

THE HOUSTON SEMINAR

Spring 2018



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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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Courses and Study Tours

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Calendar

JANUARY							FEBRUARY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6					1	2	3
7	8	9	10		12	13	4	5		7	8	9	10
14	15	16	17		19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
21	22		24	25	26	27	18	19			22	23	24
28	29	30	31				25	26	27				
MARCH							APRIL						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	5	6		8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
18	19	20		22	23	24	22	23		25	26	27	28
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30					

Study Tours

Mexico City: Past, Present, Future APRIL 3-9, 2018

Claudio Arciniega, Juan Gómez y Trasmonte, Manuel Tolsá, et al.,
Cathedral of Mexico, 16th-early 19th century.

Though it is one of the largest cities in the world, Mexico City remains a city of distinct neighborhoods. Guided by **DR. LOIS ZAMORA**, this tour will engage the multiple historical layers of this city, all of which still exist to varying degrees and mark contemporary Mexican culture. We will begin with the traces of the great Aztec city of Tenochtitlán, then move to the Spanish empire's imposition of their monumental city, to arrive at the Mexican Revolution of 1910-1920, which marks the true beginning of modern Mexico City. We will visit during the week following Easter, 2018.

Courses

Going Baroque TWO THURSDAYS, JANUARY 11 AND 18, 7:30-9:00 P.M.

Christ the King Lutheran
Church, 2353 Rice Boulevard at
Greenbriar. Parking information
distributed to subscribers.



Photo courtesy of Rick Erickson

JANUARY 11-RECORDING BACH: THE COMPOSER, THE ORGANIST, AND THE COUNTERTENOR

Johann Sebastian Bach composed or refined many song settings for Christian Schemelli's 1736 *Gesangbuch*. **RICK ERICKSON**, director of Bach Society Houston, and **RYLAND ANGEL**, internationally renowned countertenor, will give us a glimpse of how they prepare for a professional recording of these works. As the two work toward their final interpretation, Erickson will accompany Angel on both the larger Bach organ and a smaller chamber organ.

JANUARY 18-BACH AND THE ORGAN

Rick Erickson's playing has been hailed by *The New Yorker* as "exemplary Bach." He will play and demonstrate how Bach's music for organ and the organ itself work together to produce successful and satisfying results, giving attention also to the acoustical environment and architecture of the room that houses the organ.

RICK ERICKSON is the director of Bach Society Houston and the cantor at Christ the King Lutheran Church, as well as a lecturer in church music at the Shepherd School of Music, Rice University. A noted improviser, he has recorded for several major labels and often appears as recitalist, lecturer, conductor, and hymn festival leader throughout the United States and in Germany, Sweden, Australia and New Zealand.

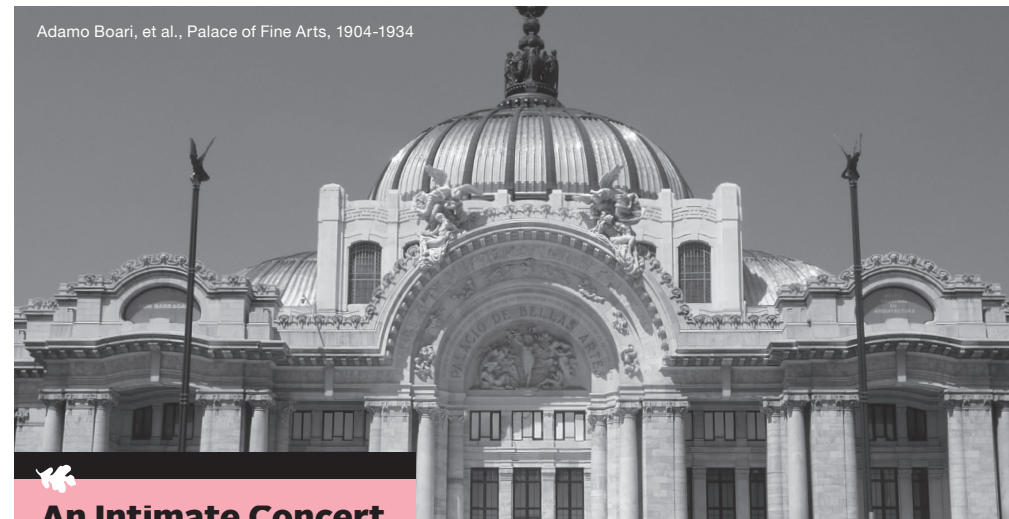
Grammy-nominated countertenor and composer **RYLAND ANGEL** has built an international reputation in opera and on the concert stage. His repertoire ranges from the Baroque to operatic commissions. He has made more than 70 CD recordings and sung on several film soundtracks. He is a fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study at the University of Minnesota.

MEXICO CITY

A Metropolis of Layers, Flavors and Music

THREE TUESDAYS, JANUARY 23, FEBRUARY 6, AND 20. Locations and time vary.

Adamo Boari, et al., Palace of Fine Arts, 1904-1934



An Intimate Concert of Modern and Contemporary Music of Mexico TUESDAY, JANUARY 23, 6:30-8:00 P.M.

Private residence; address will
be given to subscribers.

Pianist **MICHAEL ZURAW** will introduce listeners to a sampling of works by Mexican composers Gerardo Tamez, Mario Lavista, Arturo Márquez, Gabriela Ortiz, and Manuel Ponce. He will perform with **ALEJANDRO MONTIEL**, guitar, and **DANIEL SAENZ**, cello.

MICHAEL ZURAW founded Aperio-Music of the Americas in 2006 to promote contemporary and

new music by composers from the New World. A graduate of the Interlochen Arts Academy, University of Illinois, and Carnegie Mellon University, Zuraw earned a Doctor of Musical Arts degree at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music. He is currently on the faculty of St. John's School and teaches for the American Festival for the Arts.

DANIEL SAENZ has performed and presented master classes throughout South America, Mexico, and the USA. A graduate of Rice University and the Eastman School of Music, Saenz is the associate professor of cello at Sam Houston State University School of Music and is a member of the Kolonneh String Quartet.

ALEJANDRO MONTIEL performs throughout the United States, Mexico, Spain, and Italy. He holds graduate degrees from the Peabody Conservatory and the University of Texas. In addition to performing, arranging, and recording, Montiel directs the guitar programs at Sam Houston State University and Lone Star College.



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Comida en la Ciudad
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 12:00 P.M.
 Caracol Restaurant, 2200 Post Oak Blvd. near Westheimer, 77056.
 Limited enrollment.

Beard Award-winner **HUGO ORTEGA**, who was born in Mexico City and grew up there and in his family's ancestral village in Puebla near the Oaxacan border.

In this culinary nod to The Seminar's spring study tour, Hugo Ortega and his staff will create a special *comida* menu. Caracol's *chef du cuisine* will give a lively and informative explanation of the various dishes served as we explore the largest Spanish-speaking city in the world through its remarkable cuisine.

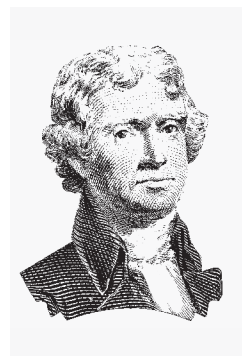
Juan O'Gorman, Gustavo Saavedra, and Juan Martínez de Velasco, Central Library, National Autonomous University of Mexico, 1950-53.

Modern Architecture in Mexico City
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 12:00-1:30 P.M.
 Moody Center for the Arts, Rice University, entrance 8. Detailed parking instructions will be shared with subscribers.



Beginning in the 1920s a new generation of architects in Mexico City created modern buildings intended to convey Mexico's unique cultural character. By midcentury these architects and their students had rewritten the country's architectural history and transformed the capital. In an illustrated lecture, **KATHRYN O'ROURKE** will present her new interpretation of architectural modernism in Mexico City. Her research reveals the close links between design, architectural history, folk art, and social reform.

O'Rourke, associate professor of art history at Trinity University, received her B.A. in Architecture from Wellesley College and her M.A. and Ph.D. in the History of Art from the University of Pennsylvania. She serves as vice chair of the State Board of Review of the Texas Historical Commission and secretary of the Society of Architectural Historians. O'Rourke is the author of the highly regarded *Modern Architecture in Mexico City: History, Representation, and the Shaping of a Capital* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2016).



Thomas Jefferson: The Essential Democrat
THREE WEDNESDAYS, FEBRUARY 21 AND 28 AND MARCH 7, 6:30-8:00 P.M.
 Covenant Church, 4949 Caroline, 77004, in the museum district.
 Parking in the church's lot is limited; parking on the surrounding streets is widely available.

Jefferson: Architect of American Liberty (Basic Books, 2017) is widely praised as the best one-volume biography of Thomas Jefferson. Its author, **JOHN B. BOLES**, the William Pettus Hobby Professor of History at Rice University, the former editor of the *Journal of Southern History*, and, most recently, an acclaimed biographer, will present three lectures on Thomas Jefferson. Professor Boles will discuss Jefferson's role in the founding of our country and in its early governance and will describe his remarkable personal qualities.

FEBRUARY 21: OVERVIEW

Professor Boles will place Jefferson in the context of his time and place—how he reflected and was formed by his environment— and will discuss how Jefferson has been treated by historians over time.

FEBRUARY 28: JEFFERSON IN FRANCE

Jefferson's time in France, 1784-1789, profoundly affected his ideas on government. He witnessed the French monarchy's disregard of its people, which sharpened his belief in the virtues of a republican form of government. He left France just as the Revolution was beginning, and the political and economic discontent he witnessed there, especially the poverty of the French peasantry, strengthened his democratic tendencies.

MARCH 7: JEFFERSON AS PRESIDENT AND POLITICIAN

Jefferson's presidency was a time of exploration and expansion and political growth. As a reluctant president who led the nation through eight tumultuous years, Jefferson was also a reluctant politician who presided over the country in the early stages of its two-party political system.

Cloudy with a Chance of Landslide: A Primary Look at the 2018 Midterms
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 12:00-1:30 P.M.
 Moody Center for the Arts, Rice University, entrance 8. Detailed parking instructions will be shared with subscribers.



Still trying to make sense of the 2016 Presidential election? Prepare now for another shocker, as federal, state and local power shifts are predicted. History informs us that the midterms are unfriendly to the president's party, especially when that president's approval ratings are low. Thirty-three Senate and all 435 House seats are up for election on November 6, 2018, as well as governor, Lt.governor, attorney general and many other Texas and Harris County positions, so candidates are vying to best their partisan peers in the primary elections this spring.

Once again, we turn to pollster and prognosticator **RICHARD MURRAY** to prepare us for what is to come in a series of two lectures before and after the March 6 Texas Primary Elections.

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 in his name was established in April 2008.

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West Side Story: Leonard Bernstein at 100

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

Private residences; addresses will
be given to course subscribers.
Limited enrollment.

WEST
SIDE
STORY

2018 marks the 100th birthday of Leonard Bernstein. Organizations throughout the world are celebrating his impact on classical music in America, including Houston Grand Opera's spring production of *West Side Story*. Join HGO's **PAUL HOPPER** for an exploration of Bernstein's life as conductor, composer, and educator. While *West Side Story* (1957) has an extensive performance history throughout the world, HGO's presentation will be the first from a major American opera company. This new production is directed by Francesca Zambello with brand new sets and costumes. We will learn why *West Side Story* continues to resonate with audiences from all walks of life.

The Seminar has asked Mr. Hopper to tell us about the impact of Hurricane Harvey on HGO and the construction of the HGO Resilience Theater inside the George R. Brown Convention Center.

PAUL HOPPER joined Houston Grand Opera in 2013. Today, as assistant artistic director he manages special artistic projects, assists in planning, and guides a variety of audiences in learning more about HGO and opera. A graduate of the Eastman School of Music and the University of Houston, he previously held positions at the Santa Fe Opera and the Metropolitan Opera.



Farming Wonders in Richmond, Texas

Details to be announced.

How do young farmers bring their experience, self-education and dreams to Texas to build a large organic farm in an urban area? **SCOTT SNODGRASS**

has been active in promoting native and organic planting for a decade. He cofounded the Edible Group, an umbrella corporation for a variety of small businesses dedicated to the production and

consumption of fresh, sustainable foods through farming and education. One of these businesses, Loam Agronomics was established two years ago with the purchase of 288 acres of farmland in Richmond. He and his management team have hired and trained farmers to plant and harvest crops that are sold through CSA (community supported agriculture) subscriptions and regional farmers' markets.

Snodgrass will take us on a journey beginning with a tour of a farm-centered home development, Harvest Green, and a Farmers' Market in Richmond. From there, we will head to the Loam Agronomics property for a tour of the large farm learning about the techniques, equipment, innovation, joys and travails of organic farming in the Houston area. Our study tour will be topped off by a chef-prepared lunch featuring vegetables just harvested from the farm.



Lisa Falkenberg

What's on Lisa Falkenberg's Mind?

TUESDAY, MARCH 27, 6:30-8:00 P.M.

Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion, Hermann Park, 1500 Hermann Drive,
77004

When we open the *Houston Chronicle*, we expect to get the news, but with **LISA FALKENBERG's** column, we are drawn into a narrative whose path leads through a fact-based perspective to people, places, and ideas that we didn't anticipate, that always recognizes the importance of our shared humanity.

For the past ten years, in her role as Metro columnist, Ms. Falkenberg has illuminated topics ranging from criminal justice to voter rights, from family illness to flooding, as well as city finances and political races. Winner of the 2015 Pulitzer Prize for Commentary, her "vividly-written, groundbreaking column" has been recognized by innumerable organizations including the American Bar Association of Texas and Houston's Coalition for the Homeless.

LISA FALKENBERG graduated with a journalism degree from the University of Texas at Austin in 2000. During and after college she worked with the Associated Press and was named Texas AP Writer of the Year in 2004. Since then she has been with the Chronicle and mentors students through their high school journalism program.



Gorbachev: His Life and Times

MONDAY, APRIL 16, 6:30-8:00 P.M.

Venue to be announced.


WILLIAM TAUBMAN, noted scholar of Soviet Russia and author of *Gorbachev: His Life and Times* (Norton, 2017), will discuss Mikhail Gorbachev as the last leader of the Soviet Union and how he changed its society after 70 years of Communist governance. Professor Taubman continued to specialize in the politics and foreign policy of the former Soviet Union when many of his colleagues switched to post-Soviet Russian affairs. He says he has always been drawn to large and enduring questions of politics, and especially the impact of leaders and their personalities.

The Houston Seminar is joining forces with the World Affairs Council to bring this noted Russian scholar to Houston. Dr. Taubman is the Bertrand Snell Professor of Political Science Emeritus at

Amherst College. His 2003 biography of Nikita Khrushchev, won both the Pulitzer Prize and the National Critics Circle Award for biography.

He holds a B.A. from Harvard, and an M.A. and Ph.D. from Columbia University.





**Behind the Pages:
A Conversation with William Middleton**
TUESDAY, APRIL 24, 6:30–8:00.

Private residence; address will be provided to subscribers. Limited enrollment

William Middleton. Photo: Time Walker

Double Vision, the long-awaited biography of John and Dominique de Menil, will be published by Knopf in March. The Houston Seminar will sponsor a unique event to celebrate the book’s release: a private conversation with its author, William Middleton.

Mr. Middleton will provide an insider’s look at the process of writing this biography. How did he earn the trust of family, friends, colleagues, and institutions...all accustomed to the utmost discretion and, in some instances, secrecy? It took more than ten years to research and write this book, a long, twisting road from New York to Houston to Paris to Normandy to Alsace to Bucharest to Los Angeles. What were the high points of the process? What were the greatest difficulties? What is *not* included in the book?

Expect a lively discussion and interchange with the audience.

WILLIAM MIDDLETON is a journalist and editor who has worked in New York and Paris.

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 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 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, email, telephone 713-666-9000, or consult www.houstonseminar.org



Course List and Reservation Form

PLEASE ENROLL ME/US IN THE FOLLOWING COURSES:

STUDY TOUR: MEXICO CITY: PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE APRIL 3-9, 2018 <i>For trip price and further information, please call 713-666-9000 or email registrar@houstonseminar.org</i>	
GOING BAROQUE TWO THURSDAYS, JANUARY 11 AND 18, 7:30–9:00 P.M.	<input type="checkbox"/> \$90 all sessions <input type="checkbox"/> \$35 single session
AN INTIMATE CONCERT OF MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY MUSIC OF MEXICO TUESDAY, JANUARY 23, 6:30–8:00 P.M.	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100 all sessions <input type="checkbox"/> \$35 single session
COMIDA EN LA CIUDAD TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 12:00 P.M.	<input type="checkbox"/> \$40 single session
MODERN ARCHITECTURE IN MEXICO CITY TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 20 12:00–1:30 P.M.	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35 single session
THOMAS JEFFERSON: THE ESSENTIAL DEMOCRAT THREE WEDNESDAYS, FEBRUARY 21, 28, AND MARCH 7, 6:30–8:00 P.M.	<input type="checkbox"/> \$90 all sessions <input type="checkbox"/> \$35 single session
CLOUDY WITH A CHANCE OF LANDSLIDE: A PRIMARY LOOK AT THE 2018 MIDTERMS TWO THURSDAYS, MARCH 1 AND 8, 6:00–7:30 P.M.	<input type="checkbox"/> \$60 all sessions <input type="checkbox"/> \$35 single session
WEST SIDE STORY: LEONARD BERNSTEIN AT 100 TWO WEDNESDAYS, MARCH 21 AND 28, 6:30–8:00 P.M.	<input type="checkbox"/> \$90 all sessions <input type="checkbox"/> \$55 single session
FARMING WONDERS IN RICHMOND, TEXAS SATURDAY, MARCH 24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$XX single session
WHAT'S ON LISA FALKENBERG'S MIND? TUESDAY, MARCH 27, 6:30-8:00 P.M.	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35 single session
GORBACHEV: HIS LIFE AND TIMES MONDAY, APRIL 16, 6:30-8:00 P.M.	<input type="checkbox"/> \$10 single session
BEHIND THE PAGES: A CONVERSATION WITH WILLIAM MIDDLETON TUESDAY, APRIL 24, 6:30–8:00 P.M.	<input type="checkbox"/> \$XX single session

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SCHEDULE AND ENROLLMENT FORM

Going Baroque

An Intimate Concert of Modern and Contemporary Music of Mexico

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