



THE HOUSTON SEMINAR

Fall 2015

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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Cover: Kota reliquary guardian figure from the Pulitzer Arts Foundation's exhibition *Kota: Digital Excavations in African Art*, co-curated by Kristina Van Dyke and Frédéric Cloth. Travelers on the St. Louis study tour are invited to the preview reception in October and will have the opportunity to examine more than fifty reliquaries produced in the Central African region of Eastern Gabon during the eighteenth through the twentieth centuries. *Kota* features the groundbreaking research of computer engineer Frédéric Cloth, offering an unprecedented perspective on the reliquaries' histories. Photo: Frédéric Cloth. Image courtesy Pulitzer Arts Foundation.



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SEPTEMBER

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NOVEMBER

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DECEMBER

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▲ FEBRUARY 27-MARCH 5, 2016

Courses for Fall 2015

STUDY TOUR: ST. LOUIS, NOW AND THEN THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15–SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18



Arch © Sam Truong.



STEPHEN FOX, noted architectural historian, will lead a four-day tour of the St. Louis area, a city known for its colorful past and marked today by architectural ambition, major art and educational institutions, and many rich historical sites.

Our tour will include the 1965 Gateway Arch by architect Eero Saarinen; the 2007 Citygarden designed by Nelson Byrd Woltz, landscape architects; the St. Louis Art Museum, recently expanded with an addition designed by the British architect David Chipperfield; Forest Park, site of the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition and St. Louis World's Fair; the Missouri Botanical Garden; and the recently renovated Pulitzer Foundation for the Arts by Tadao Ando. Near St. Louis, we will explore Cahokia Mounds, once the largest pre-Columbian city north of Mexico with a population of about 20,000 in 1250 A.D. and now a UNESCO site as well as Ferguson, Missouri, the site of the shooting death of Michael Brown in August 2014 and the center of an international conversation about race in America.

On our first afternoon, we will enjoy a walking tour of downtown St. Louis. On the following days, we will acquaint ourselves with the vibrant neighborhoods of St. Louis by motor coach, visit a home of Emily Rauh Pulitzer as well as Washington University, and explore the Creole communities along the Mississippi River. Mr. Fox will delve into the many historical connections between St. Louis and Houston dating to the design of the Rice Hotel, Hermann Park, Main Boulevard, and the Shadyside neighborhood.

Our hotel will be the Hyatt Regency at the Arch.



YUCATAN AND THE MAYA: A HISTORY APART

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 6:30–8:00 P.M.

Private residence.



The Maya created the most sophisticated civilization in the Ancient Americas, with a writing system, intricate codes of law, and teeming cities full of great public and private art. Many of the descendants of these people live in the Yucatan peninsula, where Mayan languages are still regularly spoken. While the Spanish conquest was swift, brutal, and total in central Mexico, the Mayan area of the Yucatan was not as completely conquered nor as firmly held, leading to a unique blending of Spanish and indigenous peoples.

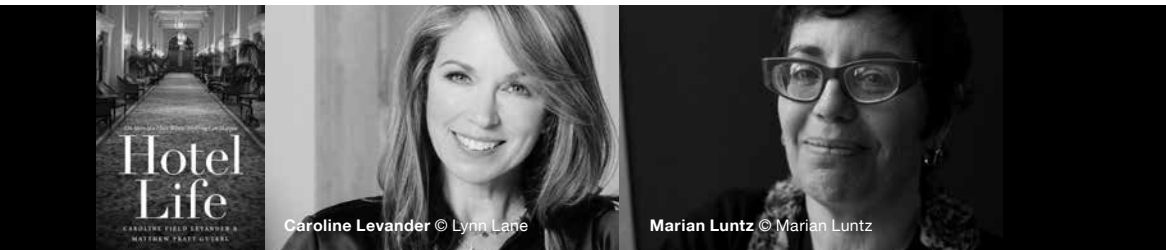
REX KOONTZ, professor in the school of art at University of Houston as well as its director, will explore how the sophisticated ancient civilization and the colonial experience have joined to produce a rich, innovative, and singular culture on the peninsula. His lecture will lay the groundwork for our spring 2016 journey to the Yucatan. Dr. Koontz is the author of *Lightning Gods and Feathered Serpents: The Public Sculpture of El Tajin* (University of Texas Press, 2009); coeditor with Heather Orr of *Blood and Beauty: Organized Violence in the Art and Archaeology of Mesoamerica and Central America* (The Cotsen Institute of Archaeology Press, 2009); and coauthor with Michael Coe of *Mexico: From the Olmecs to the Aztecs* (Thames & Hudson, 2013, 7th edition).



HOTELS IN THE IMAGINATION

TWO THURSDAYS, SEPTEMBER 24 AND OCTOBER 1, 6:30–8:00 P.M.

Locations will be provided to course subscribers.



On the ceiling, pink champagne on ice,
We're all just prisoners here of our own device.

—The Eagles, “Hotel California”

On September 24, Professor **CAROLINE LEVANDER** of Rice University will lead us down the corridors of her new book, *Hotel Life: The Story of a Place Where Anything Can Happen* (University of North Carolina Press, 2015). She will discuss the cultural, social, and political implications of some of society’s most “ubiquitous establishments,” focusing on the hotel as public space, private getaway, and location for fortune and failure, murders, suicides, and sexual escapades.

On October 1, **MARIAN LUNTZ**, curator of film and video at the Museum of Fine Arts Houston, will focus on the roles of hotels in films from the silent era through the present. Movie plots have historically placed their characters in hotels for innumerable reasons. Whether a welcoming and luxurious refuge, a setting for a tryst or hilarious hijinks, or a trap the hero must escape, hotels have arguably functioned as characters. Imagine the possibilities from movies as varied as *Grand Hotel*, 1932, *The Shining*, 1980, and *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, 2014.

CAROLINE LEVANDER is the vice provost for interdisciplinary initiatives, Carlson Professor in the Humanities, and professor of English at Rice University. She teaches a wide range of courses in American literature and culture, including U.S. literature in the Americas and civil war literature.

MARIAN LUNTZ has worked at the Museum of Fine Arts since 1990. She is responsible for planning the museum’s year-round selection of over 200 films in Brown Auditorium including classic and contemporary cinema and many festivals spotlighting films from around the world. Marian was named “Best Curator” by the *Houston Press* in its 2014 Best of Houston issue.



© Josh Pazda

WEST END ART GARDEN TOUR

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3, 3:00–5:00 P.M.

Tour details will be provided to participants.

Starting in the 1970s, Houston’s West End, a historically mixed-use, working-class district, became a mecca for Houston individualists and creative people. Their *joie de vivre* infused the neighborhood with metal-clad houses and small unusual gardens filled with art.

Five such art-filled and art-inspired gardens are included in the West End art garden tour. We will visit a lush native garden with a backdrop of “steel paintings” by artist Terrell James, another garden focused on artist Jim Love’s *Giant Bird House*, and a sustainable garden conceived by architect Robert Miller as the ideal companion piece for his “aboriginal spaceship.” At artist Salle Werner Vaughn’s, landscape and bungalows merge into an “other world” experience. The tour concludes with refreshments at Hiram Butler’s complex, where a bucolic garden is set between Butler’s contemporary art gallery and the nineteenth-century cottage where he lives.



Model Houston, Wharton and Pecos Railroad line,
courtesy Glen Rosenbaum



Ningyō © Jim Nelson



THE COLLECTOR'S EYE: FOUR SESSIONS, SEVEN COLLECTIONS

FOUR TUESDAYS, OCTOBER 6, 1:30–3:30 P.M.; OCTOBER 20 1:30–3:30 P.M.; OCTOBER 27 7:00–8:30 P.M.; AND NOVEMBER 10, 1:30–3:00 P.M.

All sessions will be in private homes; addresses will be provided to subscribers. Limited enrollment.



OCTOBER 6: High in the sky, two families display their collections. One couple collects international contemporary glass and works on paper by Matisse, Picasso and Warhol. The second couple's interests have ranged far and wide over their fifty years of marriage. We will see works by international modern masters, influential Texas artists, rare Ogden pottery, and a train collection.

OCTOBER 20: We will continue our visits to high-rise homes designed to accommodate eye catching and unusually deep collections. One collection consists of contemporary craft, international studio glass, ceramics, and fiber complemented by contemporary photography, painting, and sculpture. Another collection created over more than thirty years is traditional Japanese dolls known as *ningyō* that date to the Edo period (1615-1858). The third collection centers on nineteenth- and twentieth-century American art, from the Hudson River School to contemporary minimalism.

OCTOBER 27: In addition to renovating his family's modern 1964 home and installing classic period furniture, this Houston attorney added something uniquely his: "four smoke-blasting, whistle-blowing trains running simultaneously" as described by the *New York Times*.

NOVEMBER 10: This couple has built a home and later an addition to accommodate an extraordinary and eclectic collection of art from Maurice Utrillo to Alex Katz, Japanese ceramics, international glass, naïve art, and animal trophies from all over the globe.



BUFFALO BAYOU PARK: REIMAGINING HOUSTON'S WONDROUS WATERWAY

MONDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2015, 5:30–7:00 P.M.

Valet parking will be provided. Directions will be forwarded to participants. Limited enrollment.



In 2011, the Buffalo Bayou Partnership (BBP) launched an ambitious plan to rejuvenate the segment of Buffalo Bayou between Shepherd and Sabine streets. Today, this bold civic vision boasts miles of new paths and trails, signature lunar lighting, native trees and plants, pedestrian bridges, and amenities such as the largest dog park in the city and two visitor centers. The \$54 million, 160-acre, 2.3-mile-long project will be completed in 2015.

Our evening will begin with light bites and refreshments at The Dunlavy (the park's new special events space) with an introduction and overview, followed by a twilight stroll with our guides **ANNE OLSON**, **GUY HAGSTETTE**, and **SCOTT MCCREADY**.

Over the past 20 years, BBP president **ANNE OLSON** and the BBP board have raised and leveraged over \$150 million in private and public funds for the waterway's redevelopment. During her tenure Ms. Olson has developed and implemented a comprehensive bayou-enhancement program which includes land acquisition, trail and park development, public programming, and permanent and temporary public art along Buffalo Bayou from Shepherd Drive to the Port of Houston Turning Basin.

In mid-2010, project director **GUY HAGSTETTE**, FAIA, began overseeing the ambitious plan for Houston's historic waterway. From 2006 until 2010, he served as president and park director for Discovery Green.

SCOTT MCCREADY, ASLA, is SWA Group's lead designer for Buffalo Bayou Park. Over the past twelve years he has engaged in a number of projects along Houston's waterways, including the Sabine Promenade, Rosemont Bridge, and Brays Bayou.





THE MAYOR'S RACE AND MORE: MURRAY AT THE MATCH
THREE WEDNESDAYS. OCTOBER 28, NOVEMBER 11, AND DECEMBER 2, 6:30–8:00 P.M. Midtown Arts and Theater Center Houston (MATCH),
 3400 Main Street at Holman St., 77002

Houston Mayor Annise Parker is in her third and final two-year term as Texas' most powerful municipal executive. A vigorous competition among a bumper crop of candidates to succeed her is in full swing. As the *Baker Institute* blog in the *Houston Chronicle* proclaimed in January, "the current field of announced and likely candidates in the 2015 Houston mayoral race is the largest and strongest in the past 25 years."

Once again, pollster and political prognosticator **RICHARD MURRAY** is perfectly positioned to enlighten the Seminar audience about this important and exciting election and also offer thoughts on the national campaigns in progress. Professor Murray will join us for one evening in advance of the November 3 election, and two evenings after Election Day, before the December 12 runoff.

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, where an endowed scholarship was established in his name.

THE RESIDUE OF WAR: HOUSTON REMEMBERS THE CIVIL WAR AND EMANCIPATION

THREE MONDAYS, NOVEMBER 2, 7:00–8:30 P.M.; NOVEMBER 9, 12:00 NOON–1:30 P.M. (light lunch and valet parking included); **AND NOVEMBER 16, 7:00–8:30 P.M.** November 2 and 16 sessions in private homes; addresses to be given to subscribers. November 9 session, 7777 Washington Avenue, 77007. Limited enrollment.



In 2015, 150 years after Ulysses S. Grant accepted Robert E. Lee's surrender at Appomattox, the Civil War still resonates in the United States. We see its legacy, both positive and negative, across the nation—in Ferguson, Missouri; Selma, Alabama; Philadelphia; New York; and elsewhere. Here in Houston we also live with residue of the Civil War and its aftermath. Emancipation Park, Freedmen's Town, monuments such as the statue of Dick Dowling, and collections such as John Nau's Civil War Collection and the Papers of Jefferson Davis, all reflect Houstonians' responses over time to the country's deadliest war.

On Monday, November 2, **CALEB MCDANIEL** of Rice University will present a fresh perspective on the Civil War and emancipation as it was experienced and remembered in Houston. He will use the Emancipation Park, the renaming of East Broadway to Dowling Street, and the statue of Dowling to reveal a nuanced view of our city.

On Monday, November 9, **SALLY ANNE SCHMIDT**, curator of the Nau Civil War Collection, will introduce us to the collection and will showcase artifacts of relevance to the Civil War in Texas. John Nau built his collection of Civil War material to illustrate the lives of the individuals who fought

on both sides of the war. The Nau Collection, one of the largest in private hands, contains photographs, weapons, letters, documents, medals, and clothing.

On Monday, November 16, **LYNDA CRIST** and **MARY DIX**, editors of *The Papers of Jefferson Davis*, will spotlight Jefferson Davis's 1875 trip to Houston and other Texas cities in a case study of how former Confederate officials viewed and coped with the postwar South. Jefferson Davis first visited Texas as a soldier during the Mexican War in 1846. He represented Mississippi in the U.S. House of Representatives and the Senate, was secretary of war under Franklin Pierce, and was president of the Confederate States of America from 1861 to 1865. He died in New Orleans in 1889.

W. CALEB MCDANIEL is an assistant professor of history at Rice University. He received his Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins University in 2006 and his B.A. from Texas A&M University in 2000. *The Problem of Democracy in the Age of Slavery: Garrisonian Abolitionists and Transatlantic Reform* (Louisiana State University Press, 2013) is his first book, and he is now working on a history of slavery, emancipation, and their legacies in Texas.

SALLY ANNE SCHMIDT has managed, researched, and helped build the Nau Civil War Collection since 2005. She received her B.A. in history from Johns Hopkins University in 2000 and her M.A. and Ph.D. in history from Rice University in 2003 and 2009.

For more than twenty years, **LYNDA CRIST** and **MARY DIX** were editors of *The Papers of Jefferson Davis at Rice University*. At once a publishing venture (14 volumes, Louisiana State University Press), archive, and research center, the Davis Project is now part of the Fondren Library's Woodson Research Center at Rice.

Spring 2016 Study tour

STUDY TOUR: CONTEMPORARY AND ANCIENT MAYA IN YUCATAN

FEBRUARY 27 TO MARCH 5, 2016

Four-night option and seven-night option



Agua de Luz, 2012
by James Turrell
© Florian Holzherr

Six million Maya live today in Mexico, Guatemala, and Belize, in both urban and rural settings. Since Frederick Catherwood and John Lloyd Stephens explored the Yucatan peninsula in the mid-eighteenth century, archaeologists, spiritual seekers, and tourists have traveled the region to learn more about this longstanding civilization.

Led by extraordinary guides Benito Gritzewsky and Julia Miller, we will visit well-known and more obscure Maya archaeological sites and colonial architecture. In addition, we will learn about efforts to draw attention to contemporary Maya life as exemplified by the Hacienda Ochil, James Turrell's *Aqua de Luz* pyramid, and the Gran Museo del Mundo Maya, all of which opened in 2012. Rest assured, our travels will be accompanied by outstanding regional cuisine.

We will fly from Houston to Cancun on Saturday, February 27, and return from Merida. Our trip will have a four-night and a seven-night option. Travelers should be prepared for extensive walking, sometimes over rough ground. This itinerary subject to serendipitous changes.





Chichen Itza

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 20% 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

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COURSE LIST AND RESERVATION FORM

PLEASE ENROLL ME/US IN THE FOLLOWING COURSES:

| | |
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| ST. LOUIS, NOW AND THEN: A STUDY TOUR OCTOBER 15-18, 2015 <i>For trip price and further information, please call 713-666-9000 or email registrar@houstonseminar.org</i> | |
| YUCATAN AND THE MAYA: A HISTORY APART WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 6:30-8:00 P.M. | <input type="checkbox"/> \$35 |
| HOTELS IN THE IMAGINATION TWO THURSDAYS, SEPTEMBER 24 AND OCTOBER 1, 6:30-8:00 P.M. | <input type="checkbox"/> \$60 all sessions <input type="checkbox"/> \$35 single session |
| WEST END ART GARDEN TOUR SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3, 3:00-5:00 P.M. | <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 |
| THE COLLECTOR'S EYE: FOUR SESSIONS, SEVEN COLLECTIONS FOUR TUESDAYS, OCTOBER 6, 20, AND NOVEMBER 10, 1:30-3:30 P.M., AND OCTOBER 27, 7:00-8:30 P.M. | <input type="checkbox"/> \$150 all sessions <input type="checkbox"/> \$40 single session |
| BUFFALO BAYOU PARK: REIMAGINING HOUSTON'S WONDROUS WATERWAY MONDAY, OCTOBER 26, 5:30-7:00 P.M. | <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 |
| THE MAYOR'S RACE AND MORE THREE WEDNESDAYS. OCTOBER 28, NOVEMBER 11, AND DECEMBER 2, 6:30-8:00 P.M. | <input type="checkbox"/> \$75 all sessions <input type="checkbox"/> \$30 single session |
| THE RESIDUE OF WAR: HOUSTON REMEMBERS THE CIVIL WAR AND EMANCIPATION THREE MONDAYS, NOVEMBER 2, 16, 7:00-8:30 P.M., NOVEMBER 9, 11:30 A.M.-1:00 P.M. | <input type="checkbox"/> \$90 all sessions <input type="checkbox"/> \$35 single session |
| CONTEMPORARY AND ANCIENT MAYA IN YUCATAN STUDY TOUR FEBRUARY 27-MARCH 5, 2016 <i>For further information, please call 713-666-9000 or email registrar@houstonseminar.org</i> | |
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SPRING 2015 SCHEDULE AND ENROLLMENT FORM

Yucatan and the Maya: A History Apart

Hotels in the Imagination

West End Art Garden Tour

The Collector's Eye: Four Sessions, Seven Collections

Buffalo Bayou Park: Reimagining Houston's Wondrous Waterway

The Mayor's Race and More

The Residue of War: Houston Remembers the Civil War and Emancipation

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CONTEMPORARY AND ANCIENT MAYA IN YUCATAN

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