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## IN THIS ISSUE



called "Poetry and Poets in a Time of Crisis." It was so moving that I wish we could reprint the entire essay here; instead I will share the parts I think are most relevant to the work we do at the Humanities Institute and post the link to the full article:

[http://lithub.com/poetry-and-poets-in-a-time-of-crisis/#](http://lithub.com/poetry-and-poets-in-a-time-of-crisis/)

Zapruder invokes Wallace Stevens' claim that poetry helps us resist the pressure of the real. Regardless of political ideology, we all experience the endless drone of news, social media, and discussion leaving so many of us exhausted, discouraged, and afraid. Zapruder claims that poetry (and I would argue other arts) provide relief from the noise by preserving space for our imagination.

The goal is not to avoid the pressure of the real but to

# Black Lives Matter in the Age of a Trump Presidency

The Institute is proud to launch its Spring 2017 lineup with Frank Leon Roberts on Jan. 24. Recently referred to by Dr. Cornel West as one of the “powerhouse intellectuals” of his generation, Frank Leon Roberts is an educator and political organizer on the frontlines of the contemporary movement for black lives. He is the Creator of Black Lives Matter Syllabus, the nationally acclaimed, public educational curriculum that provides resources for teaching BLM in classroom and community settings. Frank’s pioneering work as the “Black Lives Matter Professor” has been featured in *Rolling Stone* Magazine, NPR, CNN, *The San Francisco Chronicle* and an extensive variety of other national media outlets.

During his visit to USF, Roberts will meet with faculty and graduate assistants to discuss how to proactively discuss racial inequality in the classroom. Later, he will give a public talk entitled, “After Obama: Notes on Black Lives Matter in the Age of a Trump Presidency.”

His self-described “teach-in style talk” promises to be an important and inspiring event.

“As the era of America’s first black president draws to a close, the nation finds itself in a moment of a renewed racial crisis,” Roberts says. “From the rallying cries of ‘Black Lives Matter,’ to national proposals calling for a ban on Muslims entering the United States to the struggles of indigenous peoples in Standing Rock in North Dakota, the ongoing spectacle of racial inequity continues to arrest the development of American democracy.”

Roberts will discuss what the age of Donald Trump might mean for the future of the American left, the movement for black lives, and for the future of American democracy more broadly.

Roberts is on the faculty at New York University and is committed to the idea of teaching as a form of community organizing. His courses continue to make headlines as national interventions and his work inspires audiences to use the energy of today and the teachings of yesterday to create a world that works for everyone. His forthcoming book *Black Lives Matter Syllabus: Key Writings from the Movement for Black Lives* is currently under review at the University of California Press.



He will speak at 6 p.m., Tuesday, Jan. 24, in CWY 206, with a reception to follow.

## The Origins of #BlackLivesMatter

Following the 2013 acquittal of George Zimmerman for the murder of Trayvon Martin, Alicia Garza posted a “love letter to black people” on Facebook. She wrote, “Black people, I love you. I love us. We matter. Our lives matter. Black lives matter.” Her friends and fellow community organizers, Patrisse Cullors and Opal Tometi, helped transform this message of love into one of the world’s most recognizable social media tags. The hashtag turned social movement has a wonderful website explaining their purpose and goals as well as providing resources for local chapters. “Black Lives Matter affirms the lives of Black queer and trans folks, disabled folks, black-undocumented folks, records, women and all Black lives along the gender spectrum. It centers those that have been marginalized in Black liberation movements. It is a tactic to (re)build Black liberation movement.” (<http://blacklivesmatter.com/about/>)

# Pulitzer Winner for Distinguished Scholar-in-Residence

is spring, the Institute is proud to welcome Peter Balakian as our Distinguished Scholar-in-Residence the week of Feb. 13. Balakian has a diverse background in

poetry, memoir, translation, history, and international affairs, making him an ideal candidate to work with stu-

dents in a number of different academic disciplines. He is the Donald M. and Constance H. Rebar Professor of the Humanities in the department of English and Director of Creative Writing at Colgate University. His memoir, *Black Dog of Fate* is a winner of the PEN/Albrand Prize for memoir and a New York Times Notable Book. His non-fiction book, *The Burning Tigris: The Armenian Genocide and America's Response* is the 2005 Raphael Lemkin Prize and a New York Times Notable Book.

Additionally, Balakian's prizes and awards include a Guggenheim Fellowship;



# Video Activism in a Neoliberal Age

the Arab Spring. Occupy Wall Street. Black Lives Matter. Stand With Standing Rock. In the last few years, we have seen a new wave of video activism, as civil

voices, but more importantly serves as a material practice to engage in collective struggles for equity, justice, and sustainable systems. Robé publishes widely on radical media in various journals like *Cut through the Strated* media landscape and create global communities of support for their causes. Witness videos, often recorded on smartphone cameras, proliferate on social media, providing a counterpoint to mass media and the

surveillance state. This kind of activism has acted as a corrective to the failures of corporate news organizations to cover everyday concerns and injustices, and on many occasions, it has proven to be an active tool for organizing social resistance and political reform.

In his talk, "Breaking the Spell: The Rise of Video Activism in a Neoliberal Age," Chris Robé will address the role of this kind of media in our social and political systems. Robé is an associate professor in Film and Media Studies at Florida Atlantic University. His research concerns the use of media by various activist groups in their quest for a more equitable world. He contends that in the 21st century, media does not simply offer a representational platform for disenfranchised

# The Things that Really Matter: Poet, Jill McDonough

April showers and final exams, thesis deadlines, moving out, and the welcome relief of poetry. Currently teaches poetry at UMass-Boston and directs Pearl Street, the online writing program at the Fine Arts Work Center.

Jill McDonough focuses on the things that really matter, says Wendy Lesser for a poetry reading, editor of *Where You Live* on Thursday, April 20. A mix of lesbian love-poems,

McDonough is the author of three books of poetry, including *Habeas Corpus* (2008), *Oh, James* (2012), and *Where You Live* (2012). Her newest collection, *Reaper*, will be released in April, 2017. She was awarded the 2014 Lannan Fellowship and is a three-time Pushcart Prize winner. She is also the recipient of fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Fine Arts Work Center, the New York Public Library, the Library of Congress, and Stanford's Stegner program. McDonough taught incarcerated college students through Boston University's Prison Education Program for thirteen years. She will read at 6 p.m., Thursday, April 20, in TECO Hall (Education Building), with a reception and book signing to follow.

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## The Smithsonian at Sulphur Springs

HI is pleased to partner with the Sulphur Springs Museum at Mann-Wagon Park on the banks of the Water/Ways exhibit, brought through the Smithsonian's Mainstreet Program. The exhibit explores the endless motion of water on Earth's surface, below ground, and in the atmosphere, showing its impact on landscape, settlement, migration, and even spirituality. The first activity is Saturday, Feb. 4: Grand Opening of *Water/Ways*, featuring anthropologist and Sulphur Springs expert Antoinette Jackson, followed by an open house.

USF anthropologist Elizabeth Bird wrote the grant to the Florida Humanities Council, which funds the program, and secured additional FHC funding for an event series to complement the 6-week exhibit run. Anthropology doctoral student Vivian Gornik has created a local exhibit, *Sulphur Springs: An Enduring Legacy*, that will launch the museum's life in its new



# Humanities & Hops: A New Classic

One of the areas of focus for Fall 2016 was to expand the Institute's reach into the community through partnerships with a couple local businesses and USF faculty who volunteer their time and expertise, we've founded a great new series called "Humanities & Hops." Southern Brewing and Winemaking, a local brewery in Seminole Heights, reserves their beautiful outdoor garden to host an evening of community-friendly faculty research presentations and audience discussion around a broad central topic. A food truck is on site and the atmosphere is casual and fun. Both of our fall events had crowds of over 70 people; it's a great way to support local businesses, meet new people, and learn about the fascinating work being done by USF faculty.

Since the idea of good beer, good food, and

good conversation resonated with many people, we have scheduled two events for Spring 2017:

**Tuesday, Jan. 31** • **What's New with Religion these Days?** will feature James Cavendish (Sociology), John Napora (Religious Studies), and Jim Strange (Religious Studies).

**Tuesday, Feb. 28** • **The Process of Gender,** Jennifer Boson (Psychology) will discuss her work on beliefs about masculinity and its implications and Sara Crawley (Sociology) will explain how **We are All Trans.** We still need one more faculty member to join this panel. If you would like to talk about how your work deals with issues of gender, please contact Liz Kicak at ekicak@usf.edu.

## Fall Interns Talk Climate Change

Amy Bolick (M.A. candidate in English) and Faruk Rahmanovic (Ph.D. candidate in Philosophy) spent the fall semester interning with the Humanities Institute learning about non-profit management, event planning, and higher ed administration. For their final project, interns were expected to plan an event on a topic of their choosing, and Bolick and Rahmanovic put together an excellent panel to discuss climate change issues and how they will affect the Tampa Bay area. Bringing together experts from Philosophy, the Honors College, and Tampa Bay Water, the interns' project demonstrated how leaders both within the university and in the community can collaborate together on the theoretical and practical implications of this critical issue. We're very proud of the work Amy and Faruk did and wish them well!

# Spring 2017 Calendar



