

Our Distinguished Presenters and Performers

RONALD A. BOSCO - STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK-ALBANY

Currently a Distinguished Professor of English and American Literature at UAlbany, Ron has been at the school since 1975 and never looked back. He received degrees from Fairfield University, Purdue University, and the University of Maryland. A Founder and Past President of The Emerson Society, Ron is known as a leading expert on the works and life of Ralph Waldo Emerson, and has edited numerous collections of Emerson's writings. His areas of specialization include Colonial and Early American intellectual and literary history, New England Transcendentalism, pedagogy, and documentary and textual editing; he continues to teach both graduate and undergraduate courses and lectures extensively outside the school. Ron is also a prolific writer and frequent contributor/editor to numerous publications. His most recent works include *The Collected Works of Ralph Walden Emerson*, *The Illuminated Walden*, *Hawthorne: In His Own Time*, *Nature's Panorama: Thoreau on the Seasons*, and the soon-to-be-published *Creating Waldens: An East-West Conversation on the American Renaissance* (with Daisaku Ikeda and Joel Myerson).

CATHLIN DAVIS - CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY-STANISLAUS

Cathlin first read *Little Women* when she was 11 years old, and she hasn't stopped reading Alcott since. She received her BA in English from Oberlin College, and her MA and PhD in Linguistics from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Cathlin's specialty is Alcott's juvenile fiction, and she is currently at work on an anthology of Alcott's short stories which will bring to modern readers many tales not published in over a century. Her concordant passion is assisting educators and students in understanding how to use historical materials to learn about the past. This is her fifth year participating in our Summer Series and Teacher Institute.

STERLING DELANO - VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY

Professor of American Literature, Emeritus, at Villanova University, Rick received a BS from Villanova University, his MA from Northeastern University, and a PhD from Southern Illinois University. His recent book, *Brook Farm: The Dark Side of Utopia*, is considered the definitive study of this celebrated Transcendental community, while his earlier work, *The Harbinger and New England Transcendentalism: A Portrait of Associationism in America*, was the first comprehensive scholarly account of the journal that was the official organ of Associationism and Fourierism in 1840s America, as well as a major forum for Transcendentalist writers. He was a recipient of the Christian R. and Mary F. Lindback Award for Distinguished Teaching, and is currently involved in the third year of a National Endowment for the Humanities funded workshop, "Concord, Massachusetts: Transcendentalism & Social Action in the 19th Century."

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PAULA DORESS-WORTERS - BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY

Paula has received degrees from Suffolk University, Goddard College, and Boston College, and currently teaches at Brandeis' Women's Studies Research Center. One of the original co-authors of *Our Bodies, Ourselves* and co-author of the subsequent editions *Our Bodies, Ourselves for the New Century* and *The New Ourselves, Growing Older*, she has a long-standing interest in women's history and the lives of women as political activists. Paula's recent focus has been on Ernestine L. Rose, a pioneering activist of the 19th Century women's rights movement whose contributions had been previously largely overlooked. Paula recently published *Mistress of Herself: Speeches and Letters of Ernestine L. Rose, Early Women's Rights Leader*, and intends to continue research into Rose and her contemporaries in the women's rights movement.

SARAH ELBERT - STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK - BINGHAMTON

A Professor of History and Women's Studies, Sarah read *Little Women* as a young girl in the post-World War II era, and re-read it as a graduate student at Cornell University. This led not only to her dissertation, but her seminal work, *A Hunger for Home: Louisa May Alcott's Place in American Culture*. Sarah has authored/edited three books and numerous articles on Alcott and other 19th Century women authors, and has maintained a strong interest in researching rural women's lives, the history of women's education, and the nature of sex and race relations. She is a frequent presenter at the Summer Conversational Series, and resides in Ithaca, New York.

ANNE-LAURE FRANÇOIS - UNIVERSITÉ CHARLES-DE-GAULLE LILLE 3

Currently a doctoral student at Université Lille 3 and a teaching assistant in the English Department there, Anne-Laure graduated from the Ecole Normale Supérieure in Paris. She received her MA from the Sorbonne and is a member of the French Association for American Studies. Anne-Laure re-discovered *Little Women* while an undergraduate through Gillian Armstrong's 1994 screen adaptation of Alcott's bestseller. In part because of the film, she decided to focus her doctoral research on Transcendentalism and its presence in the fiction of Alcott, an author still largely unknown to French academics. While maintaining a strong interest in Women's Studies and both American and English Literature Anne-Laure is also, at heart, an educator. Inspired by the depiction of Plumfield Academy, she and her fellow educators and friends are establishing an alternative high school near Montpellier as a living homage to Alcott's pedagogical theories.

JASON GIANNETTI - REGIS COLLEGE

Jason is currently a Professor of Philosophy at Regis College. He received a BA from Binghamton University, a Master's of Theological Studies from Harvard Divinity School, a Master's of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies from Brandeis, and also has a Juris Doctor degree from Boston College Law School. Jason recently authored *Chrysalis*, a book of poetry and philosophical writings, is a contributor to *The Journal of Liberal Religion*, and frequently lectures on World Religions. Though his previous

background is in Ancient Greek Philosophy and Biblical Studies, he has recently been doing more research in the areas of Comparative Philosophy - East/West, as well as delving into the New England Transcendentalists.

LEN GOUGEON - UNIVERSITY OF SCRANTON

A Professor of American Literature at Scranton, Len received a BA from St. Mary's University in Halifax, and the MA and PhD from UMASS-Amherst. His research interests and course offerings range from the Puritans to the moderns in the American tradition, with particularly emphasis on 19th Century American Transcendentalists and Romantics and their connections to various reform movements. Len is author of *Virtue's Hero: Emerson, Antislavery, and Reform* and *Emerson and Eros: The Making of a Cultural Hero*; with Joel Myerson, he co-edited *Emerson's Antislavery Writings*. He has also published numerous articles and book reviews, and was Past President of the Ralph Waldo Emerson Society.

EVE LAPLANTE - AUTHOR

Eve LaPlante is connected to the Alcotts in more ways than one: she is a sixth great-granddaughter of Samuel Sewall! Her recent book, *Salem Witch Judge: The Life and Repentance of Samuel Sewall*, was winner of the 2008 Massachusetts Book Award for Non-Fiction and follows the success of her *Boston Globe* bestseller *American Jezebel: The Uncommon Life of Anne Hutchinson, The Woman Who Defied the Puritans*, as well as *Seized: Temporal Lobe Epilepsy as a Medical, Historical, and Artistic Phenomenon*. She contributed to the essay collection, *Why I'm Still Married*, and has written for *The Atlantic*, *The New York Times*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, and *Gourmet*. Eve holds degrees from Princeton University and Harvard University.

DANIEL S. MALACHUK - WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY-QUAD CITY

Dan received a BA from Bowdoin College and a PhD from Rutgers University. Prior to coming to WIU-QC, he taught writing and humanities at Daniel Webster College in Nashua, NH, was an Adjunct Professor at Georgetown and George Washington universities, and a Visiting Professor at American University. Dan's research interests are in 19th Century literature and social and political theory, and he has written essays on William James, Henry David Thoreau, Matthew Arnold, and Thomas Carlyle. Dan is the author of *Perfection, the State, and Victorian Liberalism*, and is currently at work on a book about American transcendentalism, "higher law," and human rights.

JOHN MATTESON - JOHN JAY COLLEGE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

A Professor of English and former litigation attorney, John received his AB in History from Princeton, PhD in English from Columbia, and his law degree from Harvard. John currently teaches literature and legal writing, and has published articles and book chapters on a variety of 19th Century Americans, including Herman Melville, William James, and Louisa May Alcott. His first book, *Eden's Outcasts: The Story of*

Louisa May Alcott and Her Father, won the 2008 Pulitzer Prize for Biography. He is currently at work on a new book tentatively entitled *The Lives of Margaret Fuller*. This is John's fifth year participating in our Summer Series.

JOEL MYERSON - UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

The Carolina Distinguished Professor of American Literature, Emeritus, of USC, Joel received a BA from Tulane University and his MA and PhD from Northwestern University. His areas of specialization include Transcendentalism, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and bibliographical and textual studies, and he has authored or edited more than fifty books on American Romanticism. With Madeleine B. Stern and Daniel Shealy, Joel edited the journals and selected letters of Louisa May Alcott, providing a tremendous resource for Alcott scholars. In addition to compiling bibliographies of Emerson's and Walt Whitman's writings, he also edited *Critical Essays on Henry David Thoreau's Walden, Emerson and Thoreau: The Contemporary Reviews, The Cambridge Companion to Henry David Thoreau*, and *Transcendentalism: A Reader*. Active in numerous professional societies, Joel has been honored with several distinguished service awards, and is a sought-after lecturer.

SANDRA PETRULIONIS - PENN STATE-ALTOONA

A Professor of English and American Studies at Penn State, Sandy's areas of expertise include 19th Century American literature and history, Henry David Thoreau, Herman Melville, Louisa May Alcott and other women writers, Transcendentalism, the literature of slavery and abolition, and Concord, Massachusetts. She is the author of *To Set This World Right: The Antislavery Movement in Thoreau's Concord* and several articles on Thoreau, Melville, Alcott, and other 19th Century notables, and also co-edited (with Laura Dassow Walls) *More Day to Dawn: Thoreau's Walden for the Twenty-First Century*. Currently, Sandy is co-editing a scholarly digital edition of Mary Moody Emerson's manuscript, "Almanack" (with Noelle Baker) and *The Oxford Handbook of Transcendentalism* (with Joel Myerson and Laura Dassow Walls).

NANCY PORTER & HARRIET REISEN - DOCUMENTARY PRODUCERS, "LOUISA MAY ALCOTT: THE WOMAN BEHIND *LITTLE WOMEN*"

~ Watch for notices about the world premiere of the documentary in late 2009! ~

Nancy Porter has produced and directed numerous documentaries for PBS for over 25 years, first as a producer at WGBH-TV Boston, and for the last 12 years as the owner of her own production company. She was Executive Producer of *Something Personal*, a PBS series of films by and about women, and has produced such highly regarded projects as documentaries on John Irving, E. L. Doctorow, Amelia Earhart, The Wright Brothers, Richard Byrd, Houdini, and "Typhoid Mary," in addition to several NOVA productions. Nancy has won numerous awards, including a national Emmy, American Film Festival Blue Ribbon, three Cine Gold Eagle Awards, and was the first recipient of the Women in Film and Video New England Image Award for Vision and Excellence. (*please see next page for Harriet Reisen*)

Harriet Reisen has worked extensively in public/commercial/cable television,

radio, audio-visual presentations print, and audio; directed, produced, and developed new programs; and written documentary, comedy, drama, non-fiction, magazine journalism, radio commentary, radio documentary, film criticism, children's books, and songs. Harriet taught screenwriting at the Boston Film and Video Foundation and at Harvard Summer School, and was a Fellow in Screenwriting at the American Film Institute in Los Angeles. She wrote narration and scripts for HBO's "Fire at the Cocoanut Grove" and "The Wall Street Crash," as well as WGBH's "New England Begins," and co-produced "Blacklisted," a three-hour radio drama. Harriet is founder and President Emeritus of New England Women in Film and Video, and has also published several articles about Mexico.

DEBRA A. RYALS - PENSACOLA JUNIOR COLLEGE

A Superadjunct Professor teaching literature and composition at Pensacola Junior College, Debra received her BS from Pensacola Christian College, MA from Westfield State College, and PhD from Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Nominated for a Teaching Excellence Award, Debra is a frequent presenter at conferences on Alcott, Hawthorne, and Tolkien, and is a published reviewer in *The American Tradition in Literature, Volume Two*, 12th edition, and in *Sentences, Paragraphs, and Beyond With Integrated Readings*, 5th edition.

JOHN STAUFFER - HARVARD UNIVERSITY

John serves as Chair of the History of American Civilization program and is a Professor of English and African American Studies at Harvard. He received a BSE from Duke University, MAs from Wesleyan and Perdue universities, and a PhD from Yale. John writes and lectures widely on slavery and abolition, social protest, the dilemmas of self-making, and photography, and is considered one of the world's leading scholars of antislavery, protest movements, and interracial relations. The author or editor of seven books, including the award-winning *The Black Hearts of Men: Radical Abolitionists and the Transformation of Race*, he recently co-edited (with Steven Mintz) *Giants: The Parallel Lives of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln*. John's writings have appeared in such publications as *Time*, *The New York Times Review of Books*, *Raritan*, *The New York Post*, *Chronicles of Higher Education*, *Reviews in American History*, *21st*, and *The Harvard Review*. He has also recently consulted on "Free State of Jones," a motion picture about radical inter-racialism and Unionism in Civil War-era Mississippi, which will debut later this year.