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Writer and Environmental Activist Bill McKibben to Speak on October 30

Hurricane Katrina; a rapidly disappearing Arctic; the warmest winter on the East Coast in recorded history. . . . Jim Hansen, a leading scientist at NASA, warns that we have only *ten years* to reverse climate change or else we will face "a totally different planet." A British government report estimates that the financial impact of global warming will be greater than the Great Depression and both World Wars *combined*. In the words of writer and environmental activist Bill McKibben, it's no longer time to debate global warming; it's time to fight it.

In an effort to focus attention on this monumental problem, the Oregon Humanities Center is collaborating with the Environmental Studies Program this academic year to bring to campus two prominent scholars and writers working in the field of climate change, Bill McKibben, and on on March 4, 2008, Stanford biologist Stephen Schneider.

Bill McKibben will give the **2007-08 Cressman Lecture** entitled "**Building the Climate Movement**" on **Tuesday, October 30th**, at **7:30 p.m.** in the **EMU Ballroom**. McKibben will talk about why we so urgently need to build a climate movement, and precisely what is at stake. In addition to addressing some of the scientific and economic aspects of climate change, he will also touch upon some of the moral and spiritual dimensions of the problem, and will offer some practical advice about what each of us can do right now to help stop global warming.

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Bill McKibben photo: ©Nancie Battaglia

Poet Joseph Harrison Reads October 18

The Oregon Humanities Center, with the co-sponsorship of Creative Writing and English, is pleased to host poet **Joseph Harrison** in a reading on **Thursday, October 18th at 8 p.m. in the Knight Library Browsing Room**. Harrison will read from his 2003 collection, *Someone Else's Name*, and from his forthcoming book, *Identity Theft*.

Someone Else's Name was chosen as one of five poetry books for the year by *The Washington Post*, and was a finalist for the Poets' Prize. Harrison's forthcoming book, *Identity Theft*, will be released later this year in the U.K., and in early 2008 in the U.S.

Harrison's poems have appeared in a number

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OHC Faculty Advisory Board Welcomes Six New Members

This fall we are pleased to welcome six new members to the Oregon Humanities Center's Faculty Advisory Board. The new members for the three-year term beginning in 2007-08 are: **Jim Crosswhite**, English; **Lori Kruckenberg**, Music; **Deb Morrison**, Journalism and Communication; **Ellen Rees**, German and Scandinavian; **Lizzie Reis**, Women's and Gender Studies; and **Anita Weiss**, International Studies.

We would like to thank the outgoing members of the board for their service: **Carol Ann Bassett**, Journalism and Communication; **Matthew Dennis**, History; **James Earl**, English; **John Lysaker**, Philosophy; **Anne Dhu McLucas**, Music; and **Dorothee Ostmeier**, German and Scandinavian.

Advisory Board members are nominated by peers and formally appointed by Vice President Linton and OHC director Steven Shankman to serve a three-year term. Board members assist the director and associate director with several important OHC functions including reviewing fellowship applications, advising on policy issues affecting the Center, suggesting lecturers and conference topics, and helping to distribute information and announcements to other humanities faculty and graduate students.

The Faculty Advisory Board is vital to the effective functioning of the Center. We seek nominations for the board each year in May. We encourage faculty to nominate colleagues or to consider serving on the board themselves. (Self-nominations are accepted.) For more information about the OHC Advisory Board, please contact Julia Heydon at 346-1001.

Harrison

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of anthologies including The Library of America's anthology of *American Religious Poems* (ed. Harold Bloom), *180 More Extraordinary Poems for Every Day* (ed. Billy Collins), *The Best American Poetry 1998* (ed. John Hollander), and in a variety of magazines including *The Antioch Review*, *Boston Review*, *The Kenyon Review*, *The Paris Review*, *Parnassus*, *Southwest Review*, and *The Yale Review*. In 2005 he was the recipient of an Academy Award in Literature from the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

Harrison received his B.A. from Yale (1979) and his M.A. from Johns Hopkins University (1986). He lives in Baltimore and serves on the editorial board of The Waywiser Press.

The reading is free and open to the public. For more information, call 346-0649.



Heartfelt Thanks to Our Supporters!

We are deeply grateful for the generous ongoing support of our friends and donors, without whom many of the programs offered by the Oregon Humanities Center would simply not be possible. If you enjoy our free public events or would like to support our faculty fellowship programs, we hope you will consider using the enclosed envelope to make a gift to the Center.

We would like to thank the following individuals, foundations, and corporations for their support during the past fiscal year, July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2007:

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McKibben

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McKibben is known by many people for his work in organizing a series of rallies held last April 14th all across the nation called “Step It Up 07,” through which citizen-activists demanded that Congress and the president take serious action to reduce carbon by “80% by 2050.” His current nation-wide grassroots organizing project, “1 Sky,” scheduled to take place on November 3, 2007, is based on the belief that if we and our political leaders act now, we can still avoid the worst effects of global warming and create a clean energy economy that will benefit all. Please visit <www.stepitup2007.org> for more information.

Bill McKibben is a scholar-in-residence at Middlebury College and the recipient of several honorary degrees. A former staff writer for *The New Yorker*, he writes regularly for *Harper's*, *The*

Atlantic Monthly, and *The New York Review of Books*. He is the author of ten books about the environment and related issues, including *The Age of Missing Information and Enough: Staying Human in an Engineered Age*. His first volume, *The End of Nature* (1989), was

the first book about global warming written for a general audience. It has since been translated into 24 languages. *Deep Economy*, released in the spring of 2007, was a national bestseller. McKibben's forthcoming book, *Fight Global Warming Now*, due to be released on October 16, 2007, is the first hands-on guidebook to stopping climate change. It will be available at the October 30th lecture. McKibben currently lives in Vermont with his wife, writer Sue Halpern, and their daughter.

The lecture is free and open to the public, and will be followed by a book sale and signing. For more information or for disability accommodations (which must be made by October 23), please call (541) 346-3934.

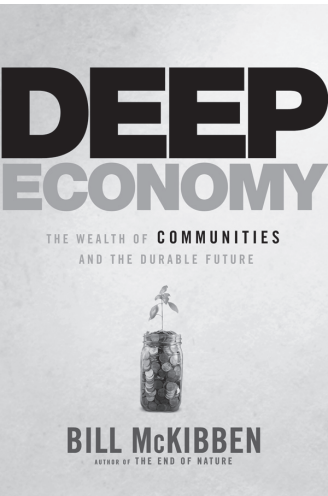
The Songs of Hector Berlioz: Reflections of an OHC Research Fellow

I came to the Oregon Humanities Center in the spring of 2007 with an idea for a project about the songs of Hector Berlioz. To many it will come as a surprise that Berlioz—known mostly for massive instrumental works such as the *Fantastic Symphony*—wrote songs at all. In fact, he wrote over 50 throughout his career. Many of them are written in the simple and popular style of the French romance—a far cry from the monumental works of a musical revolutionary. I wanted to know why these miniatures appealed to him and what, if anything, they had in common with his larger works. I had given a conference presentation on the topic and intended to expand it to a full-length article. This, I am happy to say, I was able to do during my 10-week stay at the OHC. I have just submitted the article to the journal *19th-Century Music*. I could not have finished it without my quiet, comfortable Humanities Center office overlooking the Knight Library lawn—a space where I could think without distraction, surround myself with just the materials I needed, and spend the precious time necessary (and so rare) to immerse myself again in what I love.

But to say that in my time at the Humanities Center I completed my article is to tell only half of the story. The article I completed, for one, was not quite what I had expected it to be. My hunches, I discovered, were correct: the songs Berlioz wrote between 1842 and 1850 (the focus on my study) did indeed come straight out of the romance tradition (a tradition, incidentally, that Berlioz railed against in his music criticism), and at the same time they shared with his programmatic symphonies an inventiveness and a deeply personal resonance. But I also came to see more and more that the romance provided Berlioz with not just an outlet to express himself when he could not write larger works but an ideal outlet. Facing the deaths of his father and sister, the decline of his career, and the dissolution of his marriage, Berlioz was obsessed with the past and with lost time, and he worked through those feelings in a style he associated with childhood and he knew would not be misunderstood. And I discovered that my claim about the importance of this popular genre to Berlioz had wider ramifications—it contributed to larger claims about the importance of nineteenth-century French popular song in general, a genre vital to French culture of the time but these days overlooked in favor of the more “serious” German Lied, and about the importance of studying any popular music, no matter the era. My ideas changed and developed because I got a chance to share them with Jenifer Presto, another OHC fellow that term, Julia Heydon, Steve Shankman, and above all those who came to my Work-in-Progress talk. It was there that I was reminded of the benefit of talking through ideas, not just writing about them, and of being part of a lively scholarly community. As academics, after all, we write not just for ourselves but for a real, live people. The people that graciously listened to my talk and shared ideas with me—music scholars but also other humanists of all stripes—pushed my thinking in new directions and made me realize that though the focus of my study may be small, my audience need not be.

A happy byproduct of my fellowship is that it led me toward a new project about some other songs of the same time period—not by Berlioz but by Felix and Fanny Mendelssohn. In situating Berlioz's songs in the context of nineteenth-century song I got the chance to revisit some of my favorite pieces by the Mendelssohns and realized why they also matter so much to me—like Berlioz's romances, they are simple, elegant, and direct; richly autobiographical; and unjustly neglected, for many of the same reasons. I don't yet know where exactly this path will take me, but I have the Humanities Center to thank for giving me the time and encouragement to find it—and for so much else.

—Stephen Rodgers, Assistant Professor, School of Music and Dance





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Mark Your Calendars

We continue our series of **work-in-progress talks** by University of Oregon faculty and graduate students on their current or recent research on **Fridays** at **noon** in the Humanities Center Conference Room, **159 PLC**. Brown-bag lunches are welcome!

October

- 26 **Lamia Karim**, anthropology, speaking on "An Anthropological Critique of the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize Winner the Grameen Bank of Bangladesh."

November

- 2 **Kate Mondloch**, art history, speaking on "Body and Screen: The Architecture of Media Art Spectatorship."
16 **Tze-lan Sang**, East Asian languages, speaking on "Failed Modern Girls."
30 **Christen Picicci**, graduate fellow, romance languages, speaking on "Compassion for Clorinda: A Weilian 'moment of grace' in the *Gerusalemme liberata*."

All faculty and graduate students are encouraged to attend. The conference room seats eighteen; early arrival is recommended.

The University of Oregon is an equal opportunity, affirmative action institution committed to cultural diversity and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. To arrange disability accommodations for Humanities Center events or to obtain this newsletter in an alternative format, call 541-346-3934.

Looking Ahead to January

Mark your calendars now for the **January 16, 2008 O'Fallon Lecture** with MIT Professor **Henry Jenkins**, author of *Convergence Culture* (2006) as well as several other recent books on new media. Jenkins, Co-Director of the Comparative Media Studies Program at MIT, will give a talk entitled "**Art and Storytelling in the Age of Media Convergence**" at **7:30 p.m.** The location for the lecture is still TBA.

Jenkins will discuss how the intersection of old and new media is affecting our relationship to popular culture, and how it is beginning to offer us new models for what it means to participate in the political, educational, and religious institutions which so powerfully affect and shape our lives. Please check our website or the Winter OHC Newsletter for more details.

