



THE HOUSTON SEMINAR

Spring 2017





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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We mourn the death of one of the Houston Seminar’s founders and our beloved friend

LUCIE WRAY TODD

Board of Directors 1976–1991, Advisory Board 1992–2016

She exemplified the spirit of adventure and inquiry that the Seminar aspires to in all of its programming.

COURSES AND STUDY TOURS

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CALENDAR

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| MARCH | | | | | | | APRIL | | | | | | |
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Study Tours

Charles M. Russell, *Deer in Forest (White tailed Deer)*, 1917.
Courtesy Sid Richardson Museum



KAWS, *Where The End Starts*, 2011.
Courtesy Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth

Claude Monet, *Still Life with Flowers and Fruit*, 1869. Courtesy J. Paul Getty Museum

Art and Architecture: A Jaunt to Fort Worth TUESDAY, JANUARY 17–WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 18



Join us for a two-day “Art and Architecture Jaunt” to Fort Worth covering the afternoon of Tuesday, January 17, and a full day on Wednesday, January 18, 2017. Travel to Fort Worth on your own. The group will meet Tuesday afternoon for a tour of the Sid Richardson Museum, located in the beautifully restored Sundance Square area, to see the exquisite collection of western art highlighted with works by Frederic Remington and Charles M. Russell. Up next, Fort Worth architect **MARK GUNDERSON** will give our group a presentation about the architecture and architectural history of the city. Dinner together at a favorite restaurant.

On Wednesday, we will travel by motor coach to the Kimbell Art Museum’s new Renzo Piano–designed building. The Kimbell’s senior deputy director, **GEORGE SHACKELFORD**, will introduce us to the exhibit of early works by Monet, which we will then view. Afterward, we will stroll to the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth to see the exhibit of works by KAWS, a Brooklyn-based artist. **ANDREA KARNES** will take us through this show, which she curated. Lunch will be at the highly regarded Café Modern.

The group will continue on by coach for a guided tour of the family home of a Fort Worth native, a collector with a wide variety of interests whose broad holdings include works by Matisse, Picasso, Derain, Leger, Pollock, Frankenthaler, Diebenkorn, Moore, Hockney, Johns, Warhol, and Wegman. George Shackelford will be our guide.

Finally, we will visit the dance school of Texas Ballet Theater for a special presentation arranged by artistic director, **BEN STEVENSON**. The study tour will conclude with this visit.

MARK GUNDERSON is an architect who had been in private practice in Fort Worth and Dallas since 1985. He has served as president of the Dallas Architectural Foundation and the AIA Fort Worth, lectured, taught design studios, and contributed to publications.

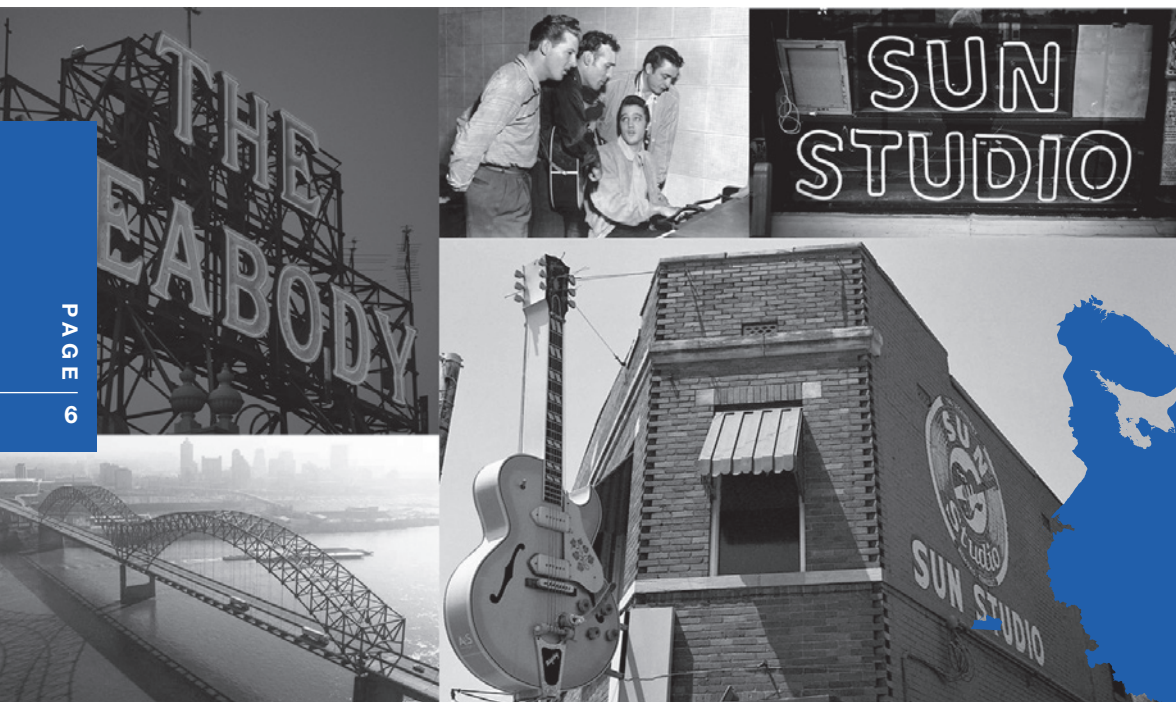
ANDREA KARNES is curator at the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, where she began working in 1989. Since then, she has moved up, but not away and has brought engaging shows to the museum. She has art history degrees from the University of North Texas and Texas Christian University.

GEORGE SHACKELFORD is remembered by many as the former curator of European painting and sculpture at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. He served as chairman of European art and curator of modern art at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and is now the senior deputy director at the Kimbell Art Museum.

BEN STEVENSON, OBE, began his dancing career in England with the Royal Ballet and English National Ballet. He served as co-director of the National Ballet of Washington, D.C., and artistic director of Houston Ballet. He is the current artistic director of Texas Ballet Theater.

The fee for the study tour includes all entry fees, transportation to venues, dinner on Tuesday, and lunch on Wednesday. Transportation to Fort Worth and hotel accommodations are not included. The Worthington Hotel is reserving rooms for our group at a special rate for Tuesday and Wednesday nights.





**Encountering Southern Culture:
A Journey to Oxford and Memphis**
THURSDAY, APRIL 6–SUNDAY, APRIL 9



Get ready for a sequel to the Houston Seminar's 2014 boisterous and inspiring Mississippi Delta tour. This time we will head to the hills of Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County (Oxford, Mississippi) and to Memphis, just across the state line in Tennessee on the bluffs of the mighty Mississippi. The Center for the Study of Southern Culture and Southern Foodways Alliance at Ole Miss in Oxford will provide the basis for a journey through Mississippi history, food, music, and literature. **LUTHER BROWN**, former director of the Delta Center for Culture and Learning at Delta State University, will return to lead us through the civil rights and music scenes of Memphis. Stay tuned for further details.

Early Alert

COMING THIS SPRING:
A "Kennan Conversation" on Russia

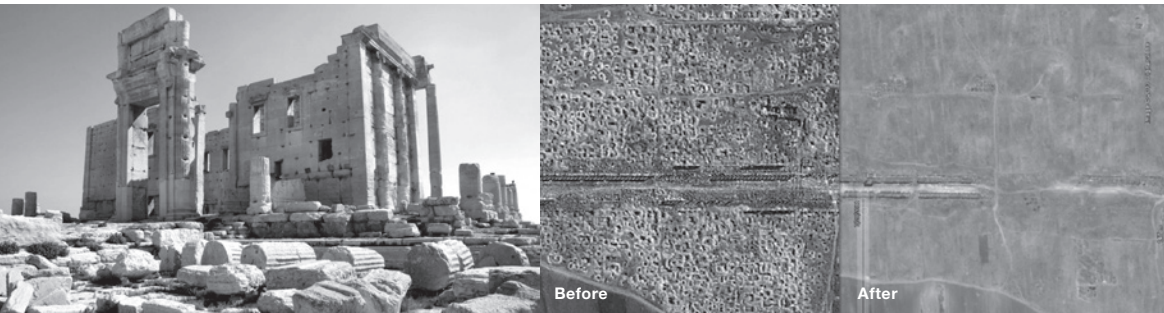


Vladimir Putin and his expansionist policies will have immense implications for the foreign policy decisions facing our new president. To bring you an in-depth and up-to-date analysis of the relationship between the United States and Russia, the Houston Seminar has invited to Houston experts from the Kennan Institute in Washington, D.C., for what is known as a "Kennan Conversation." Specifics will be sent in an e-blast when plans are complete. The date is likely to be sometime during the first half of March.

The Kennan Institute is part of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, D.C., and has been a top think tank for the study of Russia and the surrounding regions for more than forty years. Kennan Conversations are a relatively new program for the institute, designed to bring some of its most distinguished scholars "beyond the Beltway" so that local audiences can hear directly from the experts, engage in conversation with them, and learn more about this important part of our world.



Courses for Spring 2017



Palmyra

Google Earth image before and after 2015

Rewriting History: The Purposes and Practices of Cultural Destruction in Iraq and Syria

TUESDAY, JANUARY 24, 12:00–1:30 P.M. The Station Museum of Contemporary Art, 1502 Alabama at LaBranch, 77004. Free street parking available.



The destruction of a people's heritage is not a new idea. The Persians razed Athens when they sacked it in 480 BCE; Romans destroyed Carthage with the intention of obliterating culture and the threat of reprisal; Nazis sought not only to remove a people but also their culture in the genocide of the Jews during the Second World War.

In 2017, we have the philosophical framework and the international ethical codes to understand these destructions of materials, not as secondary outcomes of war, but as the purposeful, sinister devices of a people attempting to change—and remove—history. **JOHN NORTH HOPKINS**, our speaker, will focus on the deliberate destruction of the first-century Temple of Bel in Palmyra by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria in 2015. As Isis and others hack at statues, explode buildings, and loot untouched archaeological sites, what can we learn about the purposes and practices of cultural destruction?

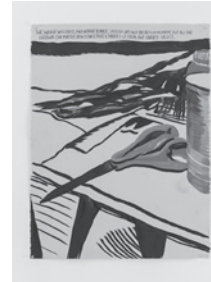
JOHN NORTH HOPKINS joined the art history faculty at Rice University in 2011, specializing in Italic and early Roman art, architecture, and archaeology. He earned a MA in 2004 and a PhD in 2010, both degrees in art history at the University of Texas at Austin. Hopkins's book, *The Genesis of Roman Architecture*, was published by Yale University Press in 2015. He has done fieldwork at the Theater of Pompey in Rome and the Basilica di San Severo in Classe, Ravenna.

Parallel Streets, Individual Tastes: Spring Art Collection Tours

TWO THURSDAYS, FEBRUARY 9 AND 23, 1:00–3:30 P.M. All sessions will be in private homes; addresses will be provided to subscribers. Limited enrollment.



Raymond Pettibon,
No Title (We would willingly...), 2013



FEBRUARY 9: In the Museum District, we will tour two houses. Each was designed by their architect owners, each with an intimate knowledge of the people and art that would inhabit the spaces.

We will first visit the collection of a woman who decided at a young age NOT to collect as a rebellious act against the fervent collecting of the remainder of her family. But the family genes prevailed and collect she did! Her eclecticism has combined inherited pieces with what she calls “opportunistic buying” through the years. The “opportunistic” portion of the collection ranges from a fourth-century Byzantine mosaic fragment and a fifteenth-century German wooden apostle figure to contemporary pieces by Dale Chihuly and by Houston artist, Sharon Kopriva.

Our second stop is a contemporary house completed in 2014, nestled into Houston's smallest historic district. Our hosts insured that their home had ample space for their art as well as outdoor space for gardening and entertaining. The interior palette of mostly contemporary works is complemented on the exterior by raised beds for herbs and vegetables and lush fern beds. Here we will see works by well-known artists such as David Aylesworth, Louise Nevelson, and James Surls and emerging talents such as Dana Frankfurt and Demetrius Oliver.

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FEBRUARY 23: In River Oaks, we will visit two unusual houses in which the homeowners have accommodated growing families and growing art collections.

First, we will tour a classic Tudor-style house, built in 1934 and since updated. The collection, which includes paintings, sculpture, and drawings, is knit together by a common thread of “detailed quirkiness.” Viewers will enjoy work by artists as varied as Raymond Pettibon, Kara Walker, Donald Moffett, Ken Price, Al Taylor, Ed Kienholz, Dario Robleto, Luis Jimenez, Jorinde Voigt, and Lawrence Weiner. Visitors to the third floor game room will find that the walls are an art installation.

The second collection is an outstanding chronicle of moments in art history over the last fifty years. Designed by architect Howard Barnstone for the current owners in 1970, the house has been the backdrop for frequent gatherings over many decades. This exceedingly personal collection has been amassed by a couple passionate about art, reflecting their shared interests as well as individual favorites. These homeowners collect established artists and also keep their fingers on the pulse of the art community at all times by supporting young artists and emerging artists in a variety of media.



Donald Moffett,
Lot 041410.12 (random F), 2012



Refugees: Are They Really Too Risky for America?

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 12:00–1:30 P.M.

Interfaith Ministries of Greater Houston, 3403 Main Street, 77002.

Parking available on site and on nearby streets.



After hearing last year's heated campaign rhetoric about whether to accept Syrian refugees in the United States, have you sometimes wondered if refugees really are a security risk that we cannot afford? Here's your chance to find out how refugees are selected and vetted, how refugees integrate into the U.S., and how U.S. treatment of refugees differs from the European model. Two speakers will share their experiences and views.

ALI AL SUDANI has seen the refugee process from both sides. After working with the U.S. forces in Iraq, he fled to Jordan because his life was in danger and was eventually approved for resettlement in the United States. He now works the other side of the process as director of refugee services at Interfaith Ministries of Greater Houston, where he helps to resettle more than 600 refugees from different homelands in our city every year. He will enlighten us on the refugee process: who is eligible, what background checks are done, what documents they must provide, which agencies handle the process, how long it typically takes, and what happens when the refugees get here.

MARTA GALICKI recently returned to Houston from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, where she taught English and mentored displaced Afghan and Syrian families. Through her volunteer work with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and a local NGO, she developed friendships as well as a rare perspective on the plight of refugees. She was born and raised in Pennsylvania and moved to Houston in 1994. While living here she worked as an art and architectural historian on projects in New Orleans, London, and Houston. She also worked at the Menil Collection.

Mississippi on Your Mind

TWO TUESDAYS, MARCH 21 AND 28, 6:30–8:00 P.M.

The Jung Center, 5200 Montrose Boulevard, 77006



MARCH 21: *Go Down, Moses* and the Southern Psyche

Using "Was," the first story of the seven in William Faulkner's novel *Go Down, Moses*, **ANDY LITTLE** will explore the structural inversions and complexities that define the style of this narrative. This apparently whimsical and innocent hunting tale twins and intertwines gender and race, memory and experience, myth and history, pursuer and quarry; through these devices Faulkner renders a rich, nuanced, and profound portrait of the American southern psyche. Reading or reviewing *Go Down, Moses* as well as *The Sound and the Fury* and other works by Faulkner will add richness to the experience of this session.

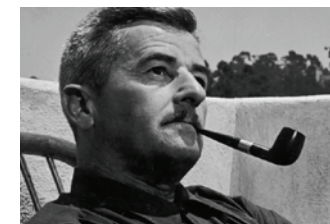
MARCH 28: CHANELLE BENZ and **CHRISTOPHER BRUNT** will examine three towering figures in the cultural history of Mississippi—William Faulkner, Barry Hannah, and James Meredith. In this seminar, we will look at these three Oxford figures who dared to tangle with the darker side of Mississippi, the contradictions of class and race, of the land and its people.

ANDY LITTLE has a MA in political philosophy and is an academic advisor and adjunct instructor in the Honors College at the University of Houston, where he has been teaching courses on great books of philosophy, politics, and literature since 1977.

CHANELLE BENZ's work has appeared or is forthcoming in *The American Reader*, *Granta*, *Guernica*, *Electric Literature's Recommended Reading*, *Fence*, and *The Cupboard*. She is also the recipient of an O. Henry Prize. She is the author of *The Man Who Shot Out My Eye Is Dead* (January 2017, Ecco Press). She received her MFA from Syracuse University as well as a B.F.A. in acting from Boston University.

CHRISTOPHER BRUNT is a poet and fiction writer whose work appears in *Ploughshares*, *Copper Nickel*, *Bat City Review*, *Drunken Boat*, and other magazines. His fiction has been selected as a Distinguished Story of 2014 by *Best American Short Stories*. He is currently a visiting assistant professor at the University of Houston Honors College, where he teaches in the great books program as well as the Center for Creative Work. He has a PhD from the University of Southern Mississippi and a MFA from Syracuse University.

This course is in conjunction with the study tour **Encountering Southern Culture: A Journey to Oxford and Memphis** but registration is not limited to tour participants.





Courtesy Houston Grand Opera

Getting *Götterdämmerung*

TWO THURSDAYS, APRIL 6 AND 13, 6:30–8:00 P.M. AND
ONE WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19, 6:00 P.M.

Private residences for the first two sessions; addresses will be given to subscribers. Those who attend the full course are invited to be guests of the Houston Grand Opera on April 19 at the dress rehearsal in Brown Theater, Wortham Center, 501 Texas Avenue, 777002. Limited enrollment.



Houston Grand Opera's historic presentation of Richard Wagner's Ring cycle comes to its climactic conclusion this spring. Join HGO dramaturg **PAUL HOPPER** for an in-depth study of *Götterdämmerung* (The Twilight of the Gods) in preparation for a trip to the final dress rehearsal as we watch the castle of the gods burn to the ground in one of opera's most extravagant finales.

PAUL HOPPER serves as Houston Grand Opera's dramaturg, or the resident opera scholar. His duties include patron education programs, pre-curtain lectures, writing articles for the *Opera Cues* program books, and creating supertitle translations for all productions. He has worked for the Metropolitan Opera and Santa Fe Opera and has been a guest speaker at the University of Houston, Czech Center Museum Houston, and the Houston-Leipzig Society.



©Bill Cooper. Courtesy Houston Ballet

Storms, Power, and Passion: *The Tempest*

FOUR TUESDAYS, MAY 2, 9, 16, AND 23.

MAY 2, 6:30–8:00 P.M. Private residence; address will be given to subscribers
MAY 9 AND 16, 6:30–8:00 P.M. Houston Ballet Center for Dance, 601 Preston St., 77002
MAY 23, 7:30 P.M. Dress rehearsal, Brown Theater, Wortham Center, 501 Texas Ave., 77002



In observance of the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death, Houston Ballet will present the North American premiere of **DAVID BINTLEY**'s magical ballet *The Tempest*, a co-production with Birmingham Royal Ballet. Mr. Bintley has created a fantastical production based on the bard's well-known play with a commissioned score by British composer **SALLY BEAMISH** and sets and costumes by Tony- and Olivier-award-winning designer **RAE SMITH**. This course offers participants special insights into *The Tempest* as interpreted by Bintley, Beamish, Smith, and the Houston Ballet.

MAY 2: Two Houston Ballet principals, cast in lead roles in *The Tempest*, will attend this intimate evening held in a private home. The dancers will discuss the ballet from their perspective—their knowledge of the roles, how they build their characters, and how they express Shakespeare without words. **JENNIFER SOMMERS**, Houston Ballet director of education and community engagement, will lead the discussion. Refreshments will be served.

MAY 9: This session provides a rare opportunity to tour the Houston Ballet Center for Dance and to have a sneak peek at the costumes and set pieces designed by Rae Smith for *The Tempest*. The tour will be led by **GEORGE PIRES**, Houston Ballet wardrobe coordinator, and will include a private reception.

MAY 16: Along with ballet trustees and top donors, Seminar registrants will attend a reception and dance talk held in the black box theater at the Center for Dance featuring a discussion between choreographer **DAVID BINTLEY**, composer **SALLY BEAMISH**, and Shakespearean scholar **ELIZABETH KLETT**.

MAY 23: Full course participants will have exclusive access to the dress rehearsal of *The Tempest*, held on the main stage at the Wortham. Access is limited to paid participants in the course and is non-transferrable.

A native of Huddersfield, England, **DAVID BINTLEY** joined the Royal Ballet Upper School in 1973. He joined Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet in 1976, where he made his mark playing character roles. At the same time, his choreographic ambition was developing, and in 1983 he became resident choreographer of Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet, followed by the same position at the Royal Ballet. He became artistic director of the Birmingham Royal Ballet in 1995. The Houston Ballet performed Mr. Bintley's *Aladdin* in 2014.

The score for *The Tempest* was composed by well-known British composer and violist **SALLY BEAMISH**. Initially a viola player, she moved from London to Scotland in 1990 to develop her career as a composer. Her music embraces many influences, particularly jazz and Scottish traditional music and is performed and broadcast internationally. Since 1999 she has been championed by the BIS label, which has recorded much of her work.

ELIZABETH KLETT is an associate professor of literature at the University of Houston-Clear Lake and was the 2013–14 Mieskuc Professor of Women's Studies. She has a PhD in English literature from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, a MA in Shakespeare studies from the Shakespeare Institute (University of Birmingham, U.K.), and a BA in English and theater from Drew University. She is the author of *Cross-Gender Shakespeare and English National Identity: Wearing the Codpiece* (Palgrave, 2009) and numerous articles on adaptations of Shakespeare in theater, film, television, and dance.



©Bill Cooper. Courtesy Houston Ballet



Report Card: The First 100 Days

ONE MONDAY, MAY 15, 6:00–7:30 P.M.

Covenant Church, 4949 Caroline, 77004, in the museum district.

Parking available behind the church or on adjacent streets.



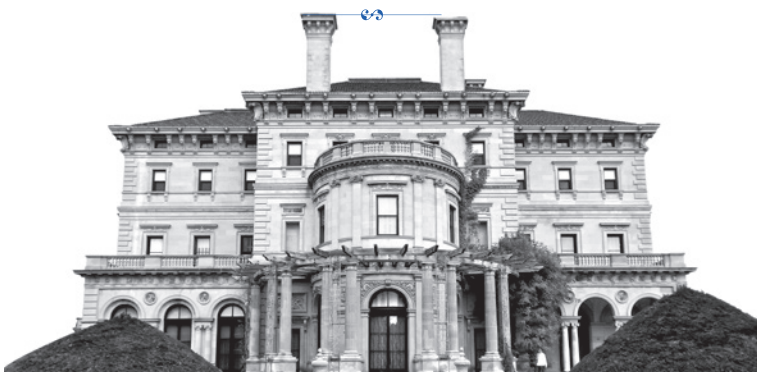
In the American tradition, we often speak of a new president's "honeymoon" during the first 100 days. **PROFESSOR RICHARD MURRAY** brings his keen observations and encyclopedic knowledge of politics to an analysis of the first 100 days of our forty-fifth president.

President Donald J. Trump was elected after a bitter and sharply partisan presidential campaign. In his first 100 days in office, has he focused on healing the wounds, or have divisions been exacerbated by the kinds of radical actions on immigration, trade, health care, and other key issues that he promised during his campaign? Has the Republican majority in Congress worked well with a Republican president, or have internal frictions re-emerged? Does the public in general seem reassured by what has been accomplished so far? What should we expect after the first 100 days?

PROFESSOR MURRAY holds the Bob Lanier Chair in Urban Public Policy at the University of Houston and is director of the Survey Research Institute at the University's Center for Public Policy. During his long career in politics, he has consulted for more than 200 political campaigns.



Fall 2017 Study Tour



The Breakers,
Garden Facade, Newport, RI

House Party in Newport THURSDAY, OCTOBER 26—MONDAY, OCTOBER 30



Join us for a “House Party in Newport” during New England’s colorful autumn leaf season. Much of the social history of the United States can be traced through Newport, Rhode Island’s outstanding houses and public buildings. From the classically inspired colonial period, through the fanciful, but relatively modest pre-Civil War Victorian “cottages” and the palaces of the post-war Gilded Age, to the plain and egalitarian apartment blocks and shopping centers of the 1950s and ’60s—all can be seen in abundance in Newport.



Enrollment: All classes are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Confirmation of enrollment will be sent. You may enroll by mail 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 study tours 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 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 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:

STUDY TOUR: ART AND ARCHITECTURE: A JAUNT TO FORT WORTH

TUESDAY, JANUARY 17—WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 18

ENCOUNTERING SOUTHERN CULTURE: A JOURNEY TO OXFORD AND MEMPHIS

THURSDAY, APRIL 6—SUNDAY, APRIL 9

STUDY TOUR: HOUSE PARTY IN NEWPORT

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 26—MONDAY, OCTOBER 30

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

REWRITING HISTORY: THE PURPOSES AND PRACTICES OF CULTURAL DESTRUCTION IN IRAQ AND SYRIA

TUESDAY, JANUARY 24, 12:00–1:30 P.M.

☐ \$30

PARALLEL STREETS, INDIVIDUAL TASTES: SPRING ART COLLECTION TOURS
TWO THURSDAYS, FEBRUARY 9 AND 23, 1:00–3:30 P.M.

☐ \$70 all sessions

☐ \$40 single session

REFUGEES: ARE THEY REALLY TOO RISKY FOR AMERICA?
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 12:00–1:30 P.M.

☐ \$25

MISSISSIPPI ON YOUR MIND

TWO TUESDAYS, MARCH 21 AND 28, 6:30–8:00 P.M.

☐ \$60 all sessions

☐ \$30 single session

GETTING GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG

TWO THURSDAYS, APRIL 6 AND 13, 6:30–8:00 P.M. AND WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19, 6:00 P.M.

☐ \$100 all sessions

☐ \$40 single session

STORMS, POWER, AND PASSION: THE TEMPEST

FOUR TUESDAYS, MAY 2, 9, AND 16, 6:30–8:00 P.M. AND MAY 23, 7:30 P.M.

☐ \$200 all sessions

☐ \$55 single session

REPORT CARD: THE FIRST 100 DAYS

MONDAY, MAY 15, 6:00–7:30 P.M.

☐ \$30

TOTAL FEE:

LESS DISCOUNT (SEE ENROLLMENT INFO):

AMOUNT ENCLOSED:

NAME

ADDRESS **CITY/ZIP**

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(VERY IMPORTANT)

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SPRING 2017 SCHEDULE AND ENROLLMENT FORM

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