



THE HOUSTON SEMINAR
FALL 2019



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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OCTOBER

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NOVEMBER

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Study Tours

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION OR TO ADD YOUR NAME TO A STUDY TOUR INTEREST LIST, PLEASE
CONTACT THE HOUSTON SEMINAR ADMINISTRATOR, JANICE D'ANGELO, AT 713-666-9000
OR EMAIL REGISTRAR@HOUSTONSEMINAR.ORG.

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When we think of New York, Manhattan comes to mind. Yet if Manhattan's neighbor, the Borough of Brooklyn, were still an independent city, it would rank ahead of Houston in population, 2,649,000 to Houston's 2,313,000. While their histories are dissimilar, today they share a common pattern of rapid growth in diversity and density.

A city of neighborhoods, Brooklyn has communities that possess distinct identities and date back to Dutch farming villages. Founded in 1643, Brooklyn has reinvented itself for over 300 years. This October, the Houston Seminar will explore the history, architecture, landscape, art, and exploding culinary scene of Brooklyn as its neighborhoods continue to evolve in the twenty-first century.

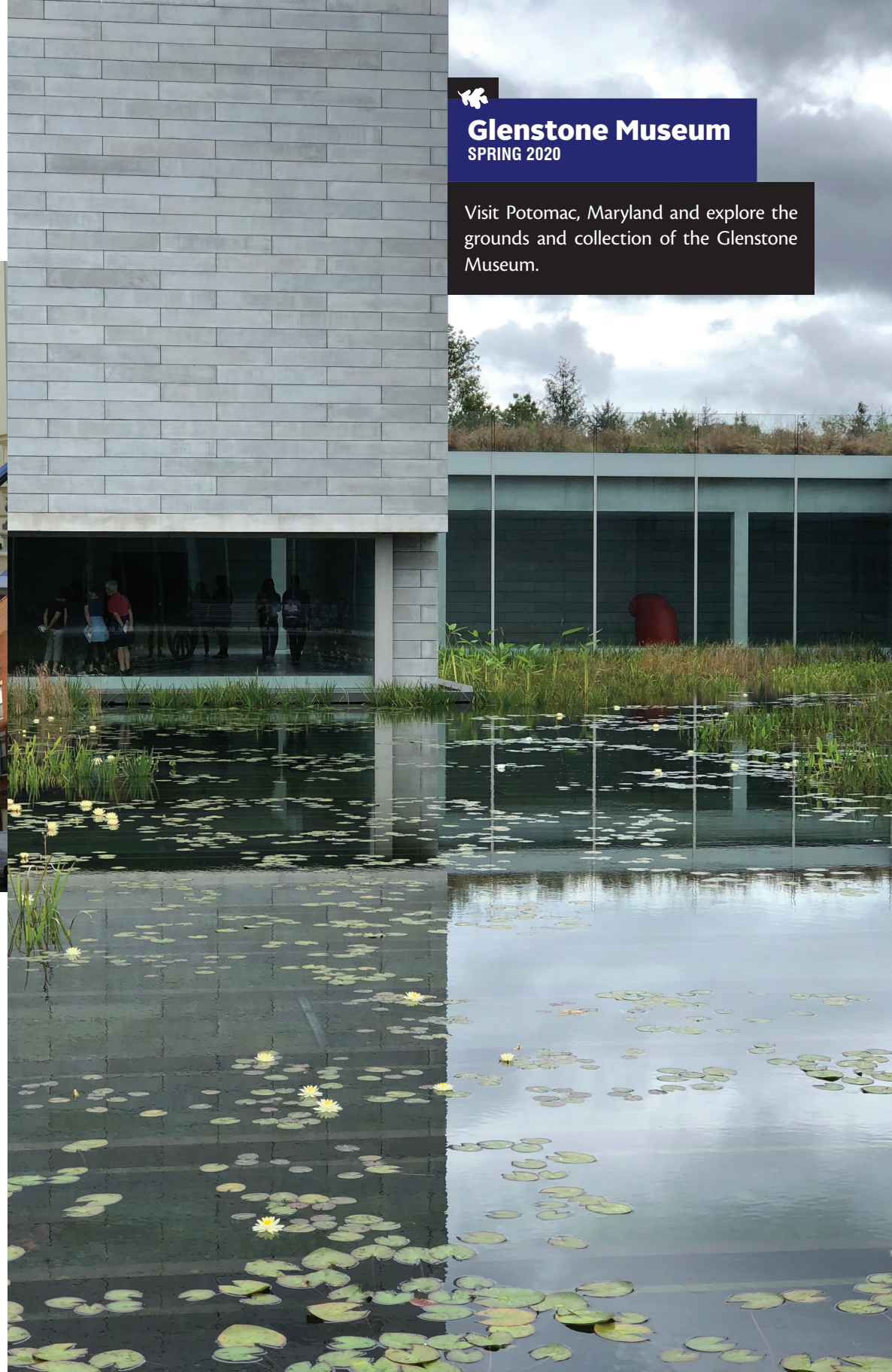
Led by architectural historian **STEPHEN FOX** and joined by local experts, we will examine historic precincts (Brooklyn Heights) and spectacular waterfront landscapes (Brooklyn Bridge Park, DUMBO, Williamsburg). We will see the transition of Red Hook and Gowanus, both largely rebuilt following widespread destruction by Hurricane Sandy. We will visit the elegant Victorian Bedford-Stuyvesant and Crown Heights neighborhoods, both historic African-American communities; Bushwick, predominately Hispanic and known for graffiti art; Park Slope, bordering Prospect Park; and so much more!



Glenstone Museum

SPRING 2020

Visit Potomac, Maryland and explore the grounds and collection of the Glenstone Museum.





Brooklyn Art and Urban Insights

TWO WEDNESDAYS, SEPTEMBER 25 AND OCTOBER 2, 6:30–8:00 P.M. Location will be given to subscribers.

in Brooklyn and will describe how the scene has developed since the early 1980s. Over the last 35 years, the artist community in Brooklyn has burgeoned, and over roughly the same period, Mr. Arning has become an advocate for many artists located there. He will also discuss the visionary work of Harvey Lichtenstein at the Brooklyn Academy of Music and Arnold Lehman at the Brooklyn Museum and how their activism has made the borough a crucial stop for anyone interested in cutting-edge arts.

Bill Arning received a B.A. in art history from New York University and a M.A. in art history from Tufts University while serving as exhibitions coordinator at the List Art Gallery of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. After 10 years as director of Houston's Contemporary Arts Museum, Mr. Arning is now an independent art consultant and curator.

OCTOBER 2: AN URBAN HISTORY

How was Brooklyn transformed from an agricultural, ferry-based commuter town adjacent to Manhattan into a bustling borough that is among the hottest real estate markets in the world and now rivals Manhattan as a destination of choice for global headquarters? Urban historian **KYLE SHELTON** will focus on the borough's evolution. The lecture will weave together the borough's demographic, development, and economic history, linking its past to its contemporary explosive growth. How did the building of the Brooklyn Bridge alter the community's position in New York City? How have waves of immigration and shifting populations affected the built form of the community? What forces have led to the borough's rejuvenation from NYC's larger 1970s decline? Finally, Dr. Shelton's talk will lead the audience to consider parallels between Brooklyn and Houston.

Kyle Shelton is a scholar and astute observer of Houston. He is director of strategic partnerships at Rice University's Kinder Institute for Urban Research, where he leads research on urban development, transportation, and placemaking, as well as on urban and metropolitan governance. He is the author of *Power Moves: Transportation, Politics and Development in Houston* (University of Texas Press, 2017) and is a frequent contributor to the Kinder Institute's Urban Edge blog.

In preparation for the Brooklyn study tour, the Seminar will offer two in-depth sessions of interest to the general public and to travelers.

SEPTEMBER 25: A PEEK AT BROOKLYN'S VISUAL ARTS

Curator and critic **BILL ARNING** will take us on a fast-paced, illustrated armchair tour of the visual arts

Eileen Morris



Three by Three on Three: Bringing the Page to Life

FOUR SESSIONS: THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 6:30–8:00 P.M., AND THREE SUNDAY MATINEES, SEPTEMBER 29, OCTOBER 6 AND OCTOBER 20. Instructions will be provided to subscribers.

theater environment, and the three plays that open their 2019-20 season.

SEPTEMBER 26: KENN McLAUGHLIN, EILEEN MORRIS, and REBECCA UDDEN—artistic directors of Stages, the Ensemble, and Main Street theaters—will discuss their theaters and creative work in a conversation led by theater critic **TREVOR BOFFONE**. Each will describe how they chose their plays and will offer their perspectives on Houston theater.

SEPTEMBER 29: If the brain is nothing but facts and matter, what is consciousness? Tom Stoppard's most recent play, *The Hard Problem*, asks with provocative discourse and quick wit whether computers and the MRI scanners will answer all the questions psychology can ask. Or is there more to being human? The play opened at London's National Theatre in 2015.

OCTOBER 6: *School Girls: Or, the African Mean Girls* by Jocelyn Bioh—set in Ghana in 1986—is a buoyant and biting comedy that explores the universal similarities (and glaring differences) and follows the travails, jealousies, and manipulations of high school girls. The ugly question of internalized racism lurks within this story. *School Girls* premiered in 2017 at New York's MCC Theater.

OCTOBER 20: Tim Price's 2011 play *Salt, Root and Roe* is the story of 80-year-old twin sisters living in a seaside Welsh town and a meditation on the nature of change and the courage it takes to face aging. This American premiere is a co-production with Upstream Theatre in St. Louis—whose artistic director, Philip Boehm, is a native Houstonian—and will feature Houston's own Sally Edmundson.

Trevor Boffone is a Houston-based scholar, educator, writer, dramaturg, and producer who explores how theater and community interact. He produces Stages' annual Sin Muros Latinx Theatre Festival.

Artistic director Kenn McLaughlin joined Stages Theatre in 2001 as managing director and has served as artistic director since 2006. Founded by Ted Swindley in 1978, Stages will expand into its new Gordy theater in 2020.

Eileen Morris is a director, actress and educator. In the 1980s, she worked closely with George W. Hawkins who founded the Ensemble Theatre in 1976 to preserve African-American artistic expression and enlighten, entertain, and enrich a diverse community.

Fresh out of Rice University, Rebecca Greene Udden founded Main Street Theater in 1975. She continues to direct and act. She also founded Main Street's thriving year-round Theater for Youth.



Founded in the mid-1970s, the Ensemble, Main Street, and Stages theaters have consistently brought excellent plays, many of them world and regional premieres, to Houston audiences and have managed to prosper despite some lean years. Three seasoned artistic directors will talk candidly about their work, Houston's



Houston Zoo: Exploring the Changing Roles of Zoos in the 21st Century

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 10:00 A.M.–1:00 P.M. Lunch at Cypress Circle Café included. Meet at the main entrance of the Houston Zoo, 6200 Hermann Park Drive. Subscribers should be prepared to walk outdoors for our immersive zoo experience.



Courtesy: Houston Zoo

The mission of the Houston Zoo is to connect people with animals and to inspire action to save wildlife: its aspirational goal is to be a leader in the global movement to save wildlife. Today, over 2 million visitors annually come to the Houston Zoo, and few realize that a portion of their membership fee or admission ticket is used to protect the wild counterparts of the zoo animals they see. To bring awareness to this dual mission, the zoo's new tagline is "See them. Save them."

RENEE BUMPUS, senior director of wildlife conservation programs, will lead us on our walk through the zoo's

exhibits. As the staff member who oversees more than 45 local and international wildlife conservation partnerships, she is well positioned to describe the changing roles of zoos. CEO **LEE EHMKE** will provide a look into the future of the Zoo, describing the future exhibits leading up to its centennial in 2022. **PETER RIGER**, vice-president of conservation and education, will join us to share some unique insights into tracking the effectiveness of the zoo's future exhibits. We will then shift our focus to the zoo's newest exhibit, the Texas Wetland habitat, which celebrates Texas species that have come back from the brink of extinction thanks to human intervention—bald eagles, whooping cranes, and alligators—before we conclude our tour with lunch at the newly opened Cypress Circle Café.



Public Art Reprise... The Treasures of the University of Houston-Downtown

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3, 10:00–11:30 A.M. Subscribers will meet at the O'Kane Gallery at UH Downtown. The gallery is located on the third floor of the Girard Street Building, One Main Street, Houston, TX 77002.



Floyd Newsum, Jr., *Contemplating Success*, 2004, acrylic on canvas. Photo: Morris Malakoff

More than 700 works have been collected and commissioned by the University of Houston Systemwide Public Art initiative over the past 50 years since the university's percent for art program was established in 1969. Many of the most stunning and monumental are located at the downtown campus. In this continuation of last fall's highly popular central campus tour, we will discover significant work by John Biggers, Nancy Graves, Trenton Doyle Hancock, Jacob Hashimoto, Rachel Hecker, and Floyd Newsum, among others.

MICHAEL GUIDRY, curator of public art, will guide us on an hour-long walking tour of the University's downtown campus. Mr. Guidry came to UH in 2005 after serving more than nine years as the assistant registrar and curator of traveling exhibitions for the New Orleans Museum of Art. He received his B.A. from the University of New Orleans in 1992 and his M.F.A. from University of Houston in 1996. As curator, Mr. Guidry oversees the collection, maintenance, and care of artworks. He is also responsible for commissioning new artworks at all UH System universities.



Trenton Doyle Hancock, *LEGENDS*, 2015, ink on acrylic. Photo: Morris Malakoff



Politics—Again!

THREE TUESDAYS, OCTOBER 15, 22, 29, AND THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 6:30–8:00 P.M., Covenant Church Fellowship Hall, 4949 Caroline, in the Museum District, 77004. Parking available behind the church and on adjacent side streets.

OCTOBER 15: ANN BEESON | WHAT WE LEARNED FROM THE 2019 TEXAS LEGISLATIVE SESSION

As the dust settles from the state legislative session in Austin, what were the major policy changes? How will they affect Texans? What did the new Speaker of the Texas House and large crop of first-time lawmakers mean for dynamics at the Capitol? Ms. Beeson will focus on the positive developments and the remaining challenges facing hard-working Texans, with an emphasis on what we can all do to stay engaged in the policymaking process.

OCTOBER 22: RICHARD MURRAY | THE ROAD TO THE WHITE HOUSE 2020

Democrats and Republicans have dramatically different tracks to winning the presidency next year. Democrats have the largest and most diverse array of contenders in the party's 200-year history. Republicans continue to deal with the consequences of Donald Trump's hostile takeover of the party in 2016. What consequences will these different nomination processes have for the 2020 general election?

OCTOBER 29: RICHARD MURRAY | WILL TEXAS BE A BATTLEGROUND STATE IN 2020?

Democrats have not won Texas' Electoral College votes since 1976 or seriously contested state elections since 1988. Will 2020 be different due to shifting demographics, the unexpectedly strong Democratic performance in the 2018 midterms, and Donald Trump's role in shifting Texas toward being a purple state?

NOVEMBER 7: SEAN THERIAULT | NEW BLOOD VERSUS OLD INSTITUTIONS

The 2018 mid-term elections brought the largest freshman class to Congress in more than a generation, with Democrats in control of the House and Republicans the Senate. Has the large influx of new members changed the way Congress operates, or will the institution prove resistant to even a sweeping election? What does it mean for the 2020 elections?

Ann Beeson is a renowned social justice lawyer, former philanthropy executive, and frequent public speaker and writer. She joined the Austin-based Center for Public Policy Priorities in 2013 and serves as CEO.

Richard Murray is the Bob Lanier Professor of Urban Public Policy and director of surveying for the Center for Public Policy at the University of Houston. He has consulted on more than 200 political campaigns.

Sean Theriault, a Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas in Austin, has received numerous teaching awards and is the author of several books on congressional decision making.

20th Century Latin American Art: Collecting, Creating, Conserving

Latin American artists of the 20th century, influenced by international currents of revolutionary thought and style, experimented wildly with disruptive means and materials to ground universal ideas in local imagery and color. Awareness of the seminal and important works of Latin America modernists has grown in recent years thanks to the work of a few collectors, curators, museums, and artists. Like Beatriz González, they believe "art relates what history cannot."

Beatriz González
Gratia plena (tocador) [Full of Grace (Dressing Table)], 1971, enamel on metal sheet joint on wood furniture.
Photo: Will Michels

Opposite page:
Beatriz González
Los papagayos [The Parrots], 1987, oil on paper.
Photo: Oriol Tarridas



Collecting: A Vision with Passion and Purpose

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 1:00–2:30 P.M. Private collection. Location will be given to subscribers. Limited enrollment.

Registrants will view an extraordinary ensemble of modern and contemporary artworks by Latin American artists. The artists—Antonio Berni, Carlos Cruz-Diez, Pedro Figari, Wifredo Lam, Jesús Rafael Soto, Rufino Tamayo and Joaquín Torres-García—are pivotal figures from the early part of the twentieth century and represent important developments within Latin American modernism. These private collectors are dedicated to preserving a historical record of Latin American art for future generations to appreciate and study.



Creating: The Vision of Beatriz González, Modern Colombian Artist

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 10:00–11:30 A.M. Museum of Fine Arts Houston, Caroline Wiess Law Building, 1001 Bissonnet, 77005.

Organized by the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and the Pérez Art Museum Miami, *Beatriz González: A Retrospective* is the first large-scale U.S. exhibition of the

work of this renowned Bogotá-based artist. Born in 1938, Ms. González's career spans over 50 years, and she is one of the few living representatives of the "radical women" generation from Latin America. Her works critique the power imbalances, marginalization, and cultural colonization perpetuated by the circulation and demand for Western goods and ideas. The exhibition will also bring to light Ms. González's political artistic production, which began in the 1980s when she felt compelled to take an ethical and critical stance towards the violent situation in Colombia. Join us as co-curator Mari Carmen Ramírez guides us through the exhibition!

MARI CARMEN RAMÍREZ is the Wortham curator of Latin American Art and director of the International Center for the Arts of the Americas (ICAA) at the MFAH. Since her arrival at the museum in 2001, Ms. Ramírez has led a long-term transformation in the appreciation and understanding of Latin American and Latino visual arts in the United States and abroad through acquisitions, research, exhibitions, publications, and a free online digital archive.



Conserving: Visions of Latin American artists in the MFAH Conservation Lab

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 10:00–11:30 A.M. Conservation Lab at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.

CORY ROGGE will build on David Bomford's riveting March tour of the MFAH's new conservation studio. Her detailed research reveals the decision-making processes of these artists and enables us to parse out the means by which they obtained their desired aesthetic and the messages hidden therein. Her ability to perform in-depth scientific analysis illuminates many aspects of the creative process including experimentation with new media, revision of color and composition, and application of the multiple layers required to achieve the surface properties that are not visible to the naked eye.

Corina E. Rogge has been the Andrew W. Mellon research scientist at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston and the Menil Collection since 2013. She earned a B.A. in chemistry from Bryn Mawr College, a Ph.D. in Chemistry from Yale University and has held postdoctoral positions at the University of Wisconsin–Madison and the University of Texas Health Sciences Center (Houston).

Katy
Prairie
Conservancy



Katy Prairie: Splendor in the Grasslands

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26, 9:30 A.M.–3:00 P.M. Location of bus departure will be given to subscribers.



Experience Katy Prairie in its autumn splendor—the coastal grasses, the dazzling birds, the native flora and fauna—all pulsing in unison to tell the story of this unique ecological preserve. Then enjoy lunch and a glass of wine at the table of one Houston's greatest Prairie supporters.

We will be met at the prairie by **MARY ANNE PIACENTINI**, president and CEO of the Katy prairie Conservancy. No one knows better than Ms. Piacentini how vitally important the prairies are to the health of Houston's ecological future. The prairies help shield Houston from catastrophic flooding and, at the same time, provide a refuge for an enormous variety of bird and animal species.

Participants will have an opportunity to walk the Ann Hamilton Trail and learn more about the restoration and flooding mitigation efforts there. Our visit will end in a private home where we will enjoy a farm-to-table meal. **BETH CLARK** of Clark/Condon will discuss how we can bring parts of the native prairie to our homes, highlighting certain native plants that are great attracters of birds and butterflies.

Mary Anne Piacentini coordinates the Conservancy's land protection programs and conservation assistance to private landowners, establishes community partnerships and relationships with diverse stakeholders, and oversees the agency's operations and programs.

Beth Clark co-founded Clark/Condon with Sheila Condon in 1985. After some time abroad, she rejoined the firm in 2004, bringing a long history of award-winning landscape design practices. She provides extensive knowledge of plant materials and natural environments.



Bob Dylan's Landscapes of Time

TWO TUESDAYS, NOVEMBER 5 AND 12,
6:30–8:00 P.M. Location will be given to
subscribers.

It is a testament to Bob Dylan's relevance as an artist that his writings remain as unshakable today as the day they were written. Just as we return to the works of Homer, Shakespeare, and Rimbaud, poets who document the foibles and aspirations of their times, so do we return to Dylan. Come listen to **CARLOS JIMENEZ**, internationally renowned architect and Dylan aficionado/scholar, expound on Dylan's themes and lyrical power. Each session will consist of an introductory lecture and a detailed analysis of specific Dylan songs, supplemented by short musical videos.

As a restless troubadour Dylan traverses past, present, and future histories to unfold a turbulent yet moving story called America. Receiving the Nobel Prize in Literature for 2016 proved that this inimitable laureate will remain "*Forever young*". Simply timeless.

Carlos Jimenez is an award-winning architect, a professor at Rice University School of Architecture, and principal of Carlos Jimenez Studio.

Victorian Angels and Rebels

TWO WEDNESDAYS, NOVEMBER 13 AND 20, 6:30–8:00 P.M.
Location will be given to subscribers.

As inveterate watchers of the recent mini-series *Victoria* can attest, Victorian ideas about women, men, and sexuality were more complex than we might at first imagine. Although Victorians are infamous for their strictness and their prudery—many of us have heard the apocryphal story that they swathed piano legs in chintz so that young people would not be reminded of inappropriate body parts—it was during the Victorian era that modern feminism was born. **DR. HELENA MICHIE** will present this two-part course on Victorian ideas about sex and gender.





NOVEMBER 13: VICTORIAN ANGELS will focus on Victorian ideals of womanhood and sexuality, from the image of the “Angel in the House” to the domestic “Mother Queen,” a role performed by Victoria to the nation and the world.

NOVEMBER 20: VICTORIAN REBELS will look both at Victorian feminists who challenged enshrined definitions of marriage and property, and at ordinary women who resisted the limitations of feminine ideals in local but important ways. Course participants will be asked to read two or three short essays/literary excerpts. Course sessions will stress materials from diaries and letters as well as visual materials, mostly from Dr. Michie’s archival research on Victorian bodies, honeymoons, and male homosexuality.

Dr. Michie, Agnes Cullen Arnold professor in Humanities and professor of English, Rice University, teaches courses in feminist theory, literary theory, and Victorian literature and culture. She is also the director of Rice University’s Center for Women, Gender and Sexuality. She is the author of five books in Victorian Studies and the study of gender and sexuality including *Victorian Honeymoons: Journeys to the Conjugal*.

Enrollment: All classes are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Confirmation of enrollment will be sent at the time of registration. It is possible to attend a single session of multi-session courses for a pro-rated fee. You may enroll by mail, email, phone, or online.

Discounts: Any individual or couple who register by mail/check for more than three courses on the same registration form may discount the total fee by 10 percent. 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 a school I.D.

Refunds: You will receive a partial refund if you cancel at least two weeks before a course begins; a 20 percent 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 will 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). Notifications will be mailed to the donor and the designated recipient. Please call for more information or include a request and payment with this form.

For further information, email registrar@houstonseminar.org, telephone 713-666-9000, or consult www.houstonseminar.org



The Houston Seminar
P.O. Box 22764, Houston, TX 77227-2764

PLEASE ENROLL ME/US IN THE FOLLOWING COURSES:

BROOKLYN: THEN & NOW (BUT MOSTLY NOW)

For trip price and further information, please call 713-666-9000 or email registrar@houstonseminar.org

GLENSTONE MUSEUM, POTOMAC, MARYLAND SPRING 2020

To place your name on an interest list, please email registrar@houstonseminar.org or call 713-666-9000

BROOKLYN ART AND URBAN INSIGHTS

TWO WEDNESDAYS, SEPTEMBER 25 AND OCTOBER 2, 6:30–8:00 P.M.

- ☐ \$60 all sessions
☐ \$35 each session

THREE BY THREE ON THREE: BRINGING THE PAGE TO LIFE

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, AND THREE SUNDAY MATINEES
SEPTEMBER 26, 6:30–8:00 P.M.: ARTISTIC DIRECTORS IN CONVERSATION
SEPTEMBER 29, 3:00 P.M.: *THE HARD PROBLEM*, MAIN STREET THEATER
OCTOBER 6, 3:00 P.M.: *SCHOOL GIRLS*, THE ENSEMBLE THEATRE
OCTOBER 20, 2:30 P.M.: *SALT, ROOT AND ROE*, STAGES THEATRE

- ☐ \$145 all sessions
☐ \$40 single session

HOUSTON ZOO: EXPLORING THE CHANGING ROLES OF ZOOS IN THE 21ST CENTURY FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 10:00 A.M.–1:00 P.M.

- ☐ \$45 single session

PUBLIC ART REPRISE...TREASURES OF UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-DOWNTOWN THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3, 10:00–11:30 A.M.

- ☐ \$35 single session

POLITICS—AGAIN! THREE TUESDAYS, OCTOBER 15, 22 AND 29 AND ONE THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 6:30–8:00 P.M.

- ☐ \$120 all sessions
☐ \$35 single session

20TH CENTURY LATIN AMERICAN ART: COLLECTING, CREATING, CONSERVING

- ☐ \$100 all sessions

COLLECTING: A VISION WITH PASSION AND PURPOSE THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 1:00–2:30 P.M.

- ☐ \$40 single sessions

CREATING: THE VISION OF BEATRIZ GONZÁLEZ, MODERN COLUMBIAN ARTIST FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 10:00–11:30 A.M.

- ☐ \$35 single session

CONSERVING: VISIONS OF LATIN AMERICAN ARTISTS IN THE MFAH CONSERVATION LAB, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 10:00–11:30 A.M.

- ☐ \$35 single session

KATY PRAIRIE: SPLENDOR IN THE GRASSLANDS SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26, 9:30 A.M.–3:00 P.M.

- ☐ \$90 single session

BOB DYLAN'S LANDSCAPES OF TIME

TWO TUESDAYS, NOVEMBER 5 AND 12, 6:30–8:00 P.M.

- ☐ \$60 all sessions
☐ \$35 each session

VICTORIAN ANGELS AND REBELS

TWO WEDNESDAYS, NOVEMBER 13 AND 20, 6:30–8:00 P.M.

- ☐ \$60 all sessions
☐ \$35 each session

NAME

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| SPRING 2019 SCHEDULE AND ENROLLMENT FORM | |
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