



THE HOUSTON SEMINAR  
SPRING 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.



PHOTO: MICHAEL L. GRAY

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

COVER: MAUDE SCHUYLER CLAY, *Super Boron*, Yellow Jacket Plantation, Sunflower County, 1993



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# COURSES

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# CALENDAR

## JANUARY

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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## FEBRUARY

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## APRIL

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### LEGEND

- Matters of the Heart
- △ Unique Gardens
- Center Stage in Houston: Early Music
- Elizabeth Strout
- ▲ Wagner and The Ring
- Mississippi Delta tour
- Whoop Whoop

## MAY

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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PHOTO: MAUDE SCHUYLER CLAY, Super Boron, Yellow Jacket Plantation, Sunflower County, 1993

## Courses for Spring 2014

### STUDY TOUR

**🦋 LAY DOWN YOUR BURDEN BY THE RIVER (MISSISSIPPI, THAT IS): JOIN THE HOUSTON SEMINAR FOR A TRIP TO THE MISSISSIPPI DELTA. THURSDAY, MAY 8—SUNDAY, MAY 11**

**Dr. Luther Brown**, director of the Delta Center for Culture and Learning at Delta State University, and **Stephen Fox**, lecturer in architectural history at Rice University, will lead us on an exploration of the extraordinary culture of “the most southern place on earth.” The Mississippi Delta is unlike anywhere else in America. It holds the roots of a unique nineteenth- and twentieth-century society whose influence—through its agricultural economy, literature, music, and civil rights struggles—is felt throughout the world.

Our journey will begin and end in Jackson, Mississippi. The tour starts with a visit to the Jackson home and garden of Eudora Welty. We will travel through the stomping grounds of other Delta greats, like Walker Percy, Shelby Foote and Tennessee Williams, Richard Wright, and Craig Claiborne.

From Jackson, we travel by bus to the heart of the Delta and our hotel in Greenwood, the famous Alluvian, owned by Viking Range Corporation and one of *Condé Nast Traveler's* “Best Hotels in the World.” At the Alluvian we will see a fine collection of Mississippi art and later visit with Maude Schuyler Clay, a former photographer in residence at Ole Miss, in her hometown of Sumner. We will explore the Delta Blues Trail to the music of Muddy Waters and Robert Johnson; we’ll experience the blues firsthand at Po Monkey Lounge in Merigold, and savor authentic Delta dining at Lusco’s in Greenwood and Doe’s Eat Place in Greenville.

Although the historic plantation economy of the Delta is inextricably linked to slavery, important civil rights milestones took place here. We will visit the site in Money where Emmett Till allegedly flirted with white store owner Carolyn Bryant and the courthouse in Sumner, site of the the trial following his brutal murder. Charles McLaurin will speak to us at the Ruleville grave site of civil rights activist Fannie Lou Hamer. We will also see Mound Bayou, an independent black community founded in 1887 on the utopian principles of Robert Owen.

### STUDY TOUR

**🦋 WHOOP WHOOP: AN OVERNIGHT VALENTINE’S VISIT TO TEXAS’ WHOOPING CRANES AND ASSORTED OTHER BIRDLIFE FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 14—SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15. RAIN OR SHINE!**

Celebrate Valentine’s Day with a visit to one of nature’s wonders. Texas’ Aransas National Wildlife Refuge is the winter home for one of North America’s most magnificent endangered species, the whooping crane. These enormous cranes migrate every fall from Canada’s Alberta and Northwest Territories provinces, 2400 miles, to the shallow waters of the coastal salt marsh.



PHOTO: MICHAEL L. GRAY

We will depart Houston on Friday morning for a motor-coach ride to Rockport where we have engaged Captain Tommy Moore and his boat The Skimmer to take us to the winter grounds of the whooping cranes. Dr. Felipe Chavez-Ramirez, the director for Conservation Programs of the Gulf Coast Bird Observatory, who holds a PhD from Texas A&M University, will be our expert guide.

Friday evening we will enjoy sunset cocktails at a waterfront house on Mustang Island and then dine in Port Aransas. On Saturday, early risers can walk to the beach

before breakfast. While the whooping cranes are the centerpiece of our visit to the coast, we will see shore birds, egrets, herons, and gulls as we spend the morning exploring the Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail. We will wrap up our journey with a special lunch and a bus ride back to Houston.

## CENTER STAGE IN HOUSTON: EARLY MUSIC

**TWO TUESDAYS, JANUARY 14 AND 21;  
AND TWO THURSDAYS, JANUARY 30 AND FEBRUARY 6 7:00-8:30 P.M.**

Christ the King Lutheran Church (Parish Hall),  
2353 Rice Boulevard at Greenbriar Drive Suggested parking: Rice Stadium  
lot, Entrance 13A from Greenbriar or Entrance 16 from Rice Boulevard; \$1  
charge; credit card required

*Christoph Wolff's lecture is underwritten by the Houston-Leipzig Sister City  
Association.*

A Pulitzer Prize–nominated Bach biographer and a Grammy-nominated artistic  
director will be among the speakers in this Houston Seminar series celebrating the  
second Houston Early Music Festival. A collaboration of the four leading Houston  
early-music organizations, the festival will take place February 8–16, 2014.

Our speakers will preview the music to be performed at the festival, which spans  
four centuries of Western music from the late Middle Ages to the Baroque.  
They will explain the phenomenon known as HIP—historically informed  
performance—with its use of period instruments and styles.

### January 14—Critics' Circle

Public radio's **St. John Flynn** will lead a panel discussion by current and former  
Houston music critics **Steven Brown, Charles Ward, and Carl Cunningham**.  
They will discuss why early music seems so compelling globally and locally, and  
will describe the organizations that are leading the movement in Houston.

**Steven Brown** is the music critic for the *Houston Chronicle*. **Charles Ward**,  
his predecessor at the *Chronicle*, is now a free-lance writer on music. **Carl  
Cunningham**, longtime music and dance critic for the *Houston Post*, writes  
program notes for classical music ensembles and is author of the new centennial  
history of Houston Grand Opera. **St. John Flynn** is the program director of  
Classical KUHA 91.7.

### January 21—Early Masters

**Gregory Barnett** is co-director of the Collegium Musicum and chair of  
musicology in the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University. He will explore  
both the connecting threads and the distinguishing traits found in works by  
Guillaume de Machaut and Josquin Desprez, the respective masters of medieval  
and Renaissance vocal polyphony. He earned graduate degrees at Oberlin  
and Princeton.

### January 30—Baroque Musical Theater

**Matthew Dirst** will explore Baroque opera  
and oratorio and introduce Alessandro  
Scarlatti's opera *La Sposa dei Cantici*,  
which will receive its modern world



premiere in Houston. He will conclude the  
evening by playing music by Domenico Scarlatti,  
son of Alessandro, on the harpsichord. Professor  
Dirst is the founder and artistic director of  
Ars Lyrica Houston, a Grammy-nominated  
ensemble specializing in Baroque chamber  
and dramatic works. He is associate professor  
of musicology at the University of Houston's  
Moore School, and he was the first American  
to win major international prizes in both organ  
and harpsichord.

### February 6 —Defining Bach the Composer

What do Bach's *Brandenburg Concertos* and B-Minor Mass have in common?  
On the surface, they could not be more different—one a group of instrumental  
compositions for courtly entertainment and the other a monumental vocal work  
of sacred character. Yet, despite their conceptual and functional differences,  
they reveal the artistic and aesthetic principles on which Bach's ambitions and  
goals as composer were based. Considered the leading Bach scholar of today,  
**Christoph Wolff** is a professor emeritus at Harvard  
University, where he served as chair of the music  
department and as dean of the Graduate School of Arts  
and Sciences. He is director of the Bach Archive in Leipzig,  
the world's preeminent center of Bach scholarship.

Special discount for Ars Lyrica Houston, Houston Early Music, and Mercury  
season ticket holders and Houston Early Music Festival ticket holders. Attend  
single lectures for \$15 per session (limited availability); students \$10 per  
session. The regular admission price is \$25 per session or \$95 for the series.



Elizabeth Strout  
PHOTO: LEONARDO CENDAMOGOLD

## PULITZER PRIZE–WINNER ELIZABETH STROUT: TWO TALKS AND A READING

**TWO WEDNESDAYS,  
FEBRUARY 5 AND 12, 6:30–8:00 P.M.**

Jung Center, 5200 Montrose Boulevard  
**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 7:30 P.M.**

Inprint Margaret Root Brown Reading  
Series at Cullen Theater, Wortham Center,  
501 Texas Avenue

**Elizabeth Strout** is best known for her *New York Times*–bestselling book  
*Olive Kitteridge*, which earned her the 2009 Pulitzer Prize. Her latest novel  
*The Burgess Boys*, also a *New York Times* bestseller, has received rave reviews.  
She will read from *The Burgess Boys* on February 24, 2014, as part of Inprint

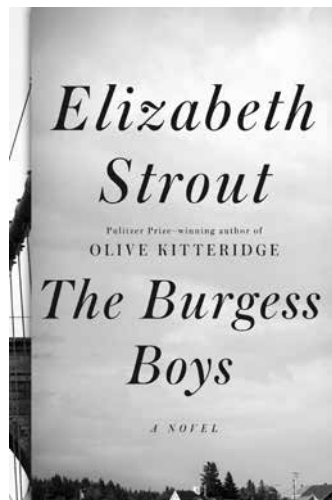
Margarett Root Brown Reading Series, which regularly attracts crowds of up a thousand, to the amazement of New York publishers.

Join **Katherine Center** on February 5 and **Maggie Galehouse** on February 12 for two evenings prior to Elizabeth Strout's appearance to discuss the author's critically acclaimed body of work, including *Amy and Isabelle*, *Abide with Me*, *Olive Kitteridge*, and *The Burgess Boys*. Full-course participants will also receive reserved seating—area tickets for Strout's February 24 reading at the Wortham Center.

Houstonian **Katherine Center** will share her passion for Strout's work prior to their onstage interview at the reading. Ms. Center is the author of four bittersweet novels about love and family, and she has just signed a contract with St. Martin's Press for three more. She is a graduate of St. John's School, Vassar College, and the University of Houston's Creative Writing Program.

**Maggie Galehouse** regularly interviews authors and writes about all things literary as the books editor for the *Houston Chronicle*. She grew up in New England and earned a Ph.D. in English at Temple University in Philadelphia, and decided to become a news reporter. She has reviewed books for the *Houston Chronicle*, the *New York Times*, the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, and the *Washington Post*.

**February 24**—This evening we will attend the Inprint Margarett Root Brown Reading Series to hear **Elizabeth Strout** read from her latest book, *The Burgess Boys*. Born in Portland, Maine, Strout holds an English degree from Bates College and a law degree from Syracuse University. In 1998, *Amy and Isabelle* was published to much critical acclaim, followed by *Abide with Me and Olive Kitteridge*. *The Burgess Boys* was published in 2013.



**🌸 GESAMTKUNSTWERK: WAGNER AND THE RING**  
**FOUR TUESDAYS, MARCH 18, 25, AND APRIL 1, 7:00–8:30 P.M.;**  
**APRIL 8 TIME TO BE ANNOUNCED.**

Private residences for the first three sessions; addresses will be provided to subscribers. Brown Theater, Wortham Center, 501 Texas Avenue, for the fourth session. Limited enrollment.

In April 2014, Houston Grand Opera will launch its first Ring Cycle, a work by Richard Wagner comprising four operas lasting sixteen hours. The full cycle will be presented over four years, and this Houston Seminar series will follow suit. HGO dramaturg **Mena Mark Hanna** will lead in-depth discussions on the origin of Wagner's colossal work, his influence on later artists, and the opera that starts the massive cosmology of the Ring, *Das Rheingold*.

**March 18—Wagner: The Ideas**

Wagner's stage works fuse literature, philosophy, and music. Learn how Wagner transformed stage drama through the Ring Cycle, his festival at Bayreuth, and his concept of *gesamtkunstwerk*—German for “total art work.”

**March 25—Wagner: The Music**

Wagner's operas were composed using carefully chosen leitmotifs, a short recurring musical fragment associated with a person, place, or idea. The Ring Cycle uses dozens of leitmotifs, some of which recur throughout the entire cycle. Learn how to recognize these leitmotifs and how Wagner revolutionized compositional technique.

**April 1—Wagner: *Das Rheingold***

The prelude of Richard Wagner's monumental Ring Cycle, *Das Rheingold* sets the stage for a series of operas that took twenty-six years to compose and has influenced countless artists, musicians, and thinkers since its premiere in 1876. Learn all about Wagner's universe: the gods, heroes, giants, and dwarves who fight over precious gold at the bottom of the Rhine River, protected by the beautiful Rhinemaidens.

**April 8—Dress Rehearsal**

Houston Grand Opera has generously invited us to the dress rehearsal. This invitation applies only to those who have signed up for the entire Seminar series.

**Mena Mark Hanna** is dramaturg at Houston Grand Opera and lecturer at the Shepherd School of Music, Rice University. At HGO, he oversees the translation and implementation of opera surtitles, is responsible for main stage production research, assists in new opera commissions, is content producer for national radio broadcasts, and lectures and writes extensively on behalf of the company. Dr. Hanna holds a DPhil from Oxford University.



## 🍀 MATTERS OF THE HEART

**FIVE TUESDAYS APRIL 15, 22, 29, AND  
MAY 6 AND 13, 12:00 NOON–1:30 P.M.**

The Health Museum, 1515 Hermann Drive,  
metered street parking and paid parking lot  
adjacent to museum.

The heart, weighing under a pound, beats 2.2 billion times in an average 70-year lifetime and pumps the equivalent of 2,500 to 5,000 gallons of blood daily. Blood travels through 60,000 miles of tiny, pipe-like vessels to supply every vital organ in the human body.

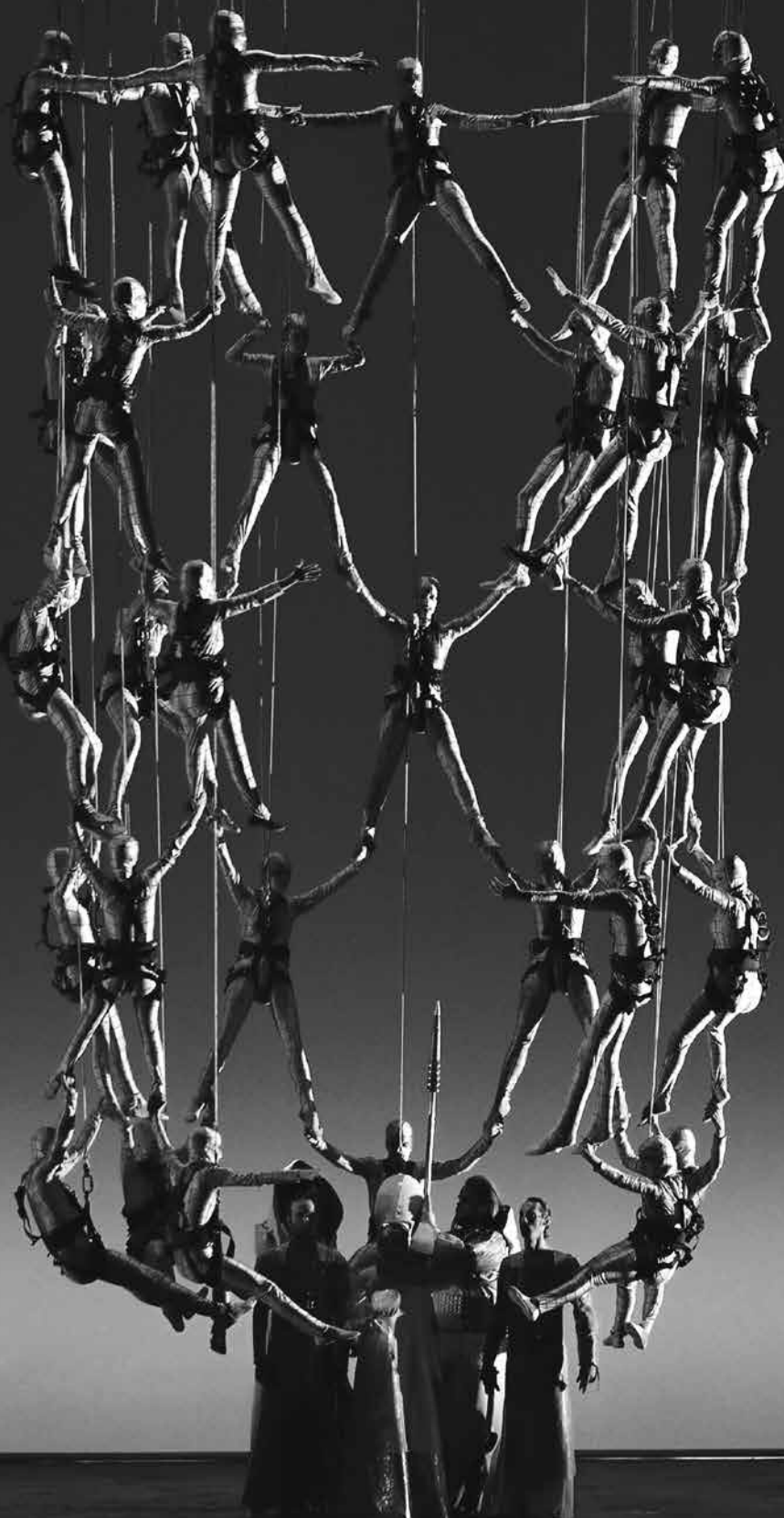
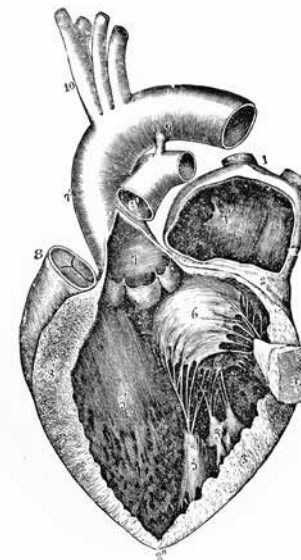
Houston has long led the world as a center for the study of cardiovascular disease – the leading cause of death in both men and women—for innovations in treatment, and, increasingly, as a site for preventive medicine. This series of talks will explore the heart itself, the emotional repercussions of heart disease, the future of heart repair and replacement, and will include a tour of research labs at the Texas Heart Institute.

**April 15—Dr. Stephanie Coulter**, a cardiologist, is dedicated to preventing heart disease through research, education, and outreach. Focused on discovering the symptoms of cardiovascular disease in women, she is developing the most effective, least invasive diagnostic tools, treatments, and prevention strategies as director of the Center for Women’s Heart & Vascular Health. Dr. Coulter will give a virtual tour of the heart using state-of-the-art animation tools and explain what the heart is, what it does, and what can be done to keep it healthy.

Dr. Coulter earned her MD at the University of Texas Medical School, Houston. She completed internships in medicine and internal medicine at Beth Israel Hospital in Boston and completed fellowships in general cardiology and echocardiography at the Massachusetts General Hospital and in clinical epidemiology and clinical trials at Brigham and Women’s Hospital.

**April 22—Lisa Bundick Hulick and Rebecca Trahan** both experienced life-threatening episodes of heart trouble in 2011. Both were healthy, young women at the time of their health crises. Ms. Hulick and Ms. Trahan will discuss how they live with heart disease. As the faces of Women Heart Houston, the self-described “co-hearts” have launched initiatives designed to assist other patients and also to increase awareness of heart disease in women

Ms. Hulick, a wife and mother, had just turned 50 when she experienced sudden cardiac death in 2011. After she was stable, she received a stent and heart catheterization. Today, Ms. Hulick continues to maintain a healthy lifestyle.



La Fura del Baus's Das Rheingold, Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia

Ms. Trahan, a long distance runner, dismissed her heart symptoms until a visit to her doctor revealed she had suffered a spontaneous dissection of her left main coronary artery. She received an emergency triple bypass. Today she is back to work and back to running.

**April 29—Dr. M. Cristina Ivan** is a psychiatrist with a special interest in treating patients suffering from the psychological distress caused by medical conditions. Depression, anxiety, and grief are all recognized symptoms that arise in the aftermath of heart disease. Dr. Ivan will explain the emotional shifts that follow these events and treatments that assist in recovery.

Dr. Ivan trained in nephrology in Romania and France, and in internal medicine in the United States. She received her psychiatric training at Baylor College of Medicine. She remains at Baylor teaching and providing inpatient treatment and consultations at Methodist hospital.

**May 6—**In his quest to repair damaged hearts, surgeon and scientist **Dr. Billy Cohn** has turned to invention and innovation. He is best known for his role in the development of a continuous-flow artificial heart pump. The continuous-flow heart pump mechanically moves blood through the body but does not generate a pulse. Holder of numerous patents and in great demand as a speaker, Billy Cohn is changing the landscape of heart repair.

Dr. Cohn is a cardiovascular surgeon and the director of minimally invasive surgical technology at the Texas Heart Institute. He is the co-director of the Cullen Cardiovascular Research Laboratory, an associate professor of surgery at Baylor College of Medicine, and adjunct professor of bioengineering at the University of Houston. Dr. Cohn received his BA from Oberlin College and his MD from Baylor College of Medicine.

**May 13 - Dr. Doris Taylor**, a pioneer in the emerging field of regenerative medicine, bases her research on the concept that the body will accept an organ generated from its own stem cells. Her ground-breaking research strips hearts and other organs of their cells, leaving a scaffold that serves as the foundation for a bioartificial organ reseeded with healthy stem cells. In September 2013, Texas Gov. Rick Perry announced the creation of a Center for Cell and Organ Biotechnology, a collaboration between Texas A&M University and the Texas Heart Institute, led by Dr. Taylor.

Dr. Taylor is the director of regenerative medicine research at the Texas Heart Institute. Dr. Taylor holds a BS in biology from Mississippi University for Women and a doctorate in pharmacology from the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School in Dallas.



## **UNIQUE GARDENS: THE GARDEN AS PLAYGROUND FOR SELF-EXPRESSION**

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23, 12:00 NOON–2:00 P.M.**

Forum of Civics Building 2503 Westheimer Road at Kirby Drive (southeast corner; parking available)

**SATURDAY, APRIL 26, 2:00–6:00 P.M.**

**RAIN DATE: SUNDAY, APRIL 27, 2:00–6:00 P.M.**

Tour of private gardens in Houston's Heights neighborhood. Maps and directions will be provided at the Wednesday lecture or emailed to tour participants.

Personal gardens seduce us with the view into the gardener's heart and mind. The plants, their placement, their symmetry and asymmetry, their order and color reveal the sensibility of the gardener. Landscape architect Sarah Newbery will give an illustrated lecture about such gardens and offer suggestions on how we can make our own gardens more personal and rewarding. She will then lead a tour of several private gardens in Houston's Heights neighborhood that are distinct reflections of their owners' gardening passions. Tour-goers will be provided with maps and will drive or carpool to the gardens. The tour will conclude with a garden reception.

**Sarah Newbery** is an architect and landscape architect. In 2013, she was named project director for Memorial Park Master Planning. Previously, she worked at Curtis & Windham Architects. She received master's degrees in both architecture and landscape architecture at the Graduate School of Design at Harvard.



REG  
FORM



La Fura del Baus's Das Rheingold, Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia

**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 may attend classes for a discounted fee of \$10 per session by registering at the door and presenting an I.D. from an accredited institution.

**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  
P.O. Box 22764, Houston, TX 77227-2764

# COURSE LIST AND RESERVATION FORM

PLEASE ENROLL ME/US IN THE FOLLOWING COURSES:

- LAY DOWN YOUR BURDEN BY THE RIVER (MISSISSIPPI, THAT IS)**  
THURSDAY, MAY 8—SUNDAY, MAY 11  
*For trip price and further information, please call 713-666-9000 or email registrar@houstonseminar.org*
- WHOOOP WHOOP: AN OVERNIGHT VALENTINE'S VISIT TO TEXAS' WHOOPING CRANES AND ASSORTED OTHER BIRDLIFE**  
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 14-SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15  
*For trip price and further information, please call 713-666-9000 or email registrar@houstonseminar.org*
- CENTER STAGE IN HOUSTON: EARLY MUSIC**  
TWO TUESDAYS, JANUARY 14 AND 21; AND TWO THURSDAYS, JANUARY 30 AND FEBRUARY 6 7:00-8:30 P.M.  
*There are special discounts for this course; please see course description on page 6.*  
 \$95/4 sessions     \$25/1 session  
*Discounted tickets*  
 \$15/ single session     \$10 for students
- PULITZER PRIZE-WINNER ELIZABETH STROUT: TWO TALKS AND A READING**  
TWO WEDNESDAYS, FEBRUARY 5 AND 12, 6:30-8:00 P.M.  
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 7:30 PM  
 \$75/3 sessions  
 \$30/1 session  
*Seating at reading is a benefit of full course participation.*
- GESAMTKUNSTWERK: WAGNER AND THE RING**  
FOUR TUESDAYS, MARCH 18 AND 25, APRIL 1, 7:00-8:30 P.M.  
APRIL 8'S TIME TO BE ANNOUNCED  
 \$165/4 sessions  
 \$55/1 session  
*Invitation to dress rehearsal is a benefit of full course participation.*
- MATTERS OF THE HEART**  
FIVE TUESDAYS, APRIL 15, 22, 29, AND MAY 6 AND 13 12:00 NOON-1:30 P.M.  
 \$150/ 5 sessions  
 \$35/1 session
- THE GARDEN AS PLAYGROUND FOR SELF- EXPRESSION**  
LECTURE, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23, 12:00 NOON-2:00 P.M.  
GARDEN TOUR, SATURDAY, APRIL 26, 2:00-6:00 P.M.  
 \$75/2 sessions  
 \$30/lecture only  
 \$45/tour only

**TOTAL FEE:** \_\_\_\_\_

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[WWW.HOUSTONSEMINAR.ORG](http://WWW.HOUSTONSEMINAR.ORG)

Please contact us if you would prefer to receive an online-only version of the brochure.

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FORM





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## **SPRING 2014 SCHEDULE AND ENROLLMENT FORM**

Schedule and Enrollment Form

Lay Down Your Burden by the River (Mississippi, That Is)

Whoop Whoop: An Overnight Visit to Texas' Whooping Cranes

Center Stage in Houston: Early Music

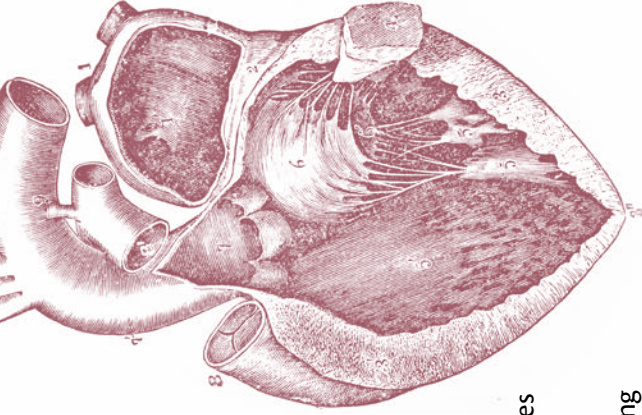
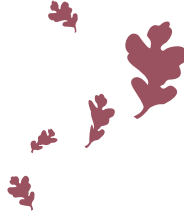
Pulitzer Prize–Winner Elizabeth Strout: Two Talks and a Reading

Gesamtkunstwerk: Wagner and the Ring

Matters of the Heart

Unique Gardens: The Garden as Playground for Self-Expression

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