common pursuits / PUBLIC GOOD

FALL
2017

Higgins School
of Humanities
Clark University

Common Pursuits / Public Good

A commitment to the public good premises a system of shared values, even as those values change and, sometimes, come into conflict with each other. Consensus can be elusive, and compromise difficult, but the pursuit continues. Institutions as well as individuals benefit from and contribute to broader social, cultural, and civic goals. This fall, we invite dialogue on how the arts and humanities contribute to the public good through acts of advocacy and teaching; creation and critique; contemplation and scholarship.

In the face of uncertainty and anxiety, individuals often find strength in communities and seek out ways to support common goals. This semester, Higgins will present multiple opportunities for members of the Clark community to engage beyond campus as well as for neighbors in the greater Worcester area to explore our programming.

There will be new avenues for outreach and art—from our tent at stART on the Street 2017 to a series of community "Repair" events along Main Street as part of an exhibit by artist William Chambers. We also are thrilled to be holding a major off-campus Higgins event, "Community and Memory," at the Belmont A.M.E. Zion Church, just across University Park. Finally, we plan to supplement our on-campus programming with opportunities to learn more and to get involved, even after the events are over. We hope you will join us.

ENGAGE

AN EXHIBIT BY WILLIAM CHAMBERS

Part installation, part performance, wholly participatory.

These ongoing socially-engaged works by artist and instructor William Chambers use the power of art objects to foster conversation on important issues and to allow for the unexpected.

"Service Station" begins with a vintage cloth hand-towel dispenser. Participants are asked to describe "What's missing?" in the world or in their lives. Their answers are turned into symbols and then embroidered on the towel. "Service Station" has collected more than 300 responses in its tour of ten cities to date. This will be its first showing in Worcester.

"Repairs" is an old-fashioned street-cart repair shop. Costumed repairers invite participants to bring objects (and less tangible items) to be repaired on the spot. Whether a practical fix is desired or a more fantastical transformation is created, personal interaction and surprising conversations are the inevitable result. This fall, "Repairs" will debut at Clark University, with public repair events scheduled throughout the semester along Main Street and "fixed" items on display in the Higgins Lounge at Dana Commons.

Chambers also will present a lecture titled "Art as Social Practice: Public Good in the Public Sphere" on Wednesday, November 8 at 7pm in the Higgins Lounge. More information.

On display September 12 through November 21

Higgins Lounge at Dana Commons

Co-sponsored by the Higgins School of Humanities and the Department of Visual and Performing Arts

REPAIRS EVENTS

Please bring items for repair to 920 Main Street, Worcester on the following Saturdays from 2–6pm:

September 16
October 21
November 4
November 18

stART on the Street 2017

This popular community festival will feature more than 250 artists and crafters selling handmade goods along Park Avenue in Worcester.

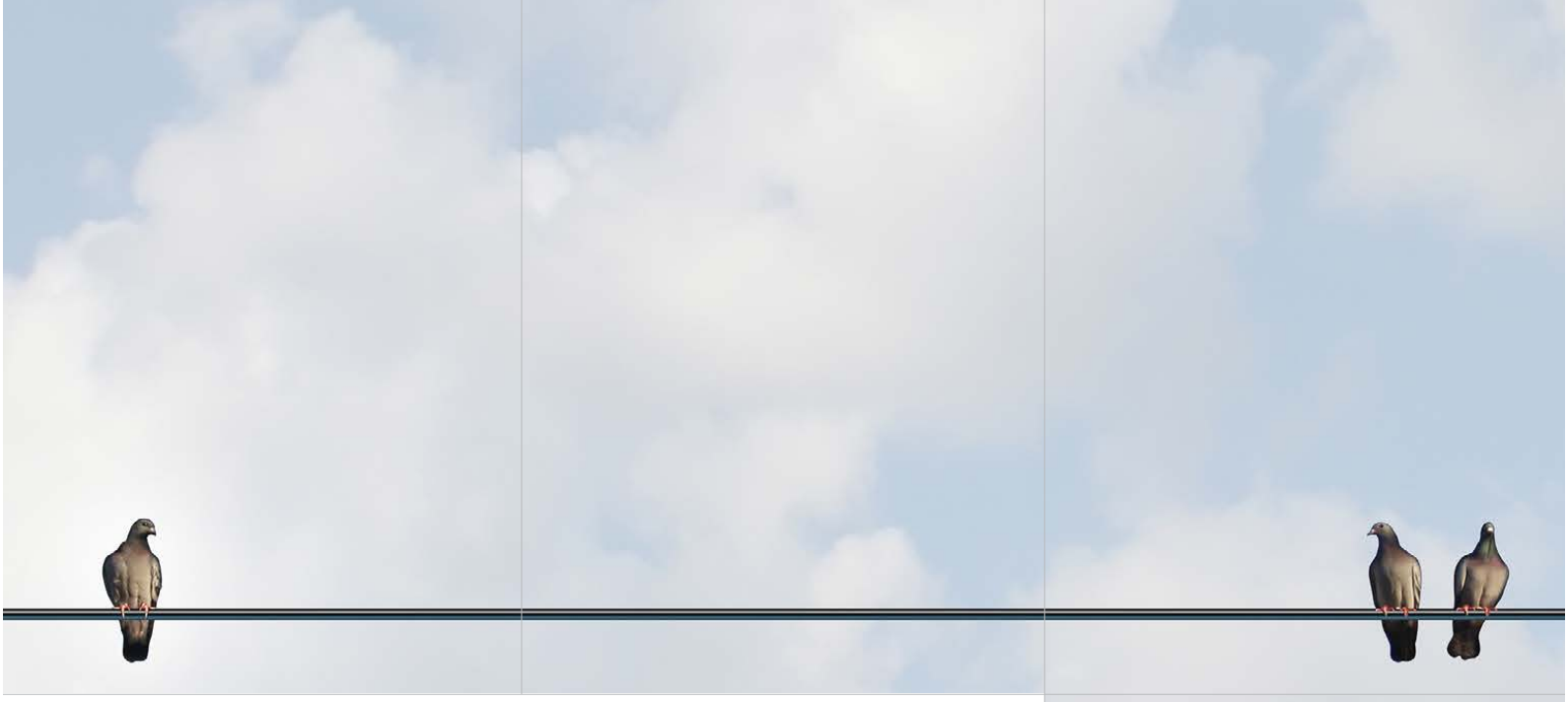
Visitors can enjoy musical performances, interactive activities for all ages, and food from vendors across the area. Be sure to stop by the Higgins School of Humanities tent, which will be located on Non-Profit Row along Elm Park.

Admission to the festival is free. More information.

Sunday, September 17 @ 11am–6pm

(Rain Date: Sunday, September 24)

Park Avenue between Highland and Pleasant Streets, Worcester



What's In It for Us?

A COMMUNITY CONVERSATION ON THE PUBLIC GOOD

The pursuit of common goals derives from a consideration of many individual perspectives—what we know from experience, what we imagine through compassion, and what we learn by listening to others.

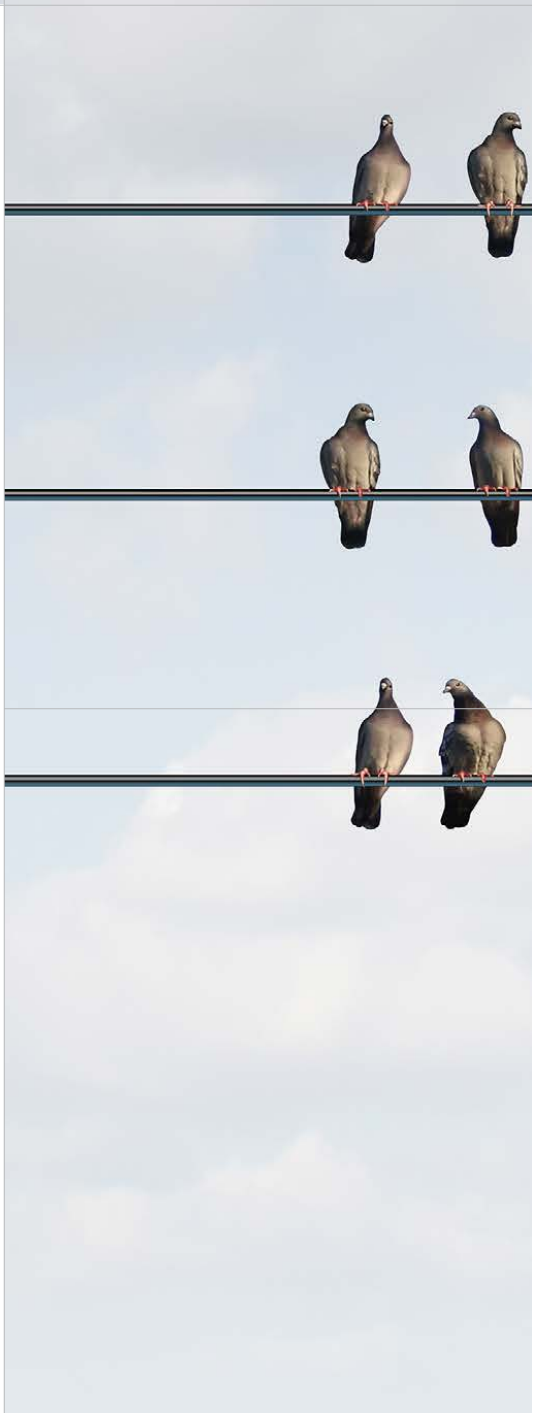
But with so many stakeholders involved, how do we support, utilize, and recognize contributions to the public good? Do we think first of organizations—whether public or private—or of individual relationships and everyday interactions within communities? Must benefits to some also serve the interests of many?

Join us for a community conversation facilitated by Barbara Bigelow (Graduate School of Management) and Toby Sisson (Studio Art), who will bring their respective expertise in dialogic process and community-based art, as we begin this semester's exploration of the "Public Good."

Thursday, September 28 @ 7pm

Higgins Lounge at Dana Commons

Co-sponsored by the Higgins School of Humanities and Difficult Dialogues



Prison is a place where people live.

Why Bother with Prison Education?

Arguments for the value of prison education generally focus on larger social benefits, such as reduced recidivism.

Arguments might also be made, however, for the less quantifiable but no less transformative outcomes for individuals themselves. Professor and poet Jill McDonough (University of Massachusetts Boston) has seen this transformation firsthand, teaching literature and creative writing in Boston University's Prison Education Program for fourteen years and volunteering in several prisons and juvenile detention facilities. Arthur Bembury was one of McDonough's students at MCI-Norfolk and is now Executive Director of Partakers, a non-profit organization devoted to helping volunteers mentor incarcerated students. Together, they will lead a conversation on the fundamental role of education in the prison system. McDonough will share her experiences as an instructor and read samples of her incarcerated students' poetry. Bembury will reflect on prison education and his work with Partakers, opening the conversation to the audience and inviting them to ask questions and offer ideas.

Thursday, October 5 @ 4:30pm

Higgins Lounge at Dana Commons

Co-sponsored by the Higgins School of Humanities, the Department of English, and the Hiatt Center for Urban Education

Why Get Involved with Prison Education?

Students and teachers, tutors and mentors, organizers and activists—all those involved in prison education programs can speak to the many overlapping benefits for individuals, families, and communities.

Tuesday, October 17 @ 4:30pm

Higgins Lounge at Dana Commons

Co-sponsored by the Higgins School of Humanities and the Department of Sociology

In this follow-up panel to "Why Bother with Prison Education?", participants will discuss the goals of various programs, offer reflections on their own experiences, and provide further information on volunteer opportunities for those interested in getting involved. Panelists will include: Clark University professor Shelly Tenenbaum (Sociology), who taught last year at MCI-Norfolk, a medium security prison for men, through the Boston University program; Claude Kaitare, a former Clark student who worked with Tenenbaum as a teaching assistant; and Steffen Seitz from the Petey Greene Program, an organization that trains undergraduate and graduate students to tutor in prison educational programs.

Terror Rising

THE VILLAGE MOB

A swarm of angry villagers emerges from the mist, torches lit and pitchforks drawn.

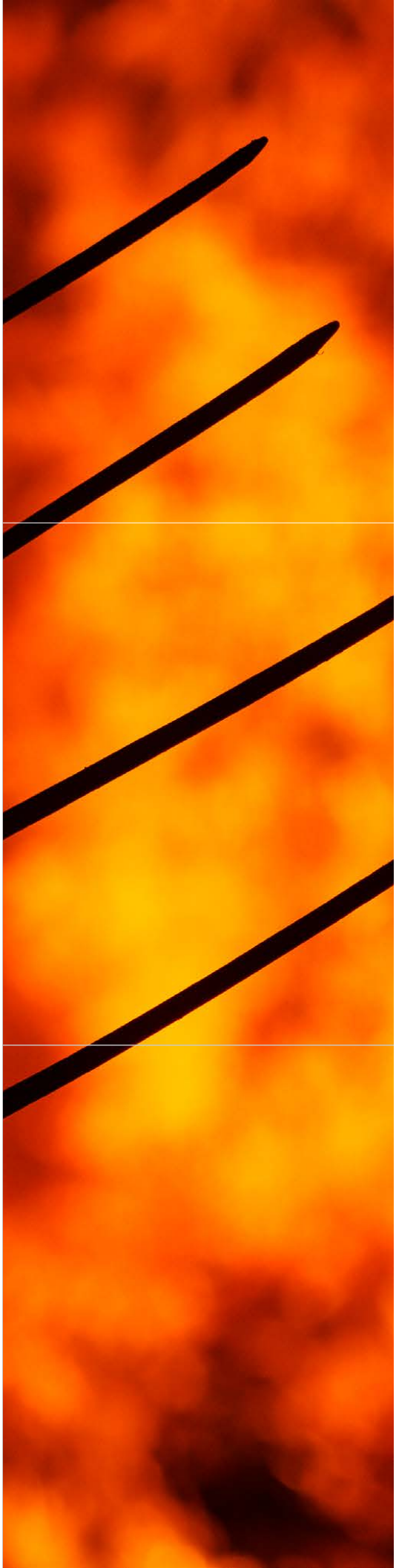
Marching through the darkness, they hunt a monster, spurred on by fear and screaming for retribution. Are they coming to save the day, or do they blindly seek to crush that which is more misunderstood than menacing? What happens when actions meant to protect society go terribly wrong?

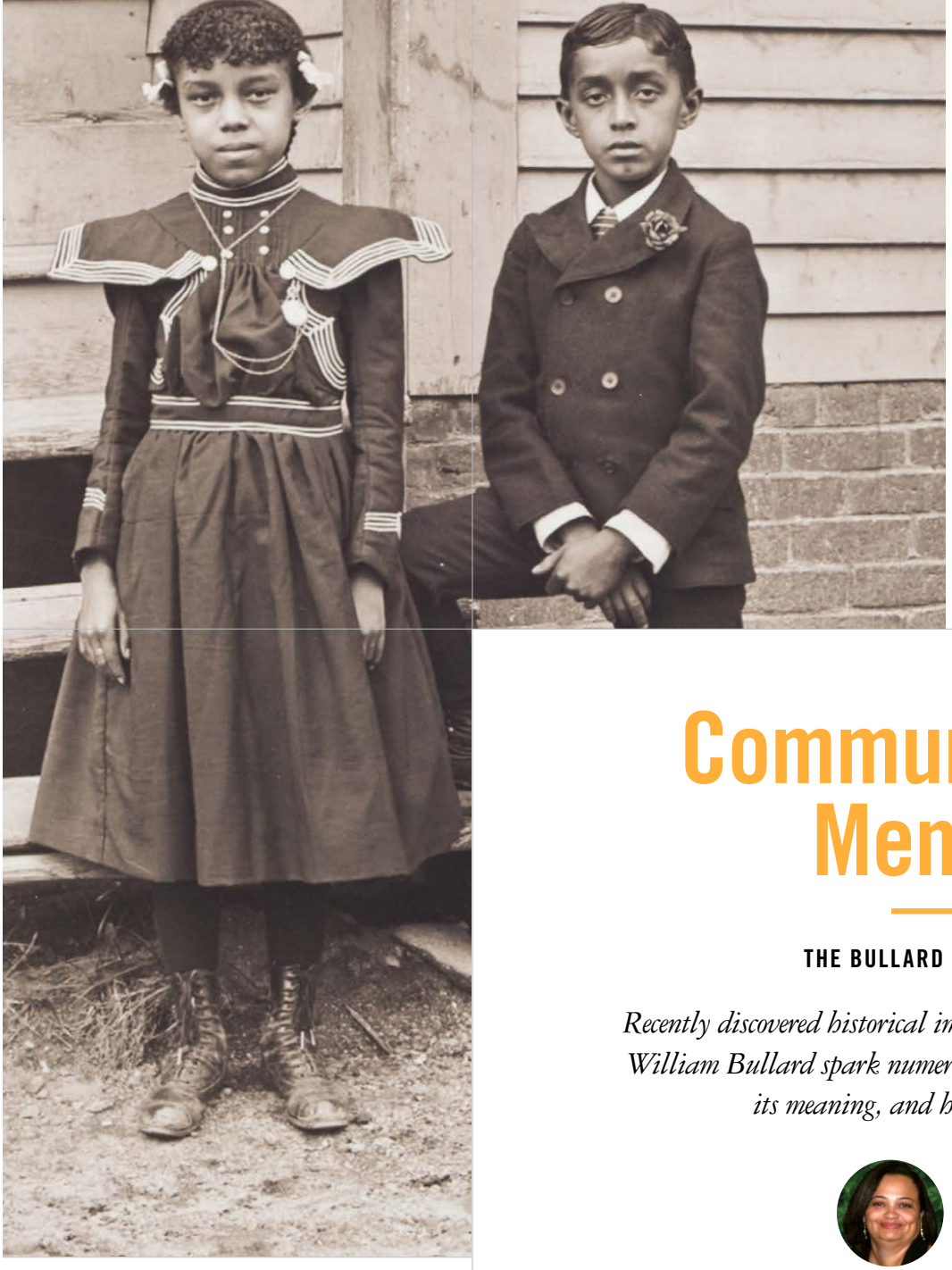
As has become our Halloween tradition, Professors Gino Dilorio (Theater), James Elliott (English), and Jennifer Plante (The Writing Center) will read scary stories that turn our attention from the fear of the monster to the fear of the mob. Combining the beauty of language, the art of storytelling, and the desire for community, *Readings in the Higgins Lounge* continues to showcase the power and pleasure of the humanities.

Wednesday, October 25 @ 7pm

Higgins Lounge at Dana Commons

Sponsored by the Higgins School of Humanities





What are the implications to an entire city... when the histories of individual neighborhoods are overlooked?

Community and Memory

THE BULLARD PHOTOGRAPHS

Recently discovered historical images by Worcester photographer William Bullard spark numerous questions about community, its meaning, and how we remember it.

The site of most of Bullard's photographs of people of color—the vital, diverse Beaver Brook neighborhood in Worcester—now largely consists of empty lots. How does loss of place impact the memory of a community? What are the implications to an entire city, such as Worcester, when the histories of individual neighborhoods are overlooked?

Cheryll Toney Holley, Sonksq and historian of the Nipmuc Nation and Hassanamisco Band of Nipmuc Indians, and Janette Thomas Greenwood, Professor of History at Clark University, will preface the discussion by showing how the Bullard photographs can help us reconstruct this neighborhood, its families, and their stories, suggesting lessons we can learn about community and memory today.

Sunday, October 29 @ 4pm

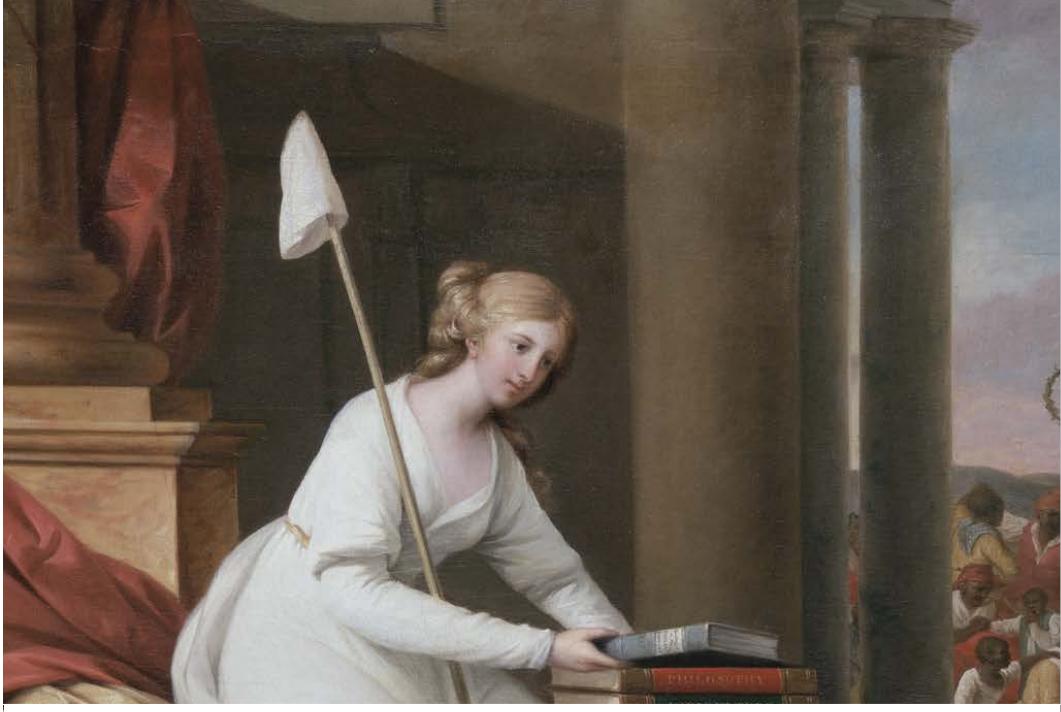
Belmont A.M.E. Zion Church

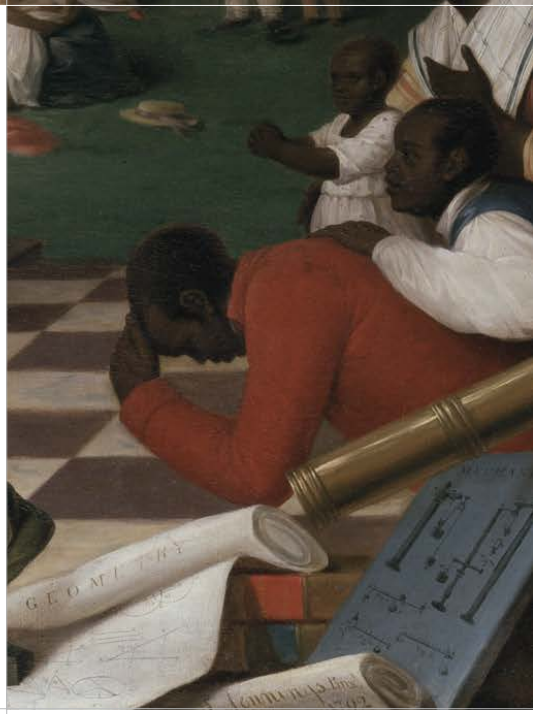
55 Illinois Street, Worcester

Co-sponsored by the Higgins School of Humanities and the Department of History

EXHIBIT

Rediscovering an American Community of Color: The Photographs of William Bullard, 1897–1917 will be on display at the Worcester Art Museum from October 14, 2017 to February 25, 2018. More information.





AFRICAN AMERICAN INTELLECTUAL CULTURE SERIES

Race/Memory/ Public Space

Last July's KKK march in Charlottesville, Virginia protesting the removal of the Robert E. Lee monument that dominated a city park was in some ways a rag-tag reenactment of the Klan march that celebrated the statue's unveiling in 1924.

Then as now, the public monument venerated Southern heritage as the mythic deeds of Confederate martyrs, but more significantly it elevated Lee as a sentinel of white supremacy to remind black residents daily of the limits of their citizenship and humanity. This and other recent controversies, such as public murders of unarmed African American men and women by the police, beg the question of whether or not public space in the United States remains racialized, divided, and dangerous to black life despite landmark strides in civil rights. As a cultural historian who has written about the National African American Museum of History and Culture and as a designer of UVA's Memorial for Enslaved African American Laborers, Mabel O. Wilson will explore the current and historical intersections of race, architecture, and the public realm.

Friday, November 3 @ 12pm

Higgins Lounge at Dana Commons

Co-sponsored by the Higgins School of Humanities, the Office of the Provost, Africana Studies, and the Department of Political Science through the Chester Bland Fund

Health Care for Good

WHAT WE NEED TO LEARN FROM RADICAL CLINICS

In the 1960s and 70s, most urban centers in the US boasted a thriving array of radical clinics, often linked to political movements such as the Black Panther Party and the Women's Health Movement.

A handful of these clinics remain and continue to evolve, still offering exceptional care today. In the best examples, radical clinics provide working models of respectful, collaborative, and affordable care that is for people, not profit. As author, performer, and practitioner Terri Kapsalis suggests, there is much work to be done both in expanding economic and geographic access to health care and ensuring the quality of the care provided. Drawing on interviews with radical clinic participants and more than twenty-five years of experience as a collective member of the Chicago Women's Health Center, Kapsalis will offer a vision of what radical health care has been and what it can be.

Tuesday, November 7 @ 7pm

Higgins Lounge at Dana Commons

Co-sponsored by the Higgins School of Humanities; the Center for Gender, Race, and Area Studies; and Women's and Gender Studies

Art as Social Practice

PUBLIC GOOD IN THE PUBLIC SPHERE

Socially engaged art exists at the intersection between powerful symbolic statements and quantifiable political change.

Rooted in the long history of artistic traditions and more recent upheavals and revolutions, socially engaged art has the power to interrogate privilege and inequity as well as identity-based pretexts for social and political discrimination. William Chambers, instructor at Massachusetts Bay Community College and Visual Arts Chair at the Bancroft School, will present a series of case studies that demonstrate the complex interplay between theory and practice, precedents and challenges found in a field that exists at once in the heart of our social and artistic spheres and nowhere at all.

A reception will follow immediately after the lecture. Be sure to visit Chambers' exhibit *ENGAGE* and participate in one of our community "Repairs" events throughout the semester. More information.

Wednesday, November 8 @ 7pm

Higgins Lounge at Dana Commons

Sponsored by the Higgins School of Humanities

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION

As this semester's Visiting Artist to the Clark University Studio Art program, Chambers will present an additional lecture titled "Making Objects Do More: Social Practice and Destroying the Genius Myth" on Wednesday, October 18 at noon in the Traina Center for the Arts.

symposium at a glance

September

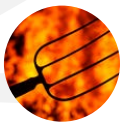
START ON THE STREET 2017

WHAT'S IN IT FOR US?

October

WHY BOTHER WITH PRISON EDUCATION?

WHY GET INVOLVED WITH PRISON EDUCATION?



TERROR RISING

COMMUNITY AND MEMORY

November

RACE/MEMORY/PUBLIC SPACE

HEALTH CARE FOR GOOD

ART AS SOCIAL PRACTICE

Also from the Higgins School

ROOTS OF EVERYTHING SERIES

The Science of Undeath

ZOMBIES AND ANIMATED CORPSES IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The popularity of shows like "The Walking Dead" and "Zombie Nation" reveal an increasing national fascination with the undead.

But interest in zombies, revenants, and animated corpses is nothing new, having long captured the imagination not just of fiction writers, but also of theologians, philosophers, and even scientists. The question of when a human is truly dead has been the focus of scholarly investigation for millennia. In this talk, historian Winston Black (Assumption College) will examine how and why medieval scholars debated corpse animation and hence understood the porous boundaries between life and death. Clark University professor Deborah Robertson (Biology) will offer commentary.

The *Roots of Everything* is a lecture series sponsored by Early Modernists Unite (EMU)—a faculty collaborative bringing together scholars of medieval and early modern Europe and America—in conjunction with the Higgins School of Humanities. The series highlights various aspects of modern existence originating in the early modern world and teases out connections between past and present.

Wednesday, October 18 @ 4:30pm

Higgins Lounge at Dana Commons

Co-sponsored by Early Modernists Unite, the Higgins School of Humanities, and the Departments of Biology and History

Image Credits

FRONT AND BACK COVER: Camille Minouflet/ Unsplash

PAGE 3: William Chambers

PAGE 4: Robyn Lewis, courtesy of stART on the Street

PAGE 5: Lightspring/Shutterstock.com

PAGE 6: istock.com/baona

PAGE 7: Steven King, Clark University

PAGE 8: istock.com/drakuliren

PAGE 9: William Bullard, *Susie Idella Morris and Harry Clinton Morris*, ca. 1901, archival inkjet print 2016, Worcester Art Museum

PAGE 10: Samuel Jennings, *Liberty Displaying the Arts and Sciences or The Genius of America Encouraging the Emancipation of the Blacks, 1792*, courtesy of the Library Company of Philadelphia

PAGE 11: RosalreneBetancourt 11/Alamy Stock Photo

PAGE 12: Abraham Schroeder

PAGE 14: Death leads a man to his own corpse, Office of the Dead, from a Book of Hours, France, ca. 1450

The Higgins School of Humanities affirms the centrality of the arts and humanities to our lives and the values of a liberal arts education. It supports teaching and research through its grant programs and sponsors public events and campus initiatives, enhancing the intellectual and cultural life of the Clark community.

All events are free and open to the public. All information is subject to change.

To support the Higgins School:
Visit alumni.clarku.edu/make-a-gift. Please select designation "Other" and direct your contribution to the Higgins School of Humanities.

Higgins School of Humanities
950 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01610
508.793.7479
HigginsSchool@clarku.edu
www2.clarku.edu/higgins

Meredith Neuman
DIRECTOR

Jennifer McGugan
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
OF ADMINISTRATION
AND COMMUNICATION

Kathy Sloan
PROGRAM COORDINATOR

humanities Higgins
difficult dialogues
CLARK UNIVERSITY

CALENDAR DESIGN Sara Raffo