2009 marks the tenth anniversary of the founding of the Leslie Center for the Humanities. Over the course of the last decade, the Center has supported hundreds of faculty and student initiatives, including research and creative projects, conferences, seminars, lectures.

Entering its second decade, the Center looks forward. It is in this spirit that we launch The Window, a bulletin that opens onto both past activities and what is to come.

This spring sees a rich slate of lectures that find their hinge in the Humanities Institute led by Dartmouth faculty members Klaus Mładek and George Edmondson, States of Exception. Other sponsored and cosponsored lectures, including a visit by Jules Feiffer and, for the annual Zantop Memorial Lecture, Marianne Hirsch and Leo Spitzer, round out our events calendar.

Looking forward, we are gearing up for this year’s Summer Arts Festival, eMotion, which will enliven the summer term with an exciting range of programs.

We are also delighted to be offering a range of faculty seminars, including the new Humanities Forum Lunchtime Discussions. And, of course, we make available various fellowships and grants that support research at the highest levels at Dartmouth and beyond.

Adrian Randolph, Director

Knock, Knock?

During the winter term we were delighted to host two Visiting Fellows. Håvard Løkke, from the University of Oslo, is a classicist studying Stoic philosophy. At Dartmouth he pursued research on the balance between self-interest and other-concern, focusing on Seneca’s De Beneficiis.

Our other winter Fellow, Martin Roberts of the New School, studies emerging media. His present research examines the play and economics of globalism and subculturalism.

For the winter and spring terms, we are joined by distinguished medieval historian Charles Briggs; he is working on a range of projects, including a book on The Body Broken: Medieval Europe 1300–1520, which will appear with Routledge.

This summer, we will be joined by Simon O’Meara, Assistant Professor of the History of Art at the American University of Kuwait, recipient of the Dartmouth AUK-Fellowship.
Humanities Forum Lunchtime Discussions

This winter we initiated a series of informal gatherings to discuss important issues relating to the arts and humanities. The Humanities Forum Lunchtime Discussions offer faculty an opportunity to air opinions, express frustrations, propose solutions, and, simply, share experiences. It is hoped that the issues to be addressed will arise naturally from the conversations themselves. This has, already, been the case.

The first discussion simply put the concept of Inter/disciplinarity on the table, along with some sandwiches. Like the sandwiches, the word was sliced, putting its singularity and hybridity into question. The time passed quickly as the term transformed through the various experiences of the interlocutors.

Following that discussion, another took place. This time our aim was more directly on the Humanities, and the nature and aims of humanistic knowledge.

This series of gathering complements an on-going program of informal discussions initiated by Carol Folt, Dean of the Faculty, and Kate Conley, Associate Dean for the Arts and Humanities. During the course of open discussions about research, teaching, and the serious interplay of both at Dartmouth, it became clear that there was room for ongoing, relaxed yet structured exchanges.

Space for these discussions is limited, so if you wish to participate, please respond to our email notices promptly.

Colleen Boggs, who runs the Humanities Forum, will be on fellowship leave this spring. If you wish to propose catalytic topics for discussion, please send them to Adrian Randolph.

The Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship Program

With the generous support of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Dartmouth regularly offers postdoctoral fellowships in the Humanities and Social Sciences. The Leslie Center cooperates with the Dean of the Faculty in organizing the searches for these fellows. These fellowships foster the academic careers of scholars who have recently received their Ph.D. degrees by permitting them to pursue their research while gaining mentored experience in a professional environment. Dartmouth benefits from the presence of these exciting scholars, who share their work with colleagues and with students.

The 2008–2010 Fellows are Pavitra Sundar (Film & Media Studies/WGST) and Jeehee Hong (Art History). The 2009–2011 Fellow, will be Shalini Ayyagari (Music & AMES).

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States of Exception
Sovereignty, Security, Secrecy
The 2009 Humanities Institute

Humanities Institutes bring together a group of scholars, from Dartmouth and beyond, to participate in a term-long seminar addressing a topic of common interest. This spring’s institute is directed by George Edmondson and Klaus Mlnadk.

Increasingly, it seems, we live in a state of emergency no one has declared but to which everyone subscribes. Guantanamo, Abu Ghraib, New Orleans, Paris, Lampedusa, Iraq, Afghanistan, Sudan, Rwanda, Bosnia, Florida: Contemporary politics has rediscovered the lawless zones — those literal and metaphorical states of exception — to where the darker practices and fantasies of civilization are outsourced. Sovereignty, once embodied in the ostentatious pomp of majesty, now gives way to more anonymous sovereign powers (police, military, security bureaucracies) whose practices, though muted by comparison, are no less devastating. Moreover, these states of exception have come to hit home. Have-nots, sans-papiers, refugees across the globe suffer from expulsion, exploitation, social injustice, genocide, state terrorism, racism, and war. Spectral and rootless, bereft of formal protections, they import the states of exception into the wealthy fortresses of the Western world. Meanwhile, the leading statesmen of the First World, resistant as usual to the transformative potential of the political, have not much more on their minds than security, order, and secrecy.

The directors of this Institute firmly believe that such grave matters deserve our keenest attention, not only as scholars and teachers, but also as political beings. We ask ourselves: Has academia kept up with the rapid political, legal, cultural and social changes that have taken place in the aftermath of the Cold War? Have the humanities and social sciences honed their analytical tools to fathom the causes and effects of contemporary modes of sovereignty, security, and secrecy? Has the complete breakdown of our political vocabulary, traditionally organized around a binary logic, been interrogated to the extent necessary? If sovereignty can no longer be understood as the single point of command above the social field, and if the bodies of the sovereign are ever more difficult to localize, what new forms and theories of sovereignty must we develop?

Our working premise is that states of exception thrive wherever there is a call for “sovereignty,” “security,” “secrecy” (or even “torture”). These concepts thus assume a crucial importance, and yet they remain among the most understudied, if overused, words of our time. This Humanities Institute aims to shed light on this intricate nexus by more clearly defining the practices, mentalities, ideas, hopes, desires, and theories that enable the analysis of states of exception as they pertain to sovereignty, security, and secrecy. We view this Institute as an ideal meeting place for scholars from all walks of life, from all stages in their respective careers, and from a broad range of disciplines.

Continued on page 5
Mellon Fellows, continued

Jeehee Hong, who earned her Ph.D. at the University of Chicago, specializes in the funerary art and visual culture of mid-imperial China. Her research explores how visual and theatrical experiences specific to a particular time period shaped contemporary notions of death and the afterlife. Her research and teaching interests also include ritual and performative aspects in Chinese art, the social history of artistic media in East Asia, and visual exchanges among East Asian cultures.

Pavitra Sundar is a Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow in Film and Media Studies and Women’s and Gender Studies. She received her doctorate in Women’s Studies and English from the University of Michigan. Her dissertation “Sounding the Nation: The Musical Imagination of Bollywood Cinema” examined the construction of gender, sexual, and national identity in contemporary Hindi film and film music. Dr. Sundar’s research and teaching interests span Indian cinema, postcolonial literary and cultural studies, and U.S. third world and transnational feminisms. Her courses at Dartmouth College this year will cover the History of Bollywood Cinema and Women and Popular Media in India.

Ethnomusicologist Shalini Ayyagari is completing her Ph.D. at the University of California, Berkeley, will be joining us later this year to share with students and faculty her enthusiasm and knowledge about South Asian music and culture. Her dissertation focuses on the musical hybridity at the India-Pakistan frontier.

Other events . . .

Early Modern Colloquium
With art historian Stephen Campbell, Johns Hopkins, and literary historian Henry Turner, Rutgers. Saturday, April 4, 2009. Kreindler Auditorium, Haldeman Center 041. Please email the Administrator if you wish to attend.

Dorothy Figueira
Are You the Puerto Rican Girl Who Wants to Study Sanskrit?
Race Affirmative Action and the Study of the Other. Thursday, May 14, 2009. 4:30pm. Venue TBA. Co-sponsored by The Leslie Center for the Humanities and Comparative Literature.

Coming up in the fall of 2009...

Judith Butler University of California, Berkeley October 15 and 16, 2009

Medieval Colloquium November 14, 2009

Imperial Classics
An International Conference November 20 and 21, 2009 With the 1st Annual Fannie and Alan Leslie Lecture in the Humanities by Homi Bhabha Harvard University

Consult our Events page for updated information: http://www.dartmouth.edu/~lhc/events/index.html

Featured Lectures

A Conversation with Cartoonist
Jules Feiffer

Tuesday, April 21, 3:30
In collaboration with Center for Cartoon Studies
Kreindler Auditorium
Haldeman Center 041
Free and open to the public

Marianne Hirsch & Leo Spitzer
School Photos and their Afterlives

The 2009 Zantop Lecture

Thursday, May 5, 4:00
Followed by a reception in the Zantop Gardens
In collaboration with the Department of Comparative Literature
Location tba
Free and open to the public
Humanities Institute, continued

A series of lectures (see program at right), open to the public, will offer fundamental insights into the concerns at the heart of the States of Exception.

—George Edmondson, English & Klaus Mladen, German Studies, Humanities Institute 2009 Directors

Fellows
Eric Santner University of Chicago and William H. Morton
Distinguished Senior Fellow for the Humanities Institute 2009
Amy Allen Associate Professor of Philosophy and Women's and Gender Studies and Chair of the Philosophy Department, Dartmouth
Kathy Biddick Professor of History, Temple University
Rebecca Biron Associate Professor of Spanish and Comparative Literature, Dartmouth
Colleen Boggs Associate Professor of English, Dartmouth
Michelle Tolman Clark Assistant Professor of Government at Dartmouth College.
Mary Coffey Assistant Professor of Art History, Dartmouth
Jennifer Fluri Assistant Professor in Women's and Gender Studies and Geography at Dartmouth College
Andrew McCann Associate Professor of English, Dartmouth
Klaus Milich Visiting Professor of American Literary and Cultural Studies, Dartmouth
Donald Pease Professor of English and the Avalon Foundation chair of the Humanities at Dartmouth
Adam Sitze Assistant Professor of Law, Jurisprudence and Social Thought at Amherst College
Jacqueline Stevens Associate Professor in the Law & Society Program at the University of California, Santa
Carsten Strathausen Associate Professor of German and English and Chair of German and Russian Studies at the University of Missouri at Columbia
Dale Turner Associate Professor of Government and Native American Studies, Dartmouth

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States of Exception

Schedule of Public Lectures

Thursday, April 2
ERIC SANTNER
University of Chicago and William H. Morton Distinguished Senior Fellow
The People's Two Bodies: Reflections on the Somatic Sublime

Wednesday, April 15
ALBRECHT KOSCHORKE
University of Konstanz
Homo Sacer and the Problem of Counter-Sovereignty

JÖRN MÜNKER
Humboldt University, Berlin
The Art of Defying the Enemy: Fortification as ars militaris in the Early Modern Period

BURKHARDT WOLF
Humboldt University, Berlin
The Captain. Establishing Sovereignty at Sea

Thursday, April 30
MICHAEL HARDT
Duke University
Title tba

Thursday, May 7
ELAINE SCARRY
Harvard University
Title tba

Thursday, May 21
ANDREW NORRIS (4:30–5:15)
University of California, Santa Barbara
Carl Schmitt on Concrete Orders and Living Decisions

MARTIN PUCHNER (5:15–6:00)
Columbia University
The Meaning of Alain Badiou

Thursday, June 4
REI TERADA
UC Irvine
Rethinking the Worst

These lectures will begin at 4:30pm and will take place in Kreindler Auditorium, Haldeman Center 041
Free and open to the public
eMotion The 2009 Summer Arts Festival

Dartmouth’s 2009 Summer Arts Festival will draw together individuals and groups wishing to explore the intersection between movement, media, and artistic creativity.

The 2009 Summer Arts Festival focuses on the dynamic circuit linking artist/s, art-event, medium, and audience. With a particular emphasis on emerging artists and emerging art forms, this year we aim to bring to Dartmouth artists whose work engages with motion, the action of artistic creativity, the mobility of art, the mechanization of movement, and the emotions that movement and its suggestion can foster.

The full program will be announced in the spring.