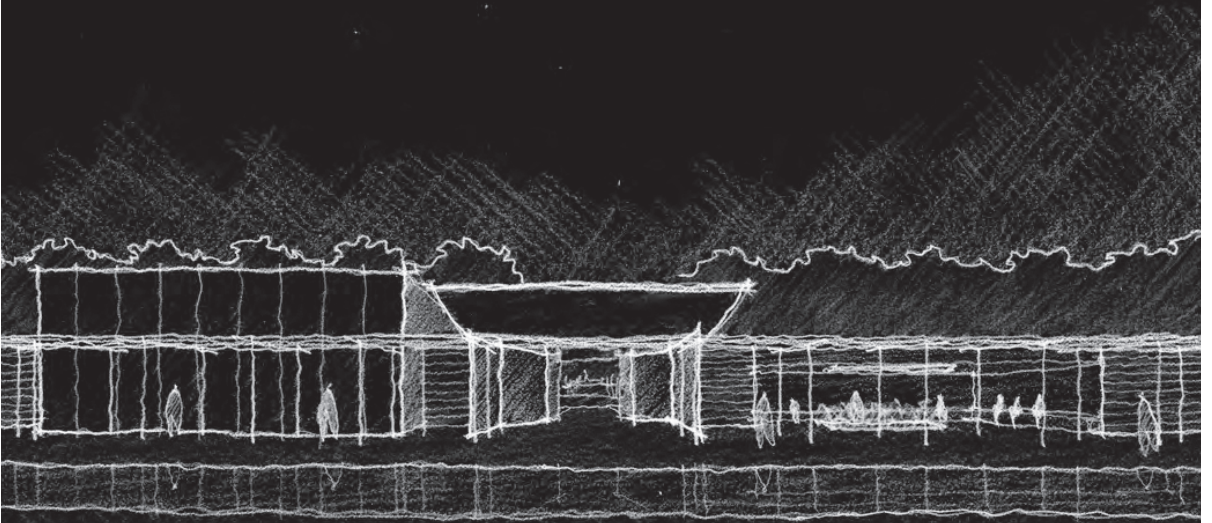




THE HOUSTON SEMINAR
Spring 2015



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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www.wastedpaper.com

Cover: Schematic Design for the Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion, Hermann Park Centennial Gardens
Courtesy of Bohlin Cywinski Jackson, 2012.

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Courses for Spring 2015

STUDY TOUR: SPRINGTIME IN PHILADELPHIA FRIDAY, APRIL 17–TUESDAY, APRIL 21



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DONALD FRIARY, a widely respected guide to American cities and the former executive director of Historic Deerfield, will lead us on an extraordinary art- and history-filled tour of our country's birthplace. In addition to its preeminence in the founding of the Republic, Philadelphia encapsulates the complex history of urban and industrial development in the United States and is a city rich with cultural and educational institutions, many of which we will explore. We will also visit important museums, historic houses, and gardens that dot the surrounding countryside.

Our tour of Philadelphia this spring will begin with a late morning arrival on Friday, April 17, and will end with a Tuesday, April 21, departure. While there we will visit the new building housing the Barnes Foundation designed by Tod Williams and Billie Tsien Architects, where the masterpieces collected by the late Albert C. Barnes have been carefully reinstalled to remain true to his original plan; the Philadelphia Museum of Art with its encyclopedic permanent collection and several fascinating special exhibitions; the Rodin Museum containing the largest assemblage of the artist's works outside of France; the Fabric Workshop and Museum; private collections; and the city's major historic sites.



We will visit Philadelphia's new Kimmel Center, where we will hear a concert entitled "Modern Fairy Tales" by the world-renowned Philadelphia Orchestra featuring the music of Francis Poulenc, Sergei Prokofiev, Camille Saint-Saëns, and Albert Roussel, and will dine in some of Philadelphia's top restaurants and a private club.

Our hotel on Rittenhouse Square is within walking distance of several of our sites. We will be transported by motor coach to other urban destinations and for our jaunts into the countryside for guided tours of the Brandywine Museum, the Winterthur Museum and Gardens, and Andalusia, the home of the Biddle family.

Philadelphia was founded in 1682, and its center contains eighteenth- and nineteenth-century buildings and walkways. Be aware that some of our routes, in both the city and the countryside, will cover uneven ground with unstable footing. Please be sure that you are able to walk over such terrain and that you are able to board and exit the motor coach without danger to yourself or others.

STUDY TOUR: A GARDENER'S DREAM: A DAY TRIP TO PECKERWOOD GARDEN

SATURDAY, MAY 2, 9:00 A.M.–3:00 P.M. Bus departs promptly from Neuhaus Education Center, 4433 Bissonnet, Bellaire. Limited enrollment.



Back by popular demand, landscape architect **SARAH NEWBERY** will take us this spring on a private tour of Peckerwood Garden, an exceptional garden just outside of Houston in Hempstead. Poised on the edge of three climatic zones, it rests in one of America's most unique garden environments. We will depart Houston on Saturday morning for a 50-minute motor-coach ride to Peckerwood for a gourmet lunch, tour of the garden, and visit to Peckerwood's nursery before returning to Houston in the afternoon.

JOHN FAIREY acquired seven acres near Hempstead in 1971, and since then his garden has grown and evolved into one of international renown. In 1998, it was designated a Preservation Project Garden by the Garden Conservancy, a national organization that saves and shares outstanding American gardens for the education and inspiration of the public. At 39 acres today, Peckerwood is unique in its multidisciplinary approach and appeal, combining and blurring the boundaries between plants and place, art and design, architecture and landscape architecture, inside and outside, wild and cultivated, and mundane object and artwork. A professor of design at Texas A&M, Mr. Fairey's fine arts background is evident in the garden's stunning design.

A demonstration garden for how to garden in the southwestern environment wisely and with style, Peckerwood is also a laboratory for horticulture and conservation, with over 3,000 species growing there, many from seed, and many of which are rare and endangered. It features multiple plant collections including agaves, cactus, crinum, yuccas, dasyilirion, palms, zephyranthes, cycads, magnolia, sycamore, cornus, mahonia, and styrax. It houses the most comprehensive collection of oaks in North America.

Peckerwood Garden is also a cultural bridge between the United States and Mexico. Mr. Fairey has made over 100 trips to Mexico collecting plants and Mexican folk art, and the garden is a showcase for the biodiversity of northeastern Mexico as well as its cultural traditions.

SARAH NEWBERY is an architect and landscape designer. In 2013 she was named project director for the Memorial Park long-range master planning process. 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.



Marion Brenner, courtesy Peckerwood Garden Conservation Foundation



SEAN THERIAULT ON POPE FRANCIS: VATICAN TRAILBLAZER, GLOBAL PHENOMENON

TWO MONDAYS, JANUARY 19 AND JANUARY 26, 6:00–7:30 P.M.

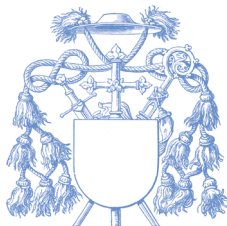
Location to be announced.



JANUARY 19: POPE FRANCIS'S VATICAN—While His Holiness Pope Francis's message has resonated around the globe, it won't endure unless it also resonates within the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church. What effect is Pope Francis's new approach having on the Vatican? Professor Sean Theriault will place the Francis papacy in a historical perspective and analyze the changes that the Pope is making in the structure of the Church.

JANUARY 26: POPE FRANCIS'S WORLD—Francis's papacy has been defined by major changes in style, emphasis, and tone. In this lecture, Professor Theriault will evaluate Pope Francis's message to the world. What effect has his transformative papacy had outside the walls of the Vatican? How has Catholicism as practiced in the pews changed as a consequence of Francis's papacy?

SEAN THERIAULT is a professor of government at the University of Texas in Austin. His primary focus is American political institutions, but he also teaches a one-semester course on the Catholic Church. He was inducted into the Academy of Distinguished Teachers in 2012, was awarded UT's Professor of the Year in 2001, and has received numerous other teaching awards including the Friar Society Teaching Fellowship, a major undergraduate teaching award, in 2009. He received his Ph.D. from Stanford University.



HERMES MALLEA: A CARIBBEAN CAPER

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 6:30–8:00 P.M. American General Conference Room, mezzanine level of the Audrey Jones Beck Building, Museum of Fine Arts Houston, 5601 Main Street.



Escape the winter doldrums with architect **HERMES MALLEA**, the author of *Great Houses of Havana*, who will present an illustrated lecture about his new book, *Escape: The Heyday of Caribbean Glamour*. Mr. Mallea, a partner in the M (Group), an influential New York design firm, has filled the book with archival photographs of jet-set retreats such as Palm Beach, Bermuda, and Nassau, and their beautiful and glamorous inhabitants. Keenly interested in historical preservation and elements of design, he will describe the emphasis on fantasy that endures in resort style and serves as a visual cue for more relaxed behavior than would be typical at home. The social history is no less interesting, including the influence of Prohibition, politics, and land speculation on the rise and fall of various tropical paradises.



Photo courtesy Hermes Mallea



ROCO — “THE MOST FUN YOU CAN HAVE WITH SERIOUS MUSIC!”

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, AND THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 11:00 A.M.–12:30 P.M.

Nau Family Room, St. John the Divine, 2450 River Oaks Boulevard.



The River Oaks Chamber Orchestra (ROCO) is one of Houston’s gems. Founded by **ALECIA LAWYER** in 2005, ROCO has become a dynamic and innovative orchestra of 40 professional chamber musicians renowned for their interactions with both adult and younger audiences. Ms. Lawyer, a Juilliard-trained oboist, brings together performers, composers, and conductors who come from around the United States to create new and invigorating approaches to music. ROCO performances are broadcast regularly to a nationwide audience on Performance Today and to Houston area audiences on KUHA Classical 91.7FM. The organization frequently commissions new works, one of which is a feature of its February 14 concert: *Murmurations* by Derek Bermel.

In the **FEBRUARY 10** session, Ms. Lawyer will discuss ROCO’s beginnings and the growth of its programming to include 38 annual concerts that provide childcare and music education plus streaming to nursing homes and hospitals. On **FEBRUARY 12**, she will take us behind the scenes to a rehearsal for ROCO’s annual Conductorless Concert, which will take place on February 14. The concert program includes Elgar’s *Salut d’Amour*, Dvorak’s *Romance for Violin and Orchestra*, Schubert’s *Symphony No. 5*, and Bermel’s *Murmurations*.

ALECIA L. LAWYER is the founder, artistic director, and principal oboist of the River Oaks Chamber Orchestra. Ms. Lawyer regularly presents her entrepreneurial model and dynamic ideas to conservatories, universities, and music festivals around the U.S. and speaks regularly on the creation, marketing, and development of performing arts.

Tickets to the February 14, 2015, concert at 5:00 P.M. can be purchased at rocohouston.org or by calling ROCO at 713-665-2700.

USSAMA MAKDISI:
UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEMPORARY MIDDLE EAST

TWO TUESDAYS, FEBRUARY 17 AND FEBRUARY 24, 6:00–7:30 P.M.
Sessions will take place in a private residence; address will be provided to subscribers.



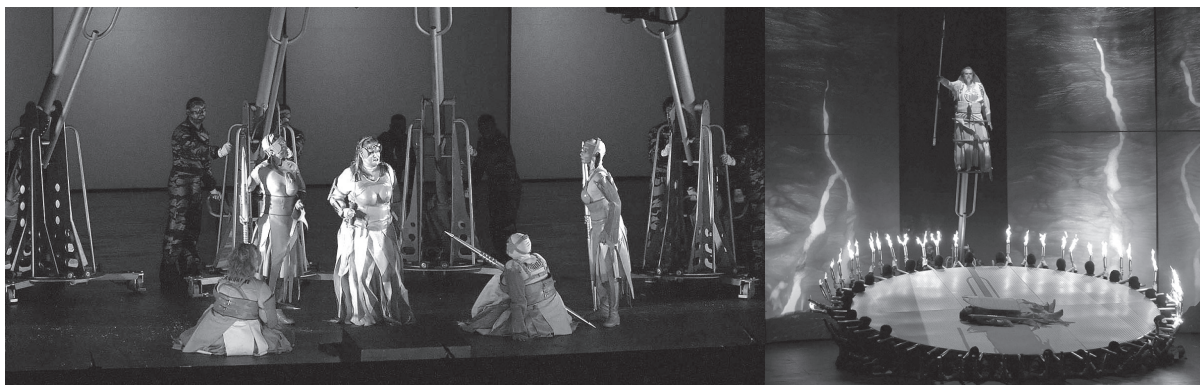
People often dismiss the constant unrest and violence in the Middle East as the irresolvable legacy of centuries of religious conflict. **USSAMA MAKDISI** looks at contemporary events through the lens of deep understanding of the long history of the Ottoman and Arab worlds and introduces an alternative understanding of the region. In his first lecture on **FEBRUARY 17**, he will trace the influence of 19th-century American missionaries and universities and the effect of the partition of the Ottoman Empire in the early 20th-century and the creation of the State of Israel in 1948. In his second lecture on **FEBRUARY 24**, Makdisi will disentangle the early promise of democracy and self-determination and the current mistrust and violence towards America, despite deep and abiding familial, business and cultural ties. Dr. Makdisi is now working on a manuscript on the origins of sectarianism in the modern Middle East to be published with the University of California Press.

PROFESSOR MAKDISI joined the faculty of Rice University in 1997 and became a professor of history in 2008. He is the first holder of the Arab-American Educational Foundation Chair of Arab Studies at Rice University and is on the board of directors of the Middle East Studies Association. Dr. Makdisi was recognized as a Carnegie Scholar for his original scholarship regarding Muslim societies and communities, both in the United States and abroad. He is the author of *Artillery of Heaven: American Missionaries and the Failed Conversion of the Middle East* (2008) and *Faith Misplaced: The Broken Promise of U.S.-Arab Relations, 1820–2001* (2010). He received his Ph.D. from Princeton University and his B.A. from Wesleyan University.



WAGNER'S *DIE WALKÜRE*

**FOUR WEDNESDAYS, MARCH 25, APRIL 1 AND APRIL 8, 6:30–8:00 P.M.
AND APRIL 15, 6:00 P.M.** Private residences for the first three sessions;
addresses will be provided to subscribers. Brown Theater, Wortham Center,
501 Texas Avenue, for the final session. Limited enrollment.



Tato Baeza/ Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia, courtesy Houston Grand Opera.

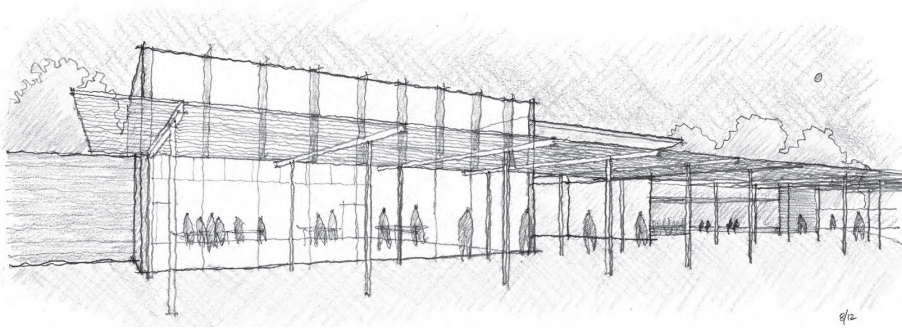
Richard Wagner composed the music and libretto for the *Ring of the Nibelung* between 1848 and 1874, premiering the sixteen-hour cycle in 1876. In 2013, Houston Grand Opera announced that it would mount the *Ring* cycle over four years, beginning with *Das Rheingold* in spring 2014. The Catalan theater group La Fura dels Baus's production has been called "One of the great *Ring* cycles – A *Ring* for the 21st century." It combines Wagner's classical vision with modern technology in a remarkable way and brought an extraordinary opera experience to Houston's audiences with last year's staging of *Das Rheingold*.

In April 2015, HGO will premier the second installment of the *Ring*, *Die Walküre* (*The Valkyrie*), the tale of Norse god Wotan's efforts to regain control of the gold band and its power to rule the world. Here again Wagner's opera is married to modern staging and astonishing contemporary technology as it retains its original magnificence.

As we did for *Das Rheingold* in 2014, we will discuss Wagner's obsessive personality, his influence on philosophers and thinkers from the late 19th-century onward, and *Die Walküre*. HGO's new dramaturg will comment on this huge undertaking and its implications for HGO and the HGO orchestra. We will examine the origin of Wagner's gargantuan work—one the greatest undertakings by a single artist in Western history and HGO's decision to launch its commitment to the *Ring* with La Fura dels Baus. Those who sign up for the whole course will then have the opportunity to see the opera itself at the full dress rehearsal.

100 YEARS IN THE MAKING: MCGOVERN CENTENNIAL GARDENS

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25, 12:00–2:00 P.M. Parking available adjacent to the Centennial Gardens in Lot C on Hermann Drive at Crawford.



Schematic Design for the Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion, Hermann Park Centennial Gardens,
Courtesy of Bohlin Cywinski Jackson, 2012.



Great cities need great public spaces. Houston is in the midst of an extraordinary renaissance in creating, restoring, and transforming its public spaces. As the first in a series of courses on new or transformed public spaces in Houston, the Seminar is focusing on the McGovern Centennial Gardens in Hermann Park. This 15-acre project was conceived to honor the 100-year anniversary of George Hermann's gift to the City of Houston. Join **DOREEN STOLLER** and **JANE CURTIS** for lunch in the award-winning Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion and an "insider" tour of the gardens. Wind your way up the 30-foot garden mount for a spectacular view of Hermann Park and Houston.

DOREEN STOLLER is executive director of the Hermann Park Conservancy and has successfully led the Conservancy's efforts at Hermann Park for more than eleven years. Under her direction, the Conservancy launched the second phase of its multimillion-dollar Centennial Campaign creating the new \$31 million McGovern Centennial Gardens. Ms. Stoller holds a B.A. from Yale University, an M.A. from the Institute of Fine Arts, and an M.B.A. from Rice University.

JANE CURTIS is the director of horticulture for the McGovern Centennial Gardens in Hermann Park. Ms. Curtis came to Houston in 1995 after serving on the Hermann Park project for Hanna/Olin, Ltd., the Park's master planner. Ms. Curtis has previously served as Associate Curator and Ima Hogg Horticultural Fellow at the Bayou Bend Collection and Gardens. Ms. Curtis holds a B.A. from Yale University and a Master of Horticulture degree from the University of Virginia.

ED HIRSCH, TONY HOAGLAND, AND SASHA WEST:
UNPACKING POETRY

THURSDAY, APRIL 16, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22, AND THURSDAY,
APRIL 30, 6:30–8:00 P.M. C. G. Jung Center, 5200 Montrose Boulevard



Tony Hoagland



Edward Hirsch



Sasha West



Participants in class will receive copies of Hirsch's *A Poet's Glossary* (2014) and Hoagland's *Twenty Poems That Could Save America and Other Essays* (2013).

Poet **ED HIRSCH** writes that poetry is “an ancient and necessary instrument of our humanity” and reflects that in a poem “what is said is always inseparable from the way it is being said.” Essayist and poet **TONY HOAGLAND** says “we need [poetry’s] aliveness, its respect for the subconscious, its willingness to entertain ambiguity; we need its plaintive truth-telling about the human condition and its imaginative exhibitions of linguistic freedom”. **SASHA WEST** speaks of “a readerly pleasure in peeling back layers, in noticing patterns across a whole, [and] in returning to the same landscapes or dilemmas at multiple points.” All see poetry as treasure and will help us unveil its mysteries and unpack its secrets. Join us for three evenings of enchantment with these acclaimed poets.

APRIL 16—Formerly a Houstonian, **ED HIRSCH** currently serves as president of the John S. Guggenheim Memorial Foundation and lives in New York. As a beloved member of the University of Houston Creative Writing faculty, he was a tireless ambassador for poetry. His poetry publications include *Wild Gratitude* (1986), *On Love* (1998), *Lay Back the Darkness* (2003), and most recently the acclaimed *Gabriel* (2014). As the author of the bestseller *How to Read a Poem and Fall in Love with Poetry* (1999), his ability to inspire readers gained national recognition. He has received numerous awards and fellowships that include those from the Guggenheim Foundation, the MacArthur Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

APRIL 22—A part-time Houstonian and current professor in the University of Houston Creative Writing Program, **TONY HOAGLAND**'s recently released collection of essays, *Twenty Poems That Could Save America* (2013), presents his passionate advocacy for the relevance of poetry in contemporary life and is another example of his penchant for witty titles. His poetry volumes include *Unincorporated Personas in the Late Honda Dynasty* (2010), *What Narcissism Means to Me* (2003), *Donkey Gospel* (1998), and *Sweet Ruin* (1992). Winner of the 2005 Mark Twain Award in recognition of his contribution to humor in American poetry, he has also received the Jackson Prize, the Hardison Prize, and grants from the National Endowment for the Arts.

APRIL 30—**SASHA WEST**'s poems have appeared in the *Southern Review*, *Ninth Letter*, *Forklift*, *Ohio*, *Third Coast*, *Born*, and elsewhere. She holds graduate degrees from Johns Hopkins University and the University of Houston, where she was editor of *Gulf Coast*. Her work has garnered awards including scholarships from the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference, Rice University's Parks Fellowship, Pushcart nominations, and Inprint's Verlaine Prize. Her book-length poem, *Failure and I Bury the Body*, won the 2012 National Poetry Series. She lives in Austin with her husband and teaches writing at the University of Texas's LBJ School of Public Affairs.

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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A GARDENER'S DREAM: A DAY TRIP TO PECKERWOOD GARDEN SATURDAY, MAY 2, 9:00 A.M.–3:00 P.M.	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150
SEAN THERIAULT ON POPE FRANCIS: VATICAN TRAILBLAZER, GLOBAL PHENOMENON TWO MONDAYS, JANUARY 19 AND 26, 6:00–7:30 P.M.	<input type="checkbox"/> \$60 all sessions <input type="checkbox"/> \$35 single session
HERMES MALLEA: A CARIBBEAN CAPER MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 6:30–8:00 P.M.	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35
ROCO — “THE MOST FUN YOU CAN HAVE WITH SERIOUS MUSIC!” TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, AND THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 11:00 A.M.–12:30 P.M.	<input type="checkbox"/> \$60 all sessions <input type="checkbox"/> \$35 single session
USSAMA MAKDISI: UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEMPORARY MIDDLE EAST TWO TUESDAYS, FEBRUARY 17 AND 24, 6:00–7:30 P.M.	<input type="checkbox"/> \$60 all sessions <input type="checkbox"/> \$35 single session
100 YEARS IN THE MAKING: MCGOVERN CENTENNIAL GARDENS WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25, 12:00–2:00 P.M.	<input type="checkbox"/> \$40
WAGNER'S DIE WALKÜRE FOUR WEDNESDAYS, MARCH 25, APRIL 1 & APRIL 8, 6:30–8:00 PM & APRIL 15, 6:00 P.M. <i>Invitation to dress rehearsal is a benefit of full course participation</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> \$165 all sessions <input type="checkbox"/> \$55 single session
ED HIRSCH, TONY HOAGLAND, AND SASHA WEST: UNPACKING POETRY THURSDAYS, APRIL 16, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22 AND THURSDAY, APRIL 30, 6:30–8:00 P.M. <i>This pricing reflects the cost of books for each session.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> \$125 all sessions <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Ed Hirsch <input type="checkbox"/> \$45 Tony Hoagland <input type="checkbox"/> \$30 Sasha West
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Ussama Makdisi: Understanding the Contemporary Middle East

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Wagner's *Die Walküre*

Ed Hirsch, Tony Hoagland, and Sasha West: Unpacking Poetry

STUDY TOURS

A Gardener's Dream: A Day Trip to Peckerwood Garden

Springtime in Philadelphia: A Study Tour

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