**Memory & Countermemory: Memorialization of an Open Future**

*Arizona State University, November 6-8, 2011*

The Center for Jewish Studies (CJS, ASU-Tempe) together with Center for Critical Inquiry and Cultural Studies (CCICS, ASU-West) and faculty research cluster in The Philosophy, Rhetoric and Literature Cluster is hosting an ASU-wide event, *Memory & Countermemory: Memorialization of an Open Future* - A Research Symposium, Nov. 6 - 8, 2011, Arizona State University. The symposium will gather in Phoenix fifteen invited distinguished scholars from the US and Europe and other ASU scholars who will discuss the relationship between trauma, memory, representation, memorialization, and education. Contributing perspectives from a variety of geographical places and transdisciplinary approaches, leading scholars of Holocaust studies will reflect about conflicted sites of memory with specialists in genocide studies, postcolonial studies, East European Studies, and trauma studies. The conference will examine some contemporary conflicted places of memory. Anticipating Arizona’s centennial celebration in 2012, the symposium will highlight some of the Southwest legacies connected to the global and local memory. The event is part of the ASU Project Humanities 2011- “The Humanities at a Crossroads: Perspectives on Place.”

**Themes and Questions**

*Haunting Memory*

- How do physical and emotional harms impact memory?
- How does coming to terms with the past shape narratives and strategies of memorialization, monuments, and museums?
- What is the relationship between memorializing of the past on behalf of victims and narrating the past for the sake of the present?

*Memory and the Historical Past*

- Given the fact that memory is usually inseparable from internal conflict, how can people in the present resolve their internal conflict about the past?
- What are the psychological resources available to dealing with trauma?
- How can we remember without homogenizing histories and idolizing seamless heritages?

*Memory and the Future*

- How does memory shape the future of an individual or a group?
- Which or whose memory makes our future possible, open, and hopeful?
- Can trans-generational memory transform uninhabitable places and difficult times that were weighted down by haunting legacies and conflicted heritages?
- Can succeeding generations remember human possibility without redemptive consolations of victory marches, monuments, museums, and other conventional ways of generating “cheap grace?”

**Contexts**

- The **academic context**: developments and newly emerging fields of shared questions in Holocaust Studies, Postcolonial Studies, Genocide Studies, East European Studies, Memory Studies, and Trauma Studies.
- The **public context**: memory ate war, representations of memory, contested sites of museums, memorials, monuments, memoirs, and public discourses.
- The **cultural context**: the memory of the victims, readings of the past that shape our present and future, liberating narratives and movements in art, architecture, literature, performance, and theory.
Memory & Countermemory: Memorialization of an Open Future  (Nov. 6 - 8, 2011, Arizona State University)

**Sunday, November 6**  ASU - Tempe campus: the Memorial Union - the Gold Room

2:30- 3:00 P.M. Introduction to the symposium theme
3:00-4:45 P.M. Session I
4:45-5:15 Break
5:15-6:45 P.M. Session II
7:00-8:30 P.M. Reception and dinner (speakers & invited guests)

**Monday, November 7**  ASU - Tempe campus: the Memorial Union - the Gold Room

8:30-10:45 A.M.  Session III
10:45-11:15 A.M. break
11:15 A.M. -12:45 P.M. Session IV
1:00-2:00 P.M. Lunch (speakers & invited guests)
2:00-4:00 P.M. Free time
4:30 P.M. Shuttle departs from the hotel for ASU–West campus (return to the hotel after the event)
5:30-7:00 P.M. Reception and dinner at ASU – West campus (speakers & invited guests)

7:30-9:00 P.M.  Public Session A  ASU - West campus – La Sala
Keynote address: Cathy Caruth
Welcome: Vice President and Dean Elizabeth Langland; Introduction & Moderator: Patricia J. Huntington

**Tuesday, November 8**  ASU - Tempe campus: the Memorial Union - the Gold Room

8:30-10:45 A.M.  Session V
10:45-11:00 A.M. break
11:00-1:15 A.M. Session VI
1:15-2:15 P.M. Lunch (speakers & invited guests)
2:15-4:00 P.M. Free time
4:00 P.M. Shuttle departs from the hotel for ASU–West campus (return to the hotel after the event)
5:00-6:00 P.M. Dinner TBA (speakers & invited guests)

6:00-9:00 P.M. Public Session B  ASU - West campus – La Sala
6:00-6:45 P.M.  Film - “Jubanos” (2010, 43 minutes, Spanish with English subtitles).
7:00-9:00 P.M.  Dramatic Reading & Performance - “Parted Waters” play by Robert Benjamin.
8:00-9:00 Discussion with the audience

**Sunday, November 13**

5:00-7:00 P.M. Public Session C  (La Sala or alternative Thursday in KIVA - ThinK series date)
Film - “All I’ve Got” (2002, 70 min., Out of the Drama Series – “Reflections of Women”).

**Tuesday, November 15**

5:00 -7:00 P.M. Public Session D  (La Sala or alternative Thursday in KIVA - ThinK series date)

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Art Installations during the month of November 2011Phoenix and Arizona memory and legacies, often conflicted, resonate with larger topics of cultural identity, immigration, citizenship, post-1989 East European memory, as well as with current issues of global significance. Anticipating Arizona’s centennial 2012 and the symposium theme number of ASUW artists and art theorists (Patricia Clark, Barry Moon, Marianne Kim, Richard Lerman, Arthur Sabatini, Nova Hall and others) and students in art and performance studies at ASUW are considering projects in connection with the November events. Professor Richard Lerman and Mona Higuchi have featured projects on the Japanese internment camps in Arizona at the time and the Nazi regime constructed death camps in Europe. With the current events in Japan and citizenship and immigration discussions in Arizona, this conflicted legacy links the U.S. Southwest to the European Holocaust and East European post-1989 memory wars.
Memory & Countermemory: Memorialization of an Open Future

Scholars who accepted invitation to participate in the symposium


**Yael Feldman** - Abraham I. Katsh Professor of Hebrew Culture and Education; Professor of Hebrew & Judaic Studies at the Skirball Department of Hebrew and Judaic Studies, New York University. Specialist in Hebrew and Comparative Literature: Bible to Modern; literary theory; gender and cultural studies; psychoanalytic criticism. Author of *Glory and Agony: Isaac’s Sacrifice and National...*  

**Alexander (Sasha) Etkind** - King's College, Cambridge, Reader in Russian Literature and Cultural History, Department of Slavonic Studies, two PhDs, in Psychology from Bekhterev Institute, Leningrad, and in Slavonic Literatures from the University of Helsinki. Before coming to Cambridge, he taught at the European University at St.Petersburg and, as a visiting professor, at New York University and Georgetown University. He was also a resident fellow at Harvard, Princeton, and Wissenschaftskolleg in Berlin. Current research interests are internal colonization in the Russian Empire; narratology from Pushkin to Nabokov; and comparative studies of cultural memory. Author of “Post-Soviet Haunting: Cultural Memory of the Soviet Terror.” *Constellations. An International Journal of Critical and Democratic Theory* 16/1 (2009): 182-200. “Bare Monuments to Bare Life: The Soon-to-Be-Dead in Arts and Memory.” *Gulag Studies*, vol.1 (2008): 27-33. "Soviet Subjectivity: Torture for the Sake of Salvation?" *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 6, 1 (winter 2005) 171-186. *Eros of the Impossible: The History of Psychoanalysis in Russia*. Boulder - Oxford: Westview (translated by Noah and Maria Rubens, 1996). Published in Russian in 1993. Translated into French, German, Swedish, Hungarian, Serbian, Bulgarian. Current Group Project: *Memory at War*, an international collaborative project investigating the cultural dynamics of the ‘memory wars’ currently raging in Poland, Russia and Ukraine. Employing a collaborative methodology grounded in the analytical and critical practices of the humanities, the project seeks to explore how public memory of twentieth-century traumas mediates the variety of ways in which East European nations develop in post-socialist space. The University of Cambridge is leading this project, which will be accomplished in association with the Universities of Bergen, Helsinki, Tartu and Groningen. The project was launched in 2010 and will run for three years.

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Sandor Goodhart - Director of Interdisciplinary Program in Classics, former Director of Jewish Studies, faculty in Philosophy and Literature Ph.D. Program, Purdue University. He is the author of Sacrificing Commentary: Reading The End of Literature (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996) and Reading Stephen Sondheim (Garland, 2000). He is at work on two books: Moebian Nights: Literary Reading After Auschwitz and The Tears of Exas: Reading, Revelation, And The Prophetic. He has published articles in Diacritics, Philosophy And Literature, The Stanford Review, Modern Judaism, Contagion: Journal of Mimesis, Religion, And Culture, among other places. He is a member of the editorial boards of Modern Fiction Studies, Contagion: Journal of Mimesis, Religion, And Culture, and Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies. He offers graduate courses in "Biblical Reading: The Religious, the Ethical, and the Literary," "Structuralism and Poststructuralism," "Shakespeare," and "Greek Tragedy and Philosophy."

James B. Gardner, is Senior Scholar at the National Museum of American History and the National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution. Prior to his appointment at the Smithsonian, Dr. Gardner served as Deputy Executive Director of the American Historical Association and as Director of Education and Special Programs for the American Association for State and Local History. His professional activities have included service as president of the National Council on Public History, chair of the Nominating Board of the Organization of American Historians, and on the Board of Editors of The Public Historian. He currently serves as chair of the Smithsonian’s Ethics Advisory Board. Dr. Gardner has written and lectured widely on museums, memory, and September 11, including (with Sarah M. Henry) “September 11 and the Mourning After: Reflections on Collecting and Interpreting the History of Tragedy,” The Public Historian (2002); “September 11: Museums, Spontaneous Memorials, and History,” in Grassroots Memorials: The Politics of Memorializing Tragic Death (2011); and “Preserving/Shaping/Creating: Museums and Public Memory in a Time of Loss,” in Museum Theory: An Expanded Field (Blackwell International Handbook of Museum Studies, in development). Current projects include The Oxford Handbook of Public History (co-editor and contributor), Museums, Ethics, and the Public Trust (author), and Exhibiting the National Past in a Global Age (co-editor and contributor). Previous publications include Public History: Essays from the Field (revised edition, 2004), Ordinary People and Everyday Life: Perspectives on the New Social History (1983), and contributions to The Public Historian, Public History Review, Samtid & museer, and other periodicals. As a lecturer and conference speaker, he has appeared on the programs of such diverse professional organizations as the American Association of Museums, the American Council of Learned Societies, and the Association of American Colleges and Universities; at symposia and conferences convened by the National Museum of Denmark, the International Congress of Maritime Museums, the University of Technology Sydney, the European Association of Social Anthropologists, and other national and international organizations; and at numerous meetings, conferences, and seminars sponsored by local, state, and regional groups.


Marianne Hirsch - Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University where she also has an appointment in the Institute for Research on Women and Gender. She has been a Guggenheim, ACLS, National Humanities Center. Rockefeller
Lawrence L. Langer (1929–), Professor of English Emeritus at Simmons College in Boston, is the foremost scholar of the Holocaust in the field of literature and testimony. Langer’s *The Holocaust and the Literary Imagination* (1975), his first work on the Holocaust, was followed by *The Age of Atrocity: Death in Modern Literature* (1978); *Versions of Survival: The Holocaust and the Human Spirit* (1982); *Holocaust Testimonies: The Ruins of Memory* (1991); *Admitting the Holocaust: Collected Essays* (1995); and *Preempting the Holocaust*. He is also editor of *Art from the Ashes: A Holocaust Anthology* (1995). Langer’s contributions to the field are many. In *Versions of Survival*, he coined the term “choiceless choices” to describe the unprecedented situations of conflict that Jews found themselves in during the Holocaust. *Holocaust Testimonies*, based on his study of survivors’ oral histories in the *Fortunoff Video Archives*, won a National Book Critics Circle Award and was named one of the “Ten Best Books of 1991” by the *New York Times Book Review*. It was one of the first scholarly works to examine survivors’ testimonies as a basis for understanding the Holocaust. A hallmark of Langer’s analyses is the rejection of reading a redemptive message into study of the Holocaust, an understanding that he pursues with rigor against all attempts to soften our understanding. Initially, especially in his widely respected work *The Holocaust and the Literary Imagination*, Langer’s preoccupation was with literature, but gradually and perceptively his focus shifted. He became consumed by the task of understanding the Holocaust. Literature became his tool; in the hands of a master, the tool soon became a club for undermining some of the simple conventions of Western society. More and more, Langer’s work concentrated on memoirs and memory, telling of the assault against the individual that was at the core of the Shoah. More than any other student of literature, Langer insisted that the Holocaust was about atrocity. No simple meanings could be found, no reassuring sense of triumphant values, no invocation of Viktor Frankl’s “will to meaning” or Terrence Des Pres’s “life spirit.” For Langer, there was no escape from darkness, no way to sidestep the radical challenge posed by the Holocaust. His understanding of Holocaust testimonies was another exploration of the narrative of survival. Unlike literary memoirs or diaries, the testimonies are the products of ordinary people, often without great literary or intellectual sophistication, who have lived through extraordinary events. Video testimonies are spontaneous and unrehearsed, they do not have the worked-through quality of literary creations. Often, the witnesses surprise themselves by what is recalled. Langer may have heard more of these oral histories than anyone alive, and he brings to this study decades of sensitivity toward the event and the literature. Yet, throughout the work he retains a keen ability to hear and resist the temptation to organize and categorize the material. Instead, the reader is treated to an extended essay on memory, deep memory, anguished memory, humiliated memory, tainted memory, unheroic memory (as the titles of his chapters go). What emerges is a refined understanding of the Holocaust as experienced by those who lived it, an uncovering of all levels of memory that falsify the event, that protect the individual from the full impact of this most painful experience. Like a great psychoanalyst, Langer strips away layer after layer of falsehood until the reader is forced to face the core experience – directly, faithfully, faithlessly. Having opted for early retirement, he left Simmons in 1992 after more than three decades of teaching and retired to write. He has written works on the art of Samuel *Bak* that combine a keen analysis of his art with an even more profound understanding of the subject matter of the art, whether it be Genesis or the shattered world in which post-Holocaust humanity dwells.

Abdul JanMohamed - UC Berkeley, Chancellor's Professor of English, writes about post-colonial fiction and theory; his work has explored the politics of literature and the nature of discourse in colonial and post-colonial cultures. Raised in Kenya, he witnessed efforts there to eliminate indigenous cultures; in early work he tried to demonstrate “the importance of accounting for . . . the cultural resistance of the colonized.” Author of *The Death-bound-subject: Richard Wright's Archaeology Of Death* (Duke UP, 2005). The book explore how Wright’s characters are shaped and coerced living with the constant threat of violent death. The founding editor of the journal *Cultural Critique*, he is also the author of *Manichean Aesthetics: The Politics of Literature in Colonial Africa*, and a coeditor, with David Lloyd, of *The Nature and Context of Minority Discourse*. He is currently working on a book about Black feminist neo-slave narratives, which are all concerned with retrieving the trauma of the past.

Berel Lang - Professor of Humanities at Trinity College, visiting Professor of Philosophy and Letters at Wesleyan University. Author of *Philosophical Witnessing: The Holocaust as Presence* (2009), *Holocaust Representation: Art Within the Limits of History and Ethics* (2000), *Post-Holocaust: Interpretation, Misinterpretation, and the Claims of History* (2005); Heidegger’s Silence (1996), *Act and Idea in the Nazi Genocide* (1990) and many other works bridging philosophy, aesthetics, ethics and history. Much honored for outstanding scholarship and teaching, he held fellowships from the N.E.H., ACLS, American Philosophical Association, and the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, and is a member of the American Academy for Jewish Research. He has taught at Wesleyan, Trinity...


Leo Spitzer - the Vernon Professor of History Emeritus at Dartmouth College and Visiting Professor of History, Columbia University. Born in La Paz, Bolivia to refugee parents who fled Nazi persecution in Austria, he now lives in the U.S., splitting his home residency between Norwich, Vermont and New York city. Trained in comparative history, he received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Brandeis University and his Masters and Doctorate from the University of Wisconsin, Madison. His interests range widely – from questions concerning emancipation and reactions to exclusion and domination in Latin America, Africa, and Central Europe, to issues of historical memory, refugeehood, and representations of trauma in photography, film and video. He is the author of *Hotel Bolivia: The Culture of Memory in a Refuge from Nazism; Lives in Between: Assimilation and Marginality in Austria, Brazil and West Africa; The Creoles of Sierra Leone: Responses to Colonialism*; and is co-editor with Mieke Bal and Jonathan Crewe of *Acts of Memory: Cultural Recall in the Present*. A former Chair of the History Department and the founding Chair of the Jewish Studies Program at Dartmouth, he was the Lucius Littauer Fellow at the National Humanities Center (1992-93) and has been the recipient of John Simon Guggenheim, Ford, Social Science Research Council, American Council of Learned Societies, Whiting, National Endowment for the Humanities, and Rockefeller/Bellagio, and Bogliasco Foundation awards and fellowships. In 1996-98, he was a National Humanities Center Distinguished Lecturer. In collaboration with Marianne Hirsch his most recent book is *Ghosts of Home: The Afterlife of Czernowitz in Jewish Memory* (2010). He has taught on "A History of the Jewish Immigrant Life in the United States, Latin America and Africa," "Representing the Holocaust: History, Memory and Survival," "Emancipation and Exclusion: the Jewish and Black Experiences in Europe and the Americas."

James Young - Professor of English and Judaic Studies at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, where he has taught since 1988. He most recently served as Chair of the Department of Judaic and Near Eastern Studies, author of *At Memory's Edge: After-images of the Holocaust in Contemporary Art and Architecture* (Yale University Press, 2000), The Texture of Memory (Yale University Press, 1993), which won the National Jewish Book Award in 1994, and Writing and Rewriting the Holocaust (Indiana University Press, 1988), which won a Choice Outstanding Book Award for 1988. He was also the Guest Curator of an exhibition at the Jewish Museum in New York City, entitled "The Art of Memory: Holocaust Memorials in History" (March - August 1994, with venues in Berlin and Munich, September 1994 - June 1995) and was the editor of The Art of Memory (Prestel Verlag, 1994), the exhibition catalogue for this show. In 1997, Professor Young was appointed by the Berlin Senate to the five-member Findungskommission for Germany's national "Memorial to Europe's Murdered Jews," dedicated in 2005. He has also consulted with Argentina's government on its memorial to the desaparecidos, as well as with numerous city agencies on their memorials and museums. Most recently, he was appointed by the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation to the jury for the World Trade Center Site Memorial competition, now under construction.

Other Participating Guests

Sarah Pessin - Associate Professor and Director, Center for Judaic Studies and Emil and Eva Hecht Chair in Judaic Studies, Dept of Philosophy & Center for Judaic Studies, University of Denver. Professor Pessin is collaborating with her colleagues in Denver on the new Holocaust Memorial Social Action Site as a model for counter-monuments.
The ASU Program Committee
Mark Von Hagen and Joel Gereboff (SHPRS), Eric Wertheimer, Professor of English, Director of CCICS (ASU-West), Monica Casper, Professor of Sociology, Director of HArCS Division (ASU-West), Patricia Huntington, Professor of Philosophy and Religious Studies (ASU-West), and the two conference organizers.

ASU participants
Patrick Bixby (ASU-West), Anna Holian (SHPRS), Volker Benkert (SHPRS), Sharon Kirsch (ASU-West), Richard Lerman (ASU-West), Arthur Sabatini (ASU-West), Claudia Sadowski-Smith (SILC), Charles St. Claire (ASU-West), Patricia Clark (ASU-West), Yasmin Saikia (Hardt-Nickachos Chair in Peace Studies), Michael Stancliff (ASU-West), Shahla Talebi (SHPRS), and others.

Cover art for the symposium program
“Unwaivering Faith, Unwaivering Life” - 2010, a memoir triptych by Nova Hall (a graduate of IAP program at ASU – West).

ASU Sponsors: Center for Jewish Studies; Center for Critical Inquiry and Cultural Studies; New College of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences; Division of Humanities, Arts, and Cultural Studies; Graduate Programs at ASUW; the ASU-wide Project Humanities 2011 - The Humanities at a Crossroad: Perspectives on Place.

Symposium Sponsors
The Center for Jewish Studies (CJS, ASU-Tempe)
Center for Critical Inquiry and Cultural Studies (CCICS, ASU-West) & The Philosophy, Rhetoric and Literature

Other ASU support
Religious Studies; the Center for Religion & Conflict; Graduate Program in Public History; Arizona State University Art Museum; The School of Social Transformation; Department of English (Tempe); Institute for Humanities Research, History and Philosophy programs in School of Historical, Philosophical and Religious Studies (Tempe), and the Melikian Center (Tempe).

Non-ASU Support
Roni Zee, Artistic Director, and Board of Greater Phoenix Jewish Film Festival
Janet Arnold, Producing Director, AZ Jewish Theater Company, Phoenix.
Rabbi Yosef Garcia, a Hispanic/Crypto Jewish Sefardi Synagogue in Chandler
Rabbi Evon Yakar, Temple Chai
Howard Hendler, a Trustee for the Phoenix Art Museum
Oliver Ike, 7AR 7TH ART RELEASING, Los Angeles
Erik Greenberg-Anjou, a film director living in New York
Robert F. Benjamin, Ph.D. and playwright living in New Mexico

The co-chair of the symposium, Professor Hava Tirosh-Samuelson and the Phoenix Symphony organized in 2010-2011 a city-wide and year-long public event, The Rediscovered Masters. This unique series of lectures accompanies the first time musical productions of the works by the composers who were suppressed or killed by the Nazi regime. The Philosophy, Rhetoric and Literature faculty cluster held during spring 2011 a faculty seminar - and Martin Beck Matuštik will offer in fall 2011 a graduate course -- connected to the symposium theme. The November symposium on Memory and CounterMemory promises to continue these conversations.

Martin Beck Matuštik
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Memory and CounterMemory: research symposium & resource site
Symposium(Flyer) Symposium(pdf) FacultySeminar FallSeminar