

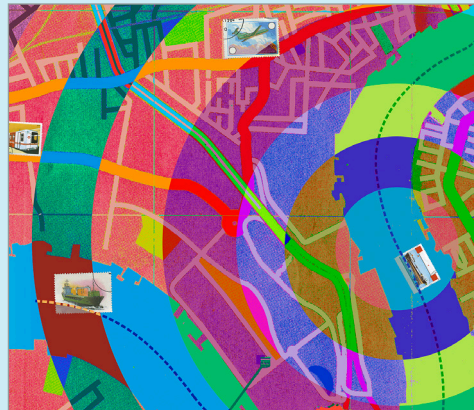


SPRING 2017

TOWNSEND

CENTER FOR THE HUMANITIES UC BERKELEY

CULTURAL CRITICISM Maggie Nelson & BAMPFA EXHIBITION Allan deSouza BOOK CHATS Jonathan Sheehan CHAPTER & VERSE Namwali Serpell



TOWNSEND CENTER FOR THE HUMANITIES

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COVER IMAGES (clockwise from left): Maggie Nelson, *Maridadi Do-si-do* (detail) by Allan deSouza, Namwali Serpell, Campanile viewed from Class of 1925 Courtyard, Jonathan Sheehan.

IMAGE CREDITS: John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation cover (Maggie Nelson), Allan deSouza cover (*Maridadi Do-si-do* detail) and p. 7 (*Merikani*, 3 detail and self portrait), Ariel Hayat (*Daily Cal*) cover (Jonathan Sheehan), Peg Skorpinski cover and p. 6 (Namwali Serpell), Eric Kotila cover (Campanile) and p. 2 (Stephens Hall grove), Julie Wolf p. 5 (Emma Silverman), Svetlana Cvetko p. 5 (Robert Reich), Andy Warhol p. 3 (*Marilyn Monroe*) and back cover (*Poppies*).



SERIES

THE FUTURE OF CULTURAL CRITICISM

SPRING 2017

Mondays | 6:30 PM | Osher Theater | **BAMPFA** | 2155 Center St | Berkeley

THIS YEARLONG SERIES of conversations features some of the most innovative and incisive commentators on culture. This semester we focus on the expansion of cultural criticism into new media, genres, and approaches.

The series is cosponsored by the Townsend Center for the Humanities, Arts Research Center, Arts+Design Initiative, Art of Writing, the Black Room, and Digital Humanities as part of **ARTS+DESIGN MONDAYS @ BAMPFA**. Learn more at arts.berkeley.edu.

January 30, 2017 | *Gender, Identity, Memoir*
Judith Butler and Maggie Nelson

JUDITH BUTLER is Maxine Elliot Professor in the Department of Comparative Literature at UC Berkeley. Her work has been influential in a variety of disciplines including critical theory and gender studies. She has received many of the highest honors in the humanities, including the Andrew W. Mellon Distinguished Achievement Award.

MAGGIE NELSON, a 2016 MacArthur Fellow, is the author of numerous works of nonfiction and poetry, including *The Argonauts*, an autobiography that explores complex issues of gender, sexuality, and love, and which received the National Book Critics Circle Award for criticism. Nelson directs the creative writing program at California Institute of the Arts.

February 13, 2017 | *Body, Intellect, Resistance*
Mark Greif and Linda Williams

MARK GREIF covers popular culture and political thought for the journal *n+1*, which he cofounded. His books include the essay collection *Against Everything*,

and a study of mid-20th century American literature and thought, *The Age of the Crisis of Man*. He is associate professor of Literary Studies at the New School for Social Research.

LINDA WILLIAMS is professor emerita of Rhetoric and Film & Media at UC Berkeley. Her works of feminist film scholarship include *Hard Core: Power, Pleasure and the Frenzy of the Visible*, which analyzes film pornography as a genre and specific cinematic form. Her most recent book is *On The Wire*, a study of the HBO television series.

February 27, 2017 | *Technology, Race, Popular Culture*
Jenna Wortham and Nadia Ellis

JENNA WORTHAM writes about technology and culture for the *New York Times*. Her criticism — which also engages with issues of race and sexuality in music, film, and other forms of popular media — has appeared in the *Awl*, *Bust*, *Vogue*, and other publications.

NADIA ELLIS, associate professor of English at UC Berkeley, specializes in African diasporic, Caribbean,

and postcolonial literatures and cultures. She is the author of *Territories of the Soul: Queered Belonging in the Black Diaspora*, and has published essays on popular culture, performance, and music.

April 17, 2017 | *Cultural Criticism in the Age of YouTube*
Tiffany Shlain and Rolla Selbak

Emmy-nominated filmmaker **TIFFANY SHLAIN** is founder of the Webby Awards, the leading international prize for excellence on the internet. She cofounded the International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences.

ROLLA SELBAK is a filmmaker whose credits include the acclaimed feature film *Three Veils*, which examines arranged marriage, homosexuality, and love within Muslim-American culture. She is also creator of the virally popular Web series “Kiss Her I’m Famous.”

April 24, 2017 | *Radio, Podcast, and Cultural Criticism*
John Horn and Glynn Washington, moderated by Ben Manilla

JOHN HORN is host of KPCC’s *The Frame*, a daily arts and entertainment program. He has covered culture for nearly thirty years, including serving for over a decade at the *Los Angeles Times* as lead writer on the film industry.

GLYNN WASHINGTON is host and executive producer of *Snap Judgment* on National Public Radio. The show’s podcasts have received widespread acclaim, with the episode “Unforgiven” named by the *Atlantic* as one of the fifty best podcast episodes of 2015.

BEN MANILLA teaches at UC Berkeley’s Graduate School of Journalism. An audio producer, he has received some of the field’s highest honors, including the Peabody Award.

May 1, 2017 | *The Future of Media in the Trump Era*
Dave Pell and Guests

DAVE PELL is the founder and editor of NextDraft, a curated compilation of daily news and analysis. [▶](#)

PUBLIC SCHOLARS PROGRAM

THIS YEAR a group of graduate students from across the UC system participated in the inaugural Public Scholars Program, designed to expose students in the arts, humanities and humanistic social sciences to community-engaged scholarship and provide them with experience in diverse careers outside of the academy.

Students gathered in Spring 2016 for a weekly seminar at UC Davis on the topic of public humanities scholarship. Each then developed a community-based research project and spent the summer working with a partner organization. While other universities offer public humanities programs and degrees, few combine the research-oriented goals of nurturing public scholarship with professional development for graduate students.

Emma Silverman, a doctoral student in the Department of History of Art, was chosen by the Townsend Center as Berkeley’s participant. For her project she worked with the nonprofit organization Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods to assist with the preservation of Pond Farm, a former artists’ colony and pottery school located in what is now a state park. Silverman collected oral histories from previous Pond Farm students, which will be used as the basis of a short film and ultimately archived as a crucial record of the school’s history. She also created a map of Pond Farm for use in a digital history platform.

Silverman credits the Mellon Public Scholars Program with allowing her to become part of a community of like-minded scholars searching for strategies to make the humanities more broadly relevant. The experience also served to hone intellectual and practical skills that she will employ in her dissertation research.

Led by the UC Davis Humanities Institute and funded by a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Public Scholars Program received additional support



from the Townsend Center, which sponsored Silverman’s participation. [▶](#)

THE ART OF WRITING

ART OF WRITING is a Townsend Center program that fosters the practice and teaching of outstanding writing. Supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and a private donor, the program is having a noticeable impact on Berkeley’s writing curriculum.

Addressing the demand for advanced undergraduate writing courses, Art of Writing sponsors innovative team-taught seminars in a variety of disciplines. This Spring’s courses are “Writing About Buildings and Cities,” which asks students to think deeply and write elegantly about the built environment; and “Knowing Others, Being Known: The Art of Writing People,” which uses both ancient and modern texts to teach students to write the human subject.

Art of Writing also strives to help graduate students become skilled teachers of writing. This year saw the launch of the Summer Writing Institute, an intensive week-long workshop for graduate student instructors led by **Joseph Harris** (University of Delaware). Extending his support into the fall semester, Harris met with the graduate fellows via Skype, offering his guidance on a variety of topics from classroom management to working with multilingual students. He returned to Berkeley in December for a final meeting with the fellows and to present a public lecture.

Art of Writing is succeeding in its goal of embedding undergraduate writing instruction in fields outside the humanities. After College of Engineering faculty member **Evan Variano** taught an Art of Writing seminar this past Spring, he developed a writing instruction module that has become an essential part of the required introductory course for students majoring in civil & environmental engineering. Art of Writing has funded the development of this module so that other engineering instructors will be capable of teaching it in the future.

In February, **Robert Reich**, Chancellor’s Professor of Public Policy and former US Secretary of Labor, delivers the second annual Art of Writing lecture. The author of fourteen books, Reich will speak with undergraduates about his everyday writing practices, from texts to tweets to blog posts. In April, author and editor **William Germano** meets with graduate students to discuss turning their dissertations into publishable books, and offers a day-long workshop for faculty on crafting successful academic book proposals. [▶](#)



CHAPTER & VERSE

Podcast Series from the Townsend Center

CHAPTER & VERSE, a podcast on literature, arts, and culture, continues to expand its series of stimulating conversations. In the latest episode, **Namwali Serpell**, associate professor of English, discusses her short story "The Sack," which won the prestigious Caine Prize for African Writing.

Other episodes feature faculty members **Adam Hochschild** on Americans fighting in the Spanish Civil War and **Robert Alter** on his rich literary translations of the Bible.

Hosted by Professor of English **Scott Saul**, Chapter & Verse can be accessed and downloaded through the Townsend Center website and also on iTunes.

Listen online at chapterversepod.com. 



February 15

Shannon Jackson
The Builders Association: Performance and Media in Contemporary Theater

February 22

Namwali Serpell
Seven Modes of Uncertainty

March 8

D.A. Miller
Hidden Hitchcock

March 15

Nadia Ellis
Territories of the Soul: Queered Belonging in the Black Diaspora

April 5

Diliana Angelova
Sacred Founders: Women, Men, and Gods in the Discourse of Imperial Founding, Rome through Early Byzantium

April 12

Jonathan Sheehan
Invisible Hands: Self-Organization and the Eighteenth Century

April 19

Abigail De Kosnik
Rogue Archives: Digital Cultural Memory and Media Fandom

ON EXHIBIT AT THE TOWNSEND CENTER

THROUGH THE BLACK COUNTRY

ALLAN deSOUZA

January 23 through May 19, 2017


ALLAN deSOUZA, chair of UC Berkeley's Department of Art Practice, conceives his project through the perspective of Zanzibari explorer **Hafeed Sidi Mubarak Mumbai**, the fictional great-grandson of renowned guide Sidi Mubarak Bombay, who led British explorers on numerous treks through East Africa and was known as Africa's greatest nineteenth-century traveler.



In deSouza's telling, Mumbai's own travels take him through contemporary England in search of the fabled and elusive source of the River Thames. In a journey modeled on Henry Stanley's African expeditions to find the source of the Nile, Mumbai sets off from London's East End to the Black Country of industrial and coal regions. In the process, he creates the maps, journal entries, photographs, and sketches that comprise the show.

Even as he takes on an independent existence, Mumbai incorporates deSouza's own history of immigration from Africa to Britain. The exhibition reenacts and upends the traditional colonial relationship, positioning modern-day England as the object of ethnographic investigation by an explorer from Africa.

DeSouza is a multimedia artist who joined the UC Berkeley faculty in 2013, after serving as chair of the New Genres program at the San Francisco Art Institute. Through his visual art, writing, and performance, deSouza seeks to interrogate colonialism and its legacy by restaging historical material, using strategies of fiction and (mis)translation.

His work has been shown extensively in the US and abroad, including at the Phillips Collection, the International Center of Photography, and the Centre Georges Pompidou. He is represented by Talwar Gallery, New York and New Delhi. 





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SPRING SEMESTER DEADLINES

February 3, 2017
**Lura Dolas Public Speaking for Graduate Students
Workshop Application**

February 10, 2017
Conference & Lecture Grants

February 17, 2017
Germano Book Proposal Workshop Application

April 7, 2017
**Daniel E. Koshland, Jr. Art of Teaching Writing
Fellowships**

May 1, 2017
Conference & Lecture Grants

May 5, 2017
Working Groups

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