

Reaping Profits Reckoning Loss

Center for
HUMANITIES
and the ARTS

WE SEEM TO LIVE IN A WORLD devoted to “profit” but defined by “loss.” We witness a relative few standing atop pinnacles of wealth, while millions of others live in the sloughs of deprivation. Our television screens are filled with images of destruction, while along the bottom, numbers charting the progress of a rising stock market march past. Profit and loss may seem to be the province of economists and those in business and government, rather than of humanists and artists. By placing these terms in different and broader contexts and media, however, humanists and artists can redefine both the nature and interrelation of these terms, and thereby open up new questions for investigation.

When we consider loss in its various senses, meaning, say, not only the “diminution of one’s possessions or advantages,” but also “perdition, ruin, destruction: the condition or fact of being ‘lost,’” we are led to think of conditions about which the humanities and arts have long been concerned. For centuries, philosophers and spiritual teachers have cautioned that it is unwise to seek profits defined solely in terms of wealth, power, and fame. From Milton’s *Paradise Lost* to the television show *Lost*, artists have sought to address the question of loss in its more complex and painful aspects: as fall, as trauma, as apocalyptic break, and as death, so much so that one may even wonder whether the profit of art is not inextricably tied to its expressions of loss.

The Center for Humanities and the Arts at the University of Colorado at Boulder will spend this year exploring not only what the humanities and arts may tell us about loss and profit, but also how the humanities and arts are themselves affected by a world that increasingly defines profit and loss exclusively in economic terms.

The Center for Humanities and the Arts holds a year-long faculty and graduate student seminar devoted to the theme, “Reaping Profits, Reckoning Loss.” In addition, we will host the following distinguished lectures and events, as well as a Colloquium on March 1–2, 2007. All events are free and open to the public.

2006–07 Lecture Series

September 29

Steven Okazaki

“Reckoning the Past: A Documentarian’s Dilemma”

October 20

Josiah Blackmore, Department of Spanish and Portuguese,
University of Toronto

“Tears of Portugal: Early Modern Expansion and the Melancholy of Empire”

November 10

Emily Calhoun, School of Law, University of Colorado at Boulder
“Tragic Loss and Judicial Obligation in Civil Liberties Disputes”

February 16

Andrei Codrescu, poet, novelist, essayist, screenwriter, columnist,
editor

“Lose a Country, Gain a World: Reflections on Exile”

March 16

Harry Berger, Jr., Professor Emeritus of Literature and Art History,
University of California, Santa Cruz; Spring 2007 Cox Family
Visiting Scholar, University of Colorado at Boulder

“A Fury in the Words: Love and Death in Shakespeare’s Venice”

For more information:

Michael E. Zimmerman, Director
Center for Humanities and the Arts, 280 UCB
Boulder, CO 80309-0280
303-492-1423; fax 303-735-2624
michaelz@colorado.edu
www.colorado.edu/ArtsSciences/CHA

Colloquium, March 1–2, 2007

J.S.G. Boggs, artist

“A COUNTING: The Exact Unspecific Value of Art for Beekeepers and Bookkeepers 101”

Bill Brown, Edward Carson Waller Distinguished Service Professor,
Department of English, University of Chicago

“Commodity Nationalism and the Lost Object”

Owen Flanagan, James B. Duke Professor and Professor of
Neurobiology, Department of Philosophy, Duke University

“The Bodhisattva’s Brain: Neuroscience, Virtue and Happiness”

Also presenting will be
the 2006–07 CHA fellows:

Valerie Forman, Department of English

Donna Goldstein, Department of Anthropology

Jill Heydt-Stevenson, Department of English and of Comparative
Literature and Humanities

Peter Hutchings, Department of Comparative Literature

Audra King, Department of English

Thomas LeCarner, Department of English

Cecilia Pang, Department of Theatre and Dance

Micheline Van Riemsdijk, Department of Geography

Allied Events:

Conference on World Affairs Athenaeum

September 27: free screenings of Steven Okazaki’s award-winning documentaries, *Days of Waiting* and *The Mushroom Club*.

February 28: free screening of Mark Jonathan Harris’ Academy Award-winning film, *Into the Arms of Strangers: Stories of the Kindertransport*.

Okazaki and Harris will introduce and participate in discussion of their films.

About Us

FOUNDED IN 1997, the Center for Humanities and the Arts (CHA) serves as a focus for humanistic scholarship and artistic creation across the University of Colorado at Boulder. Each year, CHA organizes a number of activities around a central theme: a year-long faculty and graduate student seminar, a lecture series, and a colloquium. CHA supports innovative research and creative work through programs such as our monthly work-in-progress sessions and interdisciplinary workshops. CHA also hosts a distinguished scholar/artist each spring. In addition, CHA plays an important role in supporting graduate education by granting approximately \$500,000 in graduate fellowships each year and running an internship program that won a 1999 Innovation Award from the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation. CHA's central mission is to support the excellent work being done by scholars and artists on the Boulder campus, and we are committed to bringing that work to the larger academic world and to the various publics the university serves.

Special thanks to CHA supporters

Todd Gleeson, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences; Phil DiStefano, Provost; Susan Avery, Dean of the Graduate School and Vice Chancellor for Research; Daniel Sher, Dean, College of Music; and President's Fund for the Humanities

Illustration: Angela Beloian

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UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO AT BOULDER
280 UCB
Boulder, CO 80309-0280

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presents

Reaping Profits *Reckoning Loss*

2006–07 lecture series and colloquium

