Peter Schwartz
World Languages & Literatures
Arianne Chernock
History
Deborah Burton
Musicology

Director photograph: O Globo



LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

(CONT.)

The spring closes with our Annual Gift to the Faculty on April 26th, "Reflections on Motown," and our Annual Awards Ceremony on May 16th for Graduate and Undergraduate students, their families, and the faculty who supported them. The applicant pool for BUCH Student Awards was the largest ever, which confirms the great vibrancy of Humanities fields at BU, and also perhaps the ways in which our college may be bucking certain trends in terms of student interest in Humanities.

Most of all, we are looking forward to our first major BUCH Public Forum on October 5th-7th, "Recording Lives: Libraries and Archives in the Digital Age." Co-sponsored by the Boston Public Library and the Boston Athenaeum, our Forum will bring together an eclectic group of specialists representing five different continents, as well as philanthropic, commercial, governmental, and academic institutions. Participants include Alberto Manguel, director of the National Library of Argentina, David Ferreiro, 10th National Archivist of the U.S., Julieanna Richardson, founder of "The HistoryMakers®" the Digital Archive of Interviews with African Americans who have influenced history, and David Wexler, creator of Hollywood Vaults. The Forum will begin on Thursday evening, October 5th, with a lecture by Robert Darnton and a commentary by Christopher Ricks in Rabb Hall at the Boston Public Library, followed by a reception. It will continue for two days, October 6th and 7th, in the Law School Auditorium at BU. The Forum is free and open to the public, and we encourage students, faculty, and staff interested in the potential and challenges of digital practices to come and share their ideas. The Forum will feature four panels addressing the following major areas of exploration: Setting Directions for Libraries and Archives in the Digital Age; Digital Scholarship and Practice; Preservation Spaces, Open and Closed; The Global Politics of Archives.

We also look forward to a number of new programs for BUCH in the coming year. These include: a "Second Book" workshop with the Editor in Chief of Humanities at Oxford University Press; a seminar on "Careers for Humanities Ph.D.'s"; and an event on BU's archives featuring The HistoryMakers®, The Thurman Papers, and The Gotlieb Archival Research Center. We look even further ahead to our Fall 2018 Public Forum, "The Opioid Crisis from the Humanities Point of View."

Let me end on two personal notes: We send best wishes to our former director James Winn for a happy and healthy retirement. And we also hope that Christine Loken-Kim will soon be restored to full use of her arm and ready to get back on her bike!

SUSAN L. MIZRUCHI
BUCH DIRECTOR

Meet Our Fellows, 2016-2017

JEFFREY HENDERSON SENIOR FACULTY FELLOWS



David Frankfurter
Professor of Religion
Christianizing Egypt

FELLOWS' SEMINAR

The core of the intellectual community supported by the Boston University Center for the Humanities is the Fellows' Seminar. This group has been in continuous existence since 1984, and features the sharing of research and dialogue among humanities faculty from different disciplines and between junior and senior faculty. The seminar assists Junior Faculty Fellows in their career development and engages the larger questions of culture and imagination that the humanities have always examined. Since 2008, the Jeffrey Henderson Senior Research Fellows have participated in the seminar and beginning in 2015, our Dissertation Fellows have also been full participants. The seminar meets on a biweekly basis to discuss work in progress by its members.



Aaron Garrett
Assoc. Professor of Philosophy
The Making of Modern Moral Philosophy



Dorothy Kelly
Professor of French
The Living Death of the Past: Balzac, Boudelaire, Zola



Sanjay Krishnan
Assoc. Professor of English
Unsentimental Education: V. S. Naipaul's Twentieth Century



Christopher Martin
Professor of English
Outliving the Fashion: Arts of Aging in Seventeenth Century Literature



James Schmidt
Professor of History/Philosophy
Persistent Enlightenment: Arguments About Reason, Power, and Progress, 1784-1789



Michael Zank
Professor of Religion
Jerusalem: A Brief History

JUNIOR FACULTY FELLOWS



Kimberly Arkin
Assistant Professor
of Anthropology
*Naturalizing the Social
or Socializing the Natural?:
Race, Sex, and Catholic
Secularism in France*

...[T]here is a separate
language in each of us,
also a separate aesthetics
and a separate
jurisprudence.

Every single one of us is a
little civilization built on
the ruins of any number of
preceding civilizations, but
with our own variant
notions of what is
beautiful and what is
acceptable...

~Marilynne Robinson

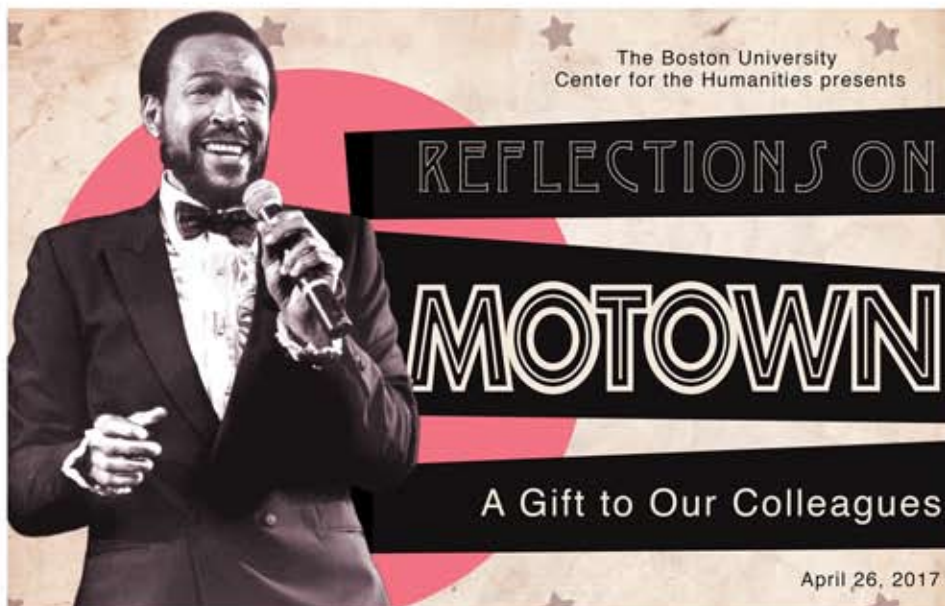
Gilead



Daniel Erker
Assistant Professor
of Spanish/Linguistics
*Salvadoran Bostonians and
the Linguistic Construction
of Identity*

Gift to Our Colleagues “Reflections on Motown”

On Wednesday, April 26, 2017, BUCH hosted its annual Gift to Our Colleagues event. This year, the theme was “Reflections on Motown.” Professor John Thornton (African American Studies) opened with a talk on Motown in the 1960s, followed by a presentation by Professor Victor Coelho (Musicology) on Marvin Gaye.



Between the talks, BU student group BU on Tap danced to “Sound and Color,” “What’s Going On,” and “Smooth Criminal.”

The reception following the presentations featured some of the iconic foods of Detroit in honor of the occasion.

GRADUATE DISSERTATION FELLOWS



Heather Barrett

English

*In Hot Pursuit:
Gothic Virgins and Villains
in Nineteenth-Century
American Fiction*



Paul Edwards

American and New England Studies
*Louis Douglas and Jonny spielt auf:
Performing Blackness in
Interwar Germany*



Aaron Hiltner

History

*Under Friendly Occupation:
Sex, Crime, and Policing in
World War II America*



Erin Hyde Nolan

History of Art & Architecture
Ottomans Abroad:

*The Circulation and Translation of
Nineteenth-Century Ottoman
Photographs from Istanbul to
Europe and America*



Eva M. Pascal

Religious Studies

*Finding Religion:
Catholic Missionary Encounters
and the Making of Buddhism*



David T. West

Classical Studies

*The Case for Politics:
a Cross-generic Study of
Cicero's Arguments for
Political Engagement*

Faculty Projects 2016-17

The Center for the Humanities is supporting 40 faculty projects over the 2016/2017 academic year. Here are a few of the highlights.

BUCH

On November 21, 2016, the BUCH hosted a serious discussion of recent political events and how they affect our classrooms, entitled “Teaching in Divisive Times.” The speakers included Boston University graduate students Pardis Dabashi and Aaron Hiltner, Professor Erin Murphy, Professor Ana Maria Reyes, and Professor Jonathan Zatlin. The Dean’s Conference Room in the College of Arts and Sciences was full of both graduate students and faculty hoping to clarify their thinking before heading home for the holidays. Pizza was served.

Digital Humanities

Professor Andrea Berlin’s Digital Humanities workshop, as hosted by Boston University’s Digital Learning Initiative, put on an exceptional Fall 2016 Speaker Series over the course of the semester that was titled “Challenging Innovation.” This series inquired into what innovation can mean at the intersection of higher education and educational technology with help from visiting emergent scholars. Some of the series topics included “Libraries as Agents of Innovation and Advocacy” and “College Student Motivation and Vulnerability Online” as a symptom of the increased presence of social media in today’s world. The four speakers each offered something new and insightful to the growing digital humanities community at Boston University.

Classical Studies

On April 21, 2017, the Department of Classical Studies hosted the 23rd annual meeting of the Boston Area Roman Studies Conference at the Boston University School of Law. This year’s program, entitled “Ovid Over Time,” featured presentations by Paul Barolsky (University of Virginia), Martin Winkler (George Mason University), Carole Newlands (University of Colorado Boulder), and Ian Fielding (University of Michigan) on varying topics, from “The Watery World of Ovid” to film and Ovidian anniversaries.



College of General Studies

On April 6, 2017, the CGS hosted Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin, Irish poet, translator, editor and Ireland Professor of Poetry at Trinity College in Dublin, as part of Professor Meg Tyler's Poetry Reading Series. Ní Chuilleanáin is the author of numerous poetry collections and boasts a prestigious array of awards for her work. In a 2009 interview for Wake Forest University Press, Ní Chuilleanáin states, "The question I ask myself constantly is 'is this real? Do I really believe this, do I really feel this?' But that is a question I cannot answer except by trying again in a poem."



AMNESP

On February 25, 2017, the New England Chapter Society of Architectural Historians hosted the 39th Annual Student Symposium at Boston University. Presenters were organized into three sessions: "Heritage Matters," which explored topics like the Gothic revival monument and technology and aesthetics; "Exhibition & Simulacrum," which included talks on Louis Sullivan's Transportation Building and Barcelona's 1929 International Exhibition; and finally "Postwar Memory & Aspirations," which examined the development of the French interior and war photography.

Musicology

On September 20, 2016, the Center for Beethoven Research presented a one-day symposium on Beethoven's Piano Sonata, Op. 31 No. 2 ("Tempest"). The symposium consisted of a series of interspersed panels and performances, featuring members of the Boston University Tanglewood Institute, the University of Leuven, and Harvard University's Beethoven research center. Performers Jonathan Biss and Peter Sykes contributed to the atmosphere of the afternoon, paying homage to one of the greatest minds of Classical composition.



African American Studies

On October 11, 2017, the African American Studies program hosted a celebration of the 350+ year evolution of Salsa, led by Jose Obando and ensemble as part of their Fall 2016 Lecture Series. The event also featured Boston University's own Salsa and Latin music ensemble *Presencia* as well as the BU Salsa Dance Team. The rousing performances were accompanied not only by a dance lesson, but also by remarks from Dr. John Thornton (BU) and Dr. Michael Birenbaum-Quintero (BU). Obando eloquently discussed the formation of Spanish-Caribbean cultural and musical identity and how the mixing of European and African elements led to the creation of Salsa.

Philosophy

The 2016-2017 Institute for Philosophy and Religion Lecture Series this year was entitled "Hope and Despair." Fall 2016 marked the second year in a three-year exploration of the theological virtues and their opposites: faith and doubt, hope and despair, love and hate. The series this year included lectures on topics such as critical theory after Hegel, responses to Nietzsche, Dionysus, and an impressive panel on Apocalypticism that included several distinguished faculty members, such as Professors David Frankfurter and April Hughes. "Hope and Despair" concluded on April 12th with a lecture by Yale's Peter Hawkins on Dante's *Divine Comedy*.

Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies

On April 5 and April 6, 2017, the Maccabees Project conducted their innovative dialogue series entitled "Maccabean Fictions." Over the course of two days, speakers Dr. Steven Weitzman (University of Pennsylvania) and Dr. Benedikt Eckhardt (University of Bremen) led three unique and varied discussions. The first was a video conference entitled "Historical Fictions: 1 Maccabees and Beyond," which drew an international audience. The second was a debate on 1 Maccabees that pitted Archaeology vs. Literature vs. History. The third was a scholarly colloquium, "Imagining the Maccabees."



World Languages and Literatures

On November 5, 2016, The Boston University Department for World Languages & Literatures presented, "Worlds of the Tale of Genji," a day of cross-disciplinary conversations celebrating Dennis Washburn's new translation of Lady Murasaki's masterpiece, "The Tale of Genji." The Keynote, *NecroRomancer: Genji and the Gothic Sublime*, was delivered by Dennis Washburn after opening remarks by Alice

Tseng and J. Keith Vincent (BU). Other speakers included Catherine Yeh (BU), Anna Elliott (BU), Elizabeth Goldsmith (BU), Melissa McCormick (Harvard), Timon Screech (UCLA), Carrie Preston (BU), and Sarah Frederick (BU). An hour-long student round table was followed by a reception. This event was co-sponsored by the BU Department of History of Art & Architecture and the CAS Dean's Office.

Faculty Publication Awards, 2016-2017

ANDREA BERLIN

Archaeology

Spear-Won Land: Sardis, from the King's Peace to the Peace of Apamea

BONNIE COSTELLO

English

The Plural of Us: Poetry and Community in Auden and Others

WIEBKE DENECKE

World Languages & Literatures

Oxford Handbook of Classical Chinese Literature

ABIGAIL GILLMAN

World Languages & Literatures

A History of German Jewish Bible Translation

ROY GRUNDMANN

Communications, Film and Television

Werner Schroeter

NANCY HARROWITZ

Romance Studies

Primo Levi and the Identity of a Survivor

STEVEN KATZ

Religion

The Holocaust and New World Slavery: A Comparative Study

DIANA LOBEL

Religion

Philosophies of Happiness: A Comparative Introduction to the Flourishing Life

SUNIL SHARMA

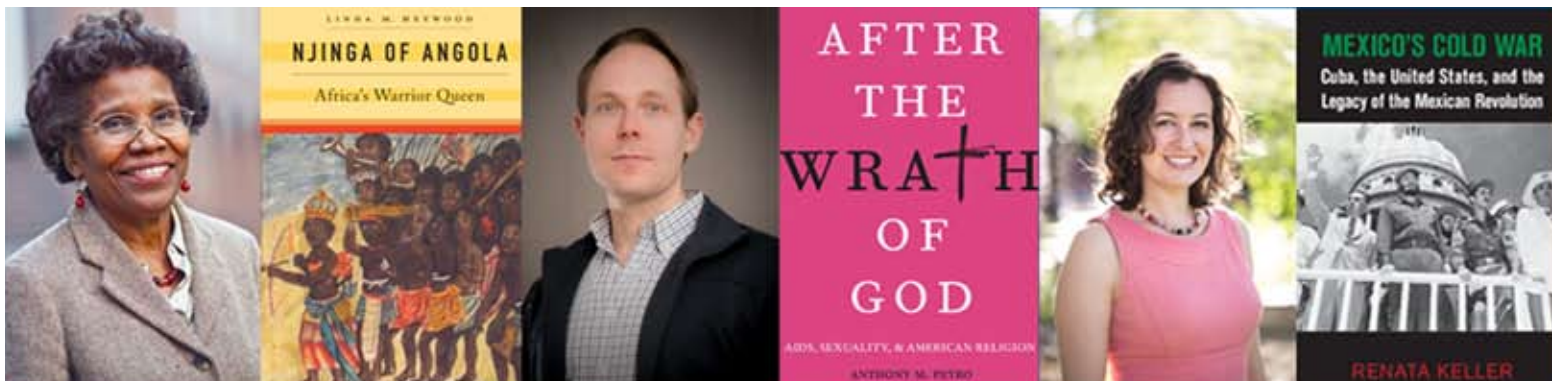
World Languages & Literatures

Mughal Acadia: Persian Poetry in an Indian Court

ALICE TSENG

History of Art & Architecture

Modern Kyoto: Building for Ceremony and Commemoration, 1868-1940



Past publication award winners

Incoming Fellows, 2017-2018

JEFFREY HENDERSON SENIOR FACULTY FELLOWS

PAUL KATSAFANAS Associate Professor of Philosophy
The Secular Afterlife of the Sacred

JONATHAN KLAWANS Professor of Religion
Heresies, Forgeries, and Novelties: Constructing and Crossing the Borders of Ancient Judaism

SARAH PHILLIPS Associate Professor of History
The Price of Plenty: From Farm to Food Politics in Postwar America

TEENA PUROHIT Associate Professor of Religion
Making Islam Modern

GREGORY WILLIAMS Associate Professor of History of Art & Architecture
Carlfriedrich Claus: Drawing, Writing, and Instrumental Thinking in the GDR

MICHAEL ZELL Associate Professor of History of Art & Architecture
The Poetics of the Mirror and the Image of the Beloved in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Paintings

JUNIOR FACULTY FELLOWS

MICHAEL BIRENBAUM QUINTERO Assistant Professor of Musicology
Fierce Joy: Sound, Violence, and Community in the Ashes of Politics

ALEXANDER NIKOLAEV Assistant Professor of Classical Studies
Grammar of Poetry: Artificial Language in Early Greek Epic

BENJAMIN SIEGEL Assistant Professor of History
Markets of Pain: American Bodies and Indian Drugs in an Age of Distress

GRADUATE DISSERTATION FELLOWS

LARA AYAD

History of Art & Architecture

Picturesque Peasants: Painting Egyptian Identity at the Fouad I Agricultural Museum in Cairo

PETER BLANDINO

Classical Studies

Music as Drama in Euripides

GREGORY CHASE

English

The Silent Soliloquy of Others: Language and Acknowledgment in Modernist Fiction, 1910-1952

CAITLIN DALTON

History of Art & Architecture

Imprinting Art and Ideology: Memory and Pedagogy in the Early GDR

DANIEL LIBATIQUE

Classical Studies

Tereus, Procne, and Philomela: Speech, Silence, and the Voice of Gender

ALEX MACCONOCHIE

English

Touch and Gesture in Early Modern Drama

look out next year for more exciting events!



Danish Royal Library

buch@bu.edu

<http://www.bu.edu/humanities>