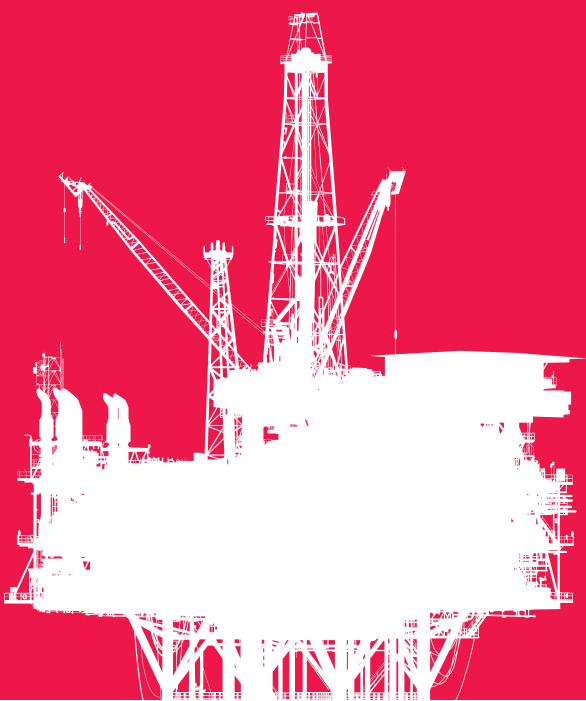




THE HOUSTON SEMINAR
SPRING 2011



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 ENVIRONMENT, AND CURRENT TRENDS AND EVENTS.



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

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A CONVERSATION WITH PATSY CRAVEN**

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


spring 2011 calendar

JANUARY	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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FEBRUARY	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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APRIL	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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	STUDY TOUR		INVISIBLE CHURCH		TONY HOAGLAND
	NECHES RIVER		CONVERS. W/ PATSY CRAVENS		URBAN GEMS
	DEAD MAN WALKING		OIL SPILL		

courses for spring 2011



DISCOVERING THE WILD NECHES RIVER

A STUDY TOUR

THURSDAY, APRIL 14–SUNDAY, APRIL 17

Enrollment limited to 25

There is no other river like the Neches. The natural components of rainfall, sunlight, elevation, and soils along the Neches corridor combine to produce some of the most varied conditions and luxuriant biodiversity found anywhere. It is one of Texas' wildest, least explored natural assets. **GINA DONOVAN**, director of the Houston Audubon Society, will lead a four-day expedition that will make this treasure more accessible to those of us interested in unlocking the river's secrets.

Our group will travel to Palestine by bus on Thursday morning and spend the next three days exploring the river and its bottomlands via the historic Texas State Railroad, canoes, pontoon boats, and a two-hour hike that will include an opportunity for guided timberland songbird watching. When we leave the river near its mouth at Beaumont, we will proceed to the Audubon Society's High Island Sanctuaries for coastal spring birding with a late afternoon arrival back in Houston on Sunday. **Please note:** *Canoeing experience is not required; however, both the canoeing and hiking portions of the trip will require moderate physical exertion.*

Sleeping accommodations will be comfortable motels in Palestine and Lufkin. Our food will consist of box lunches, meals at local eateries that specialize in catfish and barbeque, a dinner at Lufkin's Crown Colony Country Club, and a lunch at Temple Inland's Boggy Slough Hunting Club in Pollok.

GINA DONOVAN is the executive director of the Houston Audubon Society, coauthor of *Neches River User Guide* (Texas A&M University Press, 2009), and cofounder of the East Texas Forest and Wildlife Coalition. She has canoed nearly 400 miles of the Neches River.

*Canoes are unobtrusive;
They don't storm the natural world
Or ride over it, but drift upon it
As part of its own silence.*

—John Graves, *Goodbye to a River*

On March 22, In conjunction with this study tour, Ms. Donovan will teach a supporting course for the Houston Seminar with her father, **RICHARD M. DONOVAN**, acclaimed

author of *Paddling the Wild Neches* (Texas A&M University Press, 2006). Please see the listing for "The Neches River: Ribbon of Life," immediately following.



THE NECHES RIVER: RIBBON OF LIFE

ONE TUESDAY, MARCH 22, 11:30 A.M.–2:00 P.M.

Lora Jean Kilroy Visitor and Education Center (the new building at Bayou Bend Collection and Gardens), 6003 Memorial Drive at Westcott This is a companion course for the study tour of the Neches River described above, but it is also for those who would choose an "armchair expedition" instead.

Texas' burgeoning population places enormous pressure on its finite natural resources. Conservationists and environmentalists battle tremendous odds and are only occasionally successful in preserving the state's natural and cultural heritage. The victory of the Neches River National Wildlife Refuge is a story you won't want to miss. **GINA DONOVAN**, executive director of Houston Audubon and coauthor of the *Neches River User Guide* (Texas A&M University Press, 2009) will deliver a presentation about the grassroots effort to protect the essentially free-flowing Neches River in East Texas. She will include a timeline of advocacy events and beautiful photographs of the ecologically diverse river and the wildlife it sustains.

RICHARD M. DONOVAN, author of *Paddling the Wild Neches* (Texas A&M Press, 2006), will discuss the early history of the Neches River Valley and his 1999 and 2001 Neches River canoe expeditions. Using photographs, he will take us on a paddling trip down more than 200 miles of remote river bottomlands. Donovan rallies support for designating the Neches a "National Wild & Scenic River" in order to protect this spectacular waterway in perpetuity.

The price of the course includes a box lunch and a pass to the Bayou Bend Gardens to be used on March 22.



DEAD MAN WALKING: THE OPERA

ONE WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 19, 5:45 P.M.

ONE THURSDAY, JANUARY 20, 7:00 P.M.

Wortham Theater Center, 501 Texas Avenue
Limited Enrollment

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 19: Dinner and Dress Rehearsal

Composet **JAKE HEGGIE** will join us for dinner in the library of the Wortham Center; he will talk about *Dead Man Walking*. Following dinner we will adjourn to the theater for the dress rehearsal.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 20: Artistic Symposium

A panel that includes **SISTER HELEN PREJEAN**, the author of *Dead Man Walking*; **JAKE HEGGIE**, the composer; **PATRICK SUMMERS**, the music director; **ANTHONY FREUD**, general director and C.E.O. of Houston Grand Opera; and cast members will discuss *Dead Man Walking* and perform selections from the opera. Occurring in the sixth-floor rehearsal room, this symposium is part of a donor preview event to which we have been invited.

 **THE INVISIBLE CHURCH: PITTMAN MCGEHEE ON INSTITUTIONAL RELIGION AND THE SEARCH FOR MEANING**

ONE TUESDAY, JANUARY 25, 7:00–8:30 P.M.

St Luke's United Methodist Church, 3471 Westheimer Road Room R23 (second floor; park in the lot behind the church; walk in at the east entrance near the portico; there will be signs to indicate the way to Room R23.)

Please join us for an evening with **PITTMAN MCGEHEE**, who will talk about his latest book, *The Invisible Church: Finding Spirituality Where You Are* (Praeger Publishing, 2008; with Damon J. Thomas). He will discuss how we can reclaim Christianity, its symbols, and sacred stories and, in doing so, heal the wounds inflicted by “old-time” religion.

J. PITTMAN MCGEHEE is an Episcopal priest and a Jungian analyst. He is a popular lecturer in the fields of psychology and religion and has held many distinguished lectureships. He is also a widely published poet and the coauthor of *Raising Lazarus: The Science of Healing the Soul* (2009; with Blair Justice). The recipient of an honorary doctorate of divinity from the Episcopal Seminary of the Southwest and an earned master of divinity degree from the Virginia Theological Seminary, Pittman McGehee was the Dean of Christ Church Cathedral in downtown Houston for eleven years.

 **TEA AND TIME AND TOLERANCE: A CONVERSATION WITH PATSY CRAVENS**

ONE SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 4:00–6:00 PM

Private residence; address will be provided to subscribers
Limited Enrollment

Joining us for tea in the beautiful Shadyside home that belonged to her family, native Houstonian **PATSY CRAVENS**—photographer, artist, writer, and film producer—will discuss her book, *Leavin' a Testimony: Portraits from Rural Texas* (University of Texas Press, 2006), and the photographs from her traveling

exhibition Colorado County Memories: Everyone Has a Story to Tell. She will also talk about producing her award-winning, oral history documentary, *Coming Through Hard Times*, which has aired on PBS. In his introduction to Ms. Cravens's book, John Boles, professor of history at Rice University and editor of the *Journal of Southern History*, wrote:

This is a shocking, powerful, moving, disturbing, ultimately hopeful book. We all stand in debt to Patsy Cravens for having the imagination, the determination, the skill, and the heart to capture this almost-forgotten portion of the past and preserve those fragile memories that could so easily have been lost. They are now, thanks to her, a permanent part of our state's history.

 **FOULING OUR NEST: THE HISTORIC BP OIL SPILL OF 2010**

TWO THURSDAYS, FEBRUARY 10 AND 17, 6:30–8:00 P.M.

Houston Arboretum and Nature Center, 4501 Woodway Drive

The BP oil spill was capped months ago, but its legacy endures. What do we understand now about the implications for the Gulf of Mexico, for the larger ocean, and for us? Are we capable of maintaining the delicate balance between our need for petroleum and our obligation to protect the environment?

FEBRUARY 10: KATIE OXFORD, a columnist for the online *Chronicle's* Culture-Map Houston, has been “on the ground and in the boats” in and offshore Louisiana, where she reported in 13 columns about the effects of free-flowing oil on the waters, animals, and people of the Gulf and its shores. She will use images and her own colorful stories to impart the effects of the so-called spill.

FEBRUARY 17: Presenting some of the world's finest marine photography from her book, *Smithsonian Ocean: Our Water, Our World* (Smithsonian Institution, 2008), science writer **DEBORAH CRAMER** will discuss how all life, including ours, depends on the sea, and how we, a single terrestrial species, are changing the nature of the ocean itself.

KATIE OXFORD is a contributing writer for CultureMap. She was a juried poet in the Houston Poetry Festival 2003 and 2007. She was born and raised in Beaumont.

DEBORAH CRAMER is a Visiting Scholar at MIT's Earth System Initiative. Her book, *Smithsonian Ocean: Our Water, Our World*, is the companion publication to the Sant Ocean Hall, a facility for oceanic study at the National Museum of Natural History. Harvard biologist E. O. Wilson calls this poetic and beautiful book the “best in its class.”



PLOT, STRUCTURE, STANCES: TONY HOAGLAND ON THE CRAFT OF POETRY

FOUR WEDNESDAYS, MARCH 2, 9, 23, AND 30, 6:00–7:30 P.M.

Private Residence; address will be given to subscribers

Limited Enrollment

Maybe you like poetry and read it, but you would find it difficult to explain why one poem is a good poem and why another fails. Or maybe you feel left out by poems and would like to know what the secret is to reading them with pleasure and acumen. Each of these four weeks, **TONY HOAGLAND** will lead us as we read and discuss, at some length, just two or three or four good poems that embody the following particular psychological stances and also teach us something of the craft of poetry.

MARCH 2: Reticence—Poems that say more by saying less

MARCH 9: Maximalist Associative—Poems that throw a lot of spaghetti at the wall

MARCH 23: Irony—Irony as shield, irony as sword, irony as fashion

MARCH 30: Eros and Elegy—The old reasons: Kisses and lilies

TONY HOAGLAND teaches in the Creative Writing Program at the University of Houston and at Warren Wilson College. His most recent book is *Unincorporated Persons in the Late Honda Dynasty* (Graywolf Press, 2010), and his collection of poems, *What Narcissism Means to Me* (Graywolf Press, 2003), was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award. He has won the O. B. Hardison Prize for Poetry and Teaching from the Folger Shakespeare Library, the 2005 Mark Twain Award of the Poetry Foundation in recognition of his contribution to humor in American poetry, and many others. He has also received many prestigious fellowships and grants.



THURSDAY, APRIL 7

- The Cloister Garden at St. Martin's Episcopal Church
- Glenwood Cemetery
- Sabine Promenade
Tapley Tributary

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13

- Menil House Rose Garden
- Bayou Bend Gardens
- Lora Jean Kilroy Visitor and Education Center at Bayou Bend

THURSDAY, APRIL 28

- The Roof Garden at the University of Texas School of Nursing
- The Japanese Garden at Hermann Park
- The Wortham Garden at Discovery Green
- Market Square Park
- The Reading Garden at the Julia Ideson Building of the Houston Public Library

Before the course begins, the Houston Seminar will distribute a class roll to subscribers in the event that they care to arrange a carpool for the first two sessions. There will be a bus for the third session, and the meeting place will be given to subscribers.



URBAN GEMS: EXPLORING AND CELEBRATING HOUSTON'S PUBLIC GARDENS

TWO THURSDAYS, APRIL 7, 9:00 A.M.–12:30 P.M.; AND APRIL 28, 9:30 A.M.–2:30 P.M. (LUNCH AND BUS INCLUDED ON APRIL 28)

ONE WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13, 9:30 A.M.–12:30 P.M.

Limited Enrollment

Houston's public gardens serve as sources of civic pride and offer spaces of beauty where, even in the midst of our energetic, bustling city, we can feel refreshed and spiritually renewed. From an award-winning rooftop greenspace to the serenity of a historic cemetery and from a peaceful cloister garden to a lively bayou promenade, we will be led on enlightening, carefully paced tours by the landscape architects, garden designers, and historians who have created and studied these exceptional spaces.

 **CUBA**
NOVEMBER 11–18, 2011

Many of the Houston Seminar's study tours are planned far in advance, and we are aware that our patrons may be able to make travel plans if they know the dates and general destination, even though the details of a tour are not complete. For this reason we have created a pre-reservation option that will apply to a study tour of Cuba in November 2011.

A pre-reservation deposit of \$500 per person will guarantee a space on the trip to Cuba, which will have limited enrollment. As soon as the details of the trip are final, they will be publicized to our entire mailing list, and those with pre-reservations will have 30 days in which to receive a full refund should they decide not to join the tour to Cuba. Please contact the Houston Seminar by email, registrar@houstonseminar.org, or by phone, 713-666-9000, to pre-reserve a space.



Enrollment: All classes are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Confirmation of enrollment will be sent by return mail. 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.

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 courses at a discounted fee of \$10 per session.

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 713-666-9000
or fax 281-488-0511 or consult 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:

DISCOVERING THE WILD NECHES RIVER: A STUDY TOUR
Thursday, April 14–Sunday, April 17

For price and info,
call 713-666-9000

THE NECHES RIVER: RIBBON OF LIFE
One Tuesday, March 22, 11:30 a.m.–2:00 p.m.

☐ \$50/1 session

DEAD MAN WALKING: THE OPERA

One Wednesday, January 19, 5:45 p.m. One Thursday, January 20, 7:00 p.m.

☐ \$100/2 sessions

☐ \$75/Wed. only

☐ \$50/Thurs. only

**THE INVISIBLE CHURCH: PITTMAN MCGEEHEE ON
INSTITUTIONAL RELIGION AND THE SEARCH FOR MEANING**
One Tuesday, January 25, 7:00–8:30 p.m.

☐ \$35/1 session

**TEA AND TIME AND TOLERANCE: A CONVERSATION WITH
PATSY CRAVENS** Sunday, February 6, 4:00–6:00 pm

☐ \$50/1 session

FOULING OUR NEST: THE HISTORIC BP OIL SPILL OF 2010
Two Thursdays, February 10 and 17, 6:30–8:00 p.m.

☐ \$50/2 sessions

☐ \$30/1 session

**PLOT, STRUCTURE, STANCES: TONY HOAGLAND ON THE CRAFT OF
POETRY** Four Wednesdays, March 2, 9, 23, and 30, 6:00–7:30 p.m.

☐ \$120/4 sessions

☐ \$35/1 session

**URBAN GEMS: EXPLORING AND CELEBRATING HOUSTON'S
PUBLIC GARDENS** Two Thursdays, April 7, 9:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m.; and April
28, 9:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. One Wednesday, April 13, 9:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

☐ \$125/3 sessions

☐ \$50/1 session

CUBA November 11–18, 2011

\$500 per person/
pre-reservation

TOTAL FEE:

LESS DISCOUNT (SEE ENROLLMENT INFO):

AMOUNT ENCLOSED:

NAME

ADDRESS **CITY/ZIP**

TELEPHONE (VERY IMPORTANT) HOME **OFFICE**

EMAIL

We do not share or sell email addresses or any other enrollment information. Providing an email address allows us to advise you of changes and supplemental information regarding courses.

Do we have your email address? ☐ yes ☐ no

*please send reservation form and payment to
the houston seminar, p.o. box 22764, houston, texas 77227-2764, or fax to 281-488-0511.*

Visa, MasterCard, and American Express accepted.

NAME

CC# **EXP. DATE**

SIGNATURE

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SPRING 2011

SCHEDULE AND ENROLLMENT

DISCOVERING THE WILD NECHES RIVER

THE NECHES RIVER: RIBBON OF LIFE

DEAD MAN WALKING: THE OPERA

THE INVISIBLE CHURCH:

PITTMAN MCGEHEE ON THE SEARCH FOR MEANING

TEA AND TIME AND TOLERANCE:

A CONVERSATION WITH PATSY CRAVENS

FOULING OUR NEST:

THE HISTORIC BP OIL SPILL OF 2010

PLOT, STRUCTURE, STANCES:

TONY HOAGLAND ON POETRY

URBAN GEMS: HOUSTON'S PUBLIC GARDENS

COMING IN FALL 2011

CUBA

NOVEMBER 11-18, 2011

