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THE HOUSTON SEMINAR

Fall 2014



# THE HOUSTON SEMINAR

THE HOUSTON SEMINAR WAS FOUNDED IN 1977 FOR THE PURPOSE OF STIMULATING LEARNING AND CULTURAL AWARENESS. EACH SPRING AND FALL THE NONPROFIT GROUP OFFERS LECTURES AND STUDY TOURS FOCUSED ON VARIED TOPICS THAT MAY INCLUDE ART, ARCHITECTURE, LITERATURE, MUSIC, THEATER, HISTORY, POLITICS, PHILOSOPHY, PSYCHOLOGY, RELIGION, THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT, AND CURRENT TRENDS AND EVENTS.

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# CALENDAR

### SEPTEMBER

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1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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28	29	30	31			

### LEGEND

- Faith in Practice
- ▲ Politics, Drugs, and Violence in Mexico, Central, and South America
- Lucas Johnson and Kermit Oliver: Texas Visionaries
- Inscrutable Beethoven
- ▲ Richard Murray on the 2014 Elections
- The Pass of the North: El Paso Art, Architecture, and History



The Houston Seminar is grateful for the support of United Airlines, which generously provides transportation for many of our distinguished speakers.



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**THE PASS OF THE NORTH: EL PASO ART, ARCHITECTURE, AND HISTORY**

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6—SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 9

El Paso, Texas comprises a metropolis that grew from an oasis in the midst of the desert. Travelers will experience the extraordinary confluence of cultures—Native American, Spanish-Mexican, Anglo-American—that have shaped the Pass of the North since the end of the sixteenth century. From adobe pueblos and historic missions to vibrant modern art and architecture, El Paso and the surrounding area present a fascinating cultural landscape. Expect a few rare and wonderful surprises with noted architectural historian and Houston Seminar favorite **STEPHEN FOX** as our guide.



Images © Lucas Johnson (1,4) and Kermit Oliver (2,3)

**LUCAS JOHNSON AND KERMIT OLIVER: TEXAS VISIONARIES**

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 9, 6:00-8:00 P.M. Private residence; address will be provided to subscribers. Limited enrollment.

Artists Lucas Johnson and Kermit Oliver are Texas originals. Lush surfaces and rich topics entice viewers into sharing each artist's unique perspective. Guided by art critic **PATRICIA JOHNSON** and art historian **ALVIA WARDLAW**, visitors to this private collection will have the opportunity to learn about Mr. Johnson's and Mr. Oliver's iconography and inspiration. The collectors of these works, long-term friends and supporters of the artists, will share their history, vision and motivation.



**INSCRUTABLE BEETHOVEN**

FOUR THURSDAYS, OCTOBER 2, 16, AND 30, AND NOVEMBER 13, 6:30–8:00 P.M.; ONE SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 4:00 P.M.

Private residences for the first four sessions; addresses will be provided to subscribers. Fifth session at Duncan Recital Hall, Shepherd School of Music, Rice University.

Since Ludwig van Beethoven's death in 1827, scholars continue to explore the historical and biographical dimensions of Beethoven's works. Musicologists deconstruct his works piece by piece, and conductors and performers strive to find new and valid interpretations.

**OCTOBER 2 - Beethoven and His Pianos**

During his tumultuous lifetime, Beethoven played a variety of keyboard instruments: the clavichord, harpsichord, organ, various fortepianos, and pianos. Playing a magnificent Viennese piano from Beethoven's time, **BRIAN CONNELLY** will introduce our series with a discussion of current knowledge about the composer's instruments, playing style, and preferences. He will perform selections from Beethoven's early-and middle-period works.

**OCTOBER 16 – Beethoven and Our Pianos**

Some of the most widely admired piano repertoire was composed for instruments quite different from the modern ones on which Beethoven's music is performed today. Is it plausible that Beethoven was composing for a theoretical audience—writing music for the future? **BRIAN CONNELLY** will explore the reception and changing styles of performance of Beethoven's works during the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and will perform selections from the composer's later works on a modern grand piano.

**OCTOBER 30 – A Conductor's Perspective**

It has been said that Beethoven's symphonies pose one of the great interpretive challenges for a conductor, perhaps because of their range of mood and style. Maestro **LARRY RACHLEFF** will share his unique insights into the particular challenges and responsibilities of studying, preparing, rehearsing, shaping, and performing Beethoven's orchestral music. Though not part of this series, please note that Mr. Rachleff will conduct the Shepherd School Chamber Orchestra's performance of Beethoven's *Symphony No. 8* on Saturday, September 27, in Stude Concert Hall.

**NOVEMBER 13 - Eroica: The True Story of Beethoven and Napoleon**

Beethoven wrote the majestic *Eroica* to convey his respect for Napoleon Bonaparte and intended its sheer size and qualities as a tribute to his



leadership. When Beethoven's idolized hero declared himself Emperor, the composer, feeling betrayed, tore his name off the title page. What was the relationship between Beethoven and Napoleon? **DAVID FERRIS** will reveal the true story of these pivotal events in the composer's life through letters, memoirs, and the symphony itself.

### **NOVEMBER 23 – Beethoven's Archduke in Concert**

Dedicated to his friend and pupil Archduke Rudolf of Austria, Beethoven's expansive *Archduke Trio* (*Piano Trio in B-flat Major*, 1811) is his greatest work in the genre, though increasing deafness meant it also signaled his last appearance as a performer. **BRIAN CONNELLY** and the renowned musicians of **CONTEXT** will present a concert of Beethoven's chamber music, including the majestic *Archduke*, revealed anew on the ensemble's period instruments.

**BRIAN CONNELLY** teaches piano performance and chamber music in the Shepherd School of Music at Rice and is the artistic director of the renowned chamber ensemble, **Context**, now in its nineteenth season. His career embraces an unusually broad range of historical and modern repertoires and styles. Mr. Connelly has premiered works by a host of contemporary composers, and is widely known for his performances of the music of modern master Olivier Messiaen. He is respected as a scholar and performer of period instruments, appearing throughout the U.S. and Europe.

**LARRY RACHLEFF** is the Walter Kris Hubert professor of music and music director of the Shepherd School Chamber Orchestras at Rice and music director of the Rhode Island Philharmonic. "A take-charge maestro who invests everything he conducts with deep musical understanding" (*Chicago Tribune*), Mr. Rachleff is in demand as a guest conductor. Recent and upcoming engagements include the Utah Symphony, Houston Symphony, Seattle Symphony, Indianapolis Symphony, Kansas City Symphony, and Phoenix Symphony; and summer festival engagements including Tanglewood, Aspen, Interlochen, and Lucca, Italy.

**DAVID FERRIS** is an associate professor of musicology in the Shepherd School of Music at Rice. He teaches seminars on the classical style, Mozart, Romantic song, Mendelssohn, Schumann, text and music, history of music theory and criticism, as well as a first-year writing intensive seminar on musical biography. His research interests include early 19<sup>th</sup>-century German Romantic song, musical biography, and the life and works of C. P. E. Bach. His works have appeared in the *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, *the Journal of Musicology*, *Music Theory Spectrum*, and *Music and Letters*.

## **RICHARD MURRAY ON THE TEXAS GOVERNOR'S RACE AND THE 2014 MIDTERM ELECTIONS**

**TWO TUESDAYS, OCTOBER 14 AND OCTOBER 21, 6:30–8:00 P.M.** at Sumners Hall, St. John the Divine, 2450 River Oaks Boulevard, and **WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 6:30–8:00 P.M.** at Upper Kirby District Center, 3015 Richmond Ave. Upper Kirby parking entrances are on Eastside.

Does Wendy Davis stand a chance of becoming a second Democratic woman governor of Texas in her race against well-known Attorney General Greg Abbott? Will the Republicans take over the U.S. Senate? Will the Democrats be able to get out the vote to prevent a Republican take-over of Congress? Dr. Richard Murray will address these compelling and fascinating questions in The Houston Seminar's fall course on the midterm elections. As always, Dr. Murray has the inside track on political events in Texas and the nation. We will have one session devoted to the Texas races, and another to the Congressional races throughout the nation. In the post-election session, Dr. Murray will analyze what happened and why.



**FIVE WEDNESDAYS, OCTOBER 22, 29, NOVEMBER 5, 12, 19; 12:00–1:30 P.M.** Sessions will take place in private homes: addresses will be provided to subscribers. Limited enrollment.

Five Houstonians, all eminent in their fields, will share their private quests for faith. In this series, the speakers will describe their own spiritual journeys and how their professional and personal paths interweave. Each speaker takes his or her faith into action and their stories will tell how private faith animates their public work.

**OCTOBER 22—EMILEE DAWN WHITEHURST** has served as executive director of the Rothko Chapel since 2008. In her leadership capacity at the Chapel, she draws on her academic studies of world religions and her practical experience working in communities of faith. She believes that the contemplative practices embedded within religious traditions offer essential wisdom as we seek to respond to matters of global concern. She has a B.A. with honors in Human Biology from Stanford University and a Master of Divinity degree from Harvard Divinity School. Ms. Whitehurst is an ordained Presbyterian minister.

**OCTOBER 29 —JEFFREY J. KRIPAL** holds the J. Newton Rayzor Chair in Philosophy and Religious Thought at Rice University. He studies contemporary and historical mystics, eroticism and sexuality, the paranormal and the 'spiritual but not religious' phenomenon. As a historian who is trained in Roman Catholicism, the Hindu Tantra, and psychoanalytic theory, Dr. Kripal demonstrates a rare breadth of knowledge as he deftly takes his students and readers into new terrain. He received his doctorate from the University of Chicago Divinity School.

**NOVEMBER 5—MARTHA SERPAS** is a poet, professor in the Creative Writing Program at the University of Houston, advocate for wetland preservation, and hospital chaplain. Since 2006, she has served at Tampa General Hospital, where she responds to trauma, end-of-life, and crisis situations, and to more general requests for spiritual support. Her poetry is grounded in her faith and her experiences in Cajun Louisiana. She holds degrees in English and creative writing from Louisiana State, New York University, and the University of Houston, and a Master of Divinity from Yale Divinity School.

**NOVEMBER 12—JIM BLACKBURN** is an attorney specializing in environmental law and planning at Blackburn Carter P. C., a professor in Rice's Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, and a poet. Mr. Blackburn's faith is grounded in a specific place: For over 30 years, he has been personally and professionally dedicated to protecting the rich and varied natural habitat that exists in Houston and along the Gulf Coast. Mr. Blackburn received a B.A. in History and a J.D. at the University of Texas at Austin, and an M.S. in Environmental Science at Rice University.

**NOVEMBER 19—ALEJANDRO CHAUL** is a teacher and practitioner of Tibetan yoga and mind-body techniques. He is an assistant professor, director of education of the Integrative Medicine Program at M. D. Anderson Cancer Center, and associate faculty member at the McGovern Center for Humanities and Ethics at U.T. Health Science Center. Working directly with patients and caregivers, Dr. Chaoul teaches spirituality, complementary and integrative medicine, and end-of-life care. He received his doctorate in Tibetan Religions from Rice University.



## POLITICS, DRUGS, AND VIOLENCE IN MEXICO, CENTRAL, AND SOUTH AMERICA

**FOUR MONDAYS, NOVEMBER 17 AND 24,  
AND DECEMBER 1 AND 8, 12:00–1:30 P.M.**  
The Station Museum of Contemporary Art,  
1502 Alabama (at LaBranch)



### **NOVEMBER 17—Poverty, Gangs and Children in an Unsettled Central and South America**

Photographer **DONNA DE CESARE** is an award-winning journalist who has lived in Central America and currently is an associate professor, University of Texas School of Journalism. Through her books and exhibitions of her work, Ms. De Cesare presents the effects of decades of war and gang violence on youths and their families in Central America and the United States. She is the author of two books, *Unsettled/Desasosiego* and *Hijos de Destino: Youth Violence in the Americas*. Her work was recently seen in the exhibition *War/Photography* at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. Ms. De Cesare received her MPhil from Essex University in England and a bachelor's degree in literature from State University College at Buffalo, New York

### **NOVEMBER 24—Understanding Central America**

**DR. JOHN BOOTH** is considered a foremost authority on Central America and has co-authored the two most recent editions of *Understanding Central America: Global Forces, Rebellion, and Change* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2010). Over the past 40 years, Dr. Booth has studied and written about democratization, revolution, political violence, and Central American politics. He has been a political risk consultant for the Department of State and other groups, agencies, and corporations. He serves as Regents Professor of political

science, University of North Texas, Denton. Dr. Booth has a B.A. from Rice University and master's degree and doctorate from University of Texas at Austin.

**DECEMBER 1**—Politics and Violence in South America

**DR. EDUARDO ALEMÁN** is an associate professor in the department of political science at the University of Houston. He specializes in the comparative analysis of political institutions and Latin American politics. His research focuses on executive-legislative relations, legislative politics, and political parties. Author of articles in journals *World Politics*, *Comparative Politics*, *Comparative Political Studies*, *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, and *Latin American Research Review*, Dr. Alemán earned his Ph.D. at University of California, Los Angeles.

**DECEMBER 8**—Mexico: Obstacles to Progress in Spite of Reform

**DR. TONY PAYAN**, author of *The Three US-Mexico Border Wars: Drugs, Immigration, and Homeland Security* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2006), is director of the Mexico Center at Rice University's Baker Institute. He is also associate professor of political science at University of Texas, El Paso, and a member of the graduate faculty at Universidad Autonoma de Ciudad Juarez. Dr. Payan will discuss Mexico's recent acceleration of legislative work to pass important reforms in labor, competition, education, fiscal policy, telecommunications, energy, and political structure and address why has it reaped so few economic and political benefits. Dr. Payan received his doctorate in international relations from Georgetown University.

**Enrollment:** All classes are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Confirmation of enrollment will be sent. It is possible to attend a single session of multi-session courses for a pro-rated fee. You may enroll by mail, fax, or online; those enrolling by fax may wish to copy the enrollment form on regular paper before sending it through a fax machine.

**Discounts:** Any individual or couple signing up for more than three courses on the same registration form may discount the total fee by 10 percent. However, calculations of total costs eligible for the discount cannot include out-of-town trips or excursions. Teachers and students at accredited institutions may attend classes for a discounted fee of \$10 per session with school or student I.D.

**Refunds:** You will receive a partial refund if you cancel at least two weeks before a course begins; a cancellation fee will be charged. If your enrollment has caused others to be turned away from a limited-enrollment class, no refund will be issued unless your place can be filled. Refund policies for courses involving travel may differ.

**Gift certificates:** These are available for a single session, a specific course, or a dollar amount, which the recipient may apply toward any course(s). Notification will be mailed to the donor and the designated recipient. Please call for more information, or send request and payment with this form.

For further information telephone or fax 713-666-9000, or consult [www.houstonseminar.org](http://www.houstonseminar.org)

**The Houston Seminar**  
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PLEASE ENROLL ME/US IN THE FOLLOWING COURSES:

<b>THE PASS OF THE NORTH: EL PASO ART, ARCHITECTURE, AND HISTORY</b> THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6 - SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 9	Please call 713-666-9000 for further information
<b>INSCRUTABLE BEETHOVEN</b> FOUR THURSDAYS, OCTOBER 2, 16, 30 AND NOVEMBER 13, 6:30-8:00 P.M. AND SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 4:00 P.M.	<input type="checkbox"/> \$175 all sessions <input type="checkbox"/> \$45 single session <input type="checkbox"/> \$18 Concert only
<b>LUCAS JOHNSON AND KERMIT OLIVER: TEXAS VISIONARIES</b> THURSDAY, OCTOBER 9, 6:00-8:00 P.M.	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75
<b>RICHARD MURRAY ON THE TEXAS GOVERNOR'S RACE AND THE 2014 MID TERM ELECTIONS</b> TWO TUESDAYS, OCTOBER 14 AND OCTOBER 21, AND WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 6:30-8:00 P.M.	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75 all sessions <input type="checkbox"/> \$30 single session
<b>FAITH IN PRACTICE</b> FIVE WEDNESDAYS, OCTOBER 22, 29, NOVEMBER 5, 12, 19, 12:00-1:30 P.M.	<input type="checkbox"/> \$125 all sessions <input type="checkbox"/> \$30 single session
<b>POLITICS, DRUGS, AND VIOLENCE IN MEXICO, CENTRAL, AND SOUTH AMERICA</b> FOUR MONDAYS, NOVEMBER 17 AND 24, AND DECEMBER 1 AND 8, 12:00-1:30 P.M.	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100 all sessions <input type="checkbox"/> \$30 single session

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## **FALL 2014 SCHEDULE AND ENROLLMENT FORM**

Inscrutable Beethoven

Lucas Johnson and Kermit Oliver: Texas Visionaries

Richard Murray on the Texas Governor's Race and the  
2014 Midterm Elections

Faith in Practice

Politics, Drugs, and Violence in Mexico, Central, and South America

### **STUDY TOUR**

The Pass of the North: El Paso Art, Architecture, and History

### **COMING IN SPRING 2015**

Sean Theriault, University of Texas Professor of the Year in 2011, on  
Pope Francis

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