

Visiting poets, pundits, artists and authors share unique perspectives with the Whitworth community

Whitworth President Bill Robinson believes that truth is to be found in unexpected places. As a result, he urges Whitworthians to keep their eyes, ears, and minds open – to listen to and consider disparate (and sometimes dissonant) voices.

“Along with my hope for Christ’s presence,” Robinson said in a recent e-mail message to the Whitworth faculty, “is an encouragement for you to keep supporting the open exploration of new thoughts and ideas. At Whitworth it is imperative that we nurture in our students a curiosity rooted in humble openness. I see this as a complement to Christ at the center. Where better for students to examine ideas that are foreign to Christian faith than in a community of Christian scholars?”

The Whitworth faculty and administration heartily concur with Robinson about the importance of open inquiry, and to that end the Whitworth community has upped the ante in seeking out speakers and artists who represent a variety of political and religious viewpoints, intellectual and artistic perspectives, and cultural traditions.

In addition to college-sponsored guest lectures, panels, town-hall meetings, and coffeehouses from which an array of differing opinions and worldviews emerge, new venues for new voices are appearing at Whitworth.

For more than 30 years, Forum, a required course featuring guest speakers and performers who exposed Whitworthians to a wide range of ideas and issues, was the primary format for guest speakers and artists at the college. In 2000 the program was suspended when evidence indicated that it wasn’t meeting its goals. In its place, Whitworth experimented for one year with a program that featured Connections, a voluntary class taken for credit, and Showcase, a non-credit series, before moving into its current Speakers & Artists Series.

The college also filled the Forum gap – and went far beyond Forum’s original scope – by augmenting its slate of established lectureships, readings, and planned performances with a number of new programs that bring the world to Whitworth.

From the Speakers & Artists Series to programs sponsored by the Murdock and Lilly grants; from the School of Global Commerce and Management’s Entrepreneurship Speakers Series to the Department of Politics & History’s Great Deci-



by **Caitlin Clapp, '03**

sions Lecture Series; from the English Department’s popular Endowed English Readings and Ada Redmond Readings to the Art Department’s Gallery Series, Whitworth is alive with fresh ideas and perspectives that lead to thoughtful discussions and enriched learning experiences across the campus.

The newest of these programs, the Speakers & Artists Series, is emblematic of Whitworth’s efforts to bring first-rate thinkers and artists to the college. As part of the series, faculty members or departments arrange guest lectures, presentations and performances that are open to the campus community and, quite often, the Spokane community, says Gordon Jackson, associate dean of the faculty. A committee overseen by Vice President for Academic Affairs Tammy Reid, '60, coordinates and publicizes Speakers & Artists events on campus, and faculty integrate the guest speakers and artists into their curriculum and encourage their students to attend lectures and performances.

As this and other such programs evolve, Whitworth continues to support the exploration of new thoughts and ideas through bringing to campus engaging speakers and artists who are leaders in their fields.

This academic year, numerous guests will visit Whitworth to enrich the campus-learning environment. Read on to learn more about notable Whitworth speakers from fall 2002 and spring 2003.

Presentations



Leonard Pitts, Jr.

As a syndicated columnist for *The Miami Herald*, Leonard Pitts, Jr., followed closely the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks through his columns. "It's my job to have something to say," Pitts commented on Sept. 12, 2001.

The columnist delivered his trademark thought-provoking commentary on social-justice issues when he visited Whitworth Feb. 17 and lectured to a packed Cowles Auditorium on *Choosing Sides*.

Pitts' famous column, *We'll Go Forward From This Moment*, was an angry and defiant letter to the 9/11 terrorists that circled the globe via the Internet. Pitts was named the 2002 Columnist of the Year by the National Society of Newspaper Columnists and was winner of the 2001 American Society of Newspaper Editors' prestigious ASNE Award for Commentary Writing. Pitts was also honored by The Society of Professional Journalists with its Fellow of the Society Award in 2000 and was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in 1993.

"Pitts is a keen observer of our society and our culture," says Esther Louie, assistant dean for programming and diversity at Whitworth. "His viewpoint helps us expand our horizons. He holds up a mirror and reflects back to us what he sees, and I find that he does this in a thoughtful, honest and authentic manner."

Billy Collins

U.S. Poet Laureate Billy Collins has been called an American phenomenon; his critical acclaim and broad popular appeal have been compared to that of poet Robert Frost. Collins will speak at Whitworth on April 11 as the English Department's Endowed English Reader.

Collins is the author of several books of poetry, including *Nine Horses: Poems* (2002); *Sailing Around the Room* (2001); *Picnic, Lightning* (1997); *The Art of Drowning* (1995); *The Apple That Astonished Paris* (1988); and *Questions About Angels* (1991). Librarian of Congress James H. Billington, who announced Collins' appointment as U.S. Poet Laureate, said that Collins' work exhibits original thoughts about everyday things and situations, incorporating humor and a contemplative twist.

"Billy Collins is certainly one of the foremost American poets, not only because he is the Poet Laureate of the U.S., but because even before he held that post, he reached a wider readership than many former laureates," says Professor of English Doug Sugano. "He is a wonderful reader, an engaging personality, and a poet who cares about what Americans both read and believe."



Laura Nash



Introducing Christian ideals into the business world may be no easy task, especially in the wake of recent corporate scandals such as the Enron collapse. The Weyerhaeuser Center-sponsored Faith and Work Conference lecture by Laura Nash, Ph.D., author of *Believers in Business* and senior research fellow on the faculty of Harvard Business School, will shed some light on the topic. Nash will lecture April 9 on *Church on Sunday, Work on Monday: The Challenge of*

Fusing Christian Values with Business Life.

“Nash is one of the country’s leading writers in regard to how we might think about integrating our faith into the workplace,” says Dale Soden, director of the Weyerhaeuser Center for Christian Faith and Learning. “Nash’s visit will give students an opportunity to think about how they can connect their spiritual life with the world outside of church.”

Melvin Oliver

Whitworth is collaborating with Spokane’s Bethel A.M.E. Church on a lecture series, *Alleviating Poverty and Building Assets for the Development of World Class Communities: Partnerships and Collaboration.* The series will feature three prominent speakers who will encourage the Whitworth and Spokane communities to think about what it takes to have a healthy city and what types of partnerships work best between and among the institutions of civil society. The March 13 speaker is Melvin Oliver, an expert on racial and urban inequality and poverty who is vice president of the Asset Building and Community Development Program at the Ford Foundation. The program helps build human, social, economic, environmental and interpersonal assets among poor and disadvantaged individuals worldwide.



“It is our hope that this community-action lecture series will add to the perspectives leading the One Spokane Initiative on Poverty,” says Professor of Politics & History Julia Stronks, who is helping to coordinate the series. “It will help our students, local churches and other community-based organizations as we all think about our role in doing justice in our community.”

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Gus Lee

The 2002-03 Ada Redmond Reading in November brought to campus award-winning author Gus Lee, who presented a business-ethics lecture and read from his works.



Lee is the author of four novels including *China Boy* (1991) and an upcoming memoir, *Chasing Hepburn: A Memoir of Shanghai, Hollywood, and a Chinese Family’s Fight for Freedom.* Lee’s ear for dialogue and vivid portrayal of the complexities of culture and society have made his four novels favorites among critics.

Prior to becoming a full-time author in 1993 and following the success of *China Boy*, Lee conducted notable careers in law and the military. He attended West Point and served in the U.S. Army as a drill sergeant and paratrooper. Lee earned B.A. and J.D. degrees from the University of California at Davis, where he also served as assistant dean of students for the Educational Opportunity Program and project coordinator of the Asian American Studies Program.

“Lee’s time on campus was valuable because he offered his wide-ranging expertise in business, law, and literature,” Sugano says. “In addition, his life experiences, including his connections to pre-Communist China, were invaluable to Whitworth’s history courses. Lee’s talk on business ethics and his reading raised a number of contemporary issues relating to corporate ethics, ‘doing the right thing’ in regard to ethnic diversity in the workplace, broadening our notions of American society, and reading works by writers of color. These are all issues that are being discussed openly on our campus and ought to be discussed everywhere.”

Wayne Angell

Kicking off Whitworth's new School of Global Commerce and Management, Wayne Angell, a former member of the board of governors at the Federal Reserve and chief economist for one of the world's largest investment banking and brokerage firms, spoke in September on *Capitalism, Christianity and Corporate Accountability*. Angell has made decisions with billion-dollar consequences and shared with the Whitworth community how ethical principles should guide business decisions, regardless of how many dollar signs and zeroes are at stake.



"The events of the last year in corporate America have properly enraged our sense of fairness," says Kyle Usrey, dean of the School of Global Commerce and Management. "Perhaps never before has the need for ethical leaders and business people been greater. By bringing in speakers like Wayne Angell, a person who has dedicated his career and life to leading with integrity, we hope to inspire students to incorporate such values in their lives and careers."

Jean Bethke Elshtain

Noted ethicist and political philosopher Jean Bethke Elshtain presented Whitworth's Simpson-Duvall lecture in November. Currently the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Professor of Social and Political Ethics at the University of Chicago, Elshtain lectured on the topic *Using Force on Behalf of Our Neighbors*. Elshtain researches and lectures on the connection between Americans' political and ethical convictions.



"Jean Bethke-Elshtain is one of America's leading public intellectuals," Soden says. "Her presence on campus stimulated conversations about how Christians might think about the pending war in the Middle East, American foreign policy, and the ways in which Christians should think about the concept of 'Who is my neighbor?'"

Suzanne Brown-Fleming

Suzanne Brown-Fleming, a program officer at the Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., spoke at Whitworth in October about the role of churches in the religious responses to the Holocaust.

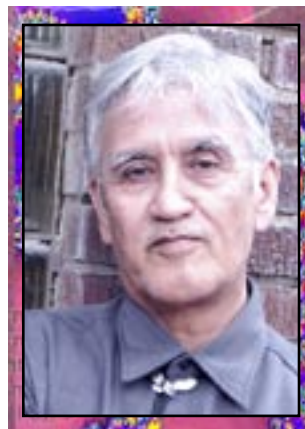


Hosted by the Weyerhaeuser Center for Christian Faith and Learning, Brown-Fleming discussed the religious and political climate of Germany in the years preceding the Holocaust, focusing on the pivotal year of 1933, which marked a split in German Protestantism and clarified the rights of the Catholic Church in Germany.

"Suzanne brought a very critical perspective to the role of the church in times of injustice, specifically the Holocaust," says Professor of Psychology James Waller, author of *Becoming Evil: How Ordinary People Commit Genocide and Mass Killing* (2002). "She helped us ask hard questions about what God calls the church to do and be in a society riven by discrimination, persecution, hatred and injustice. She challenged us to learn from our apathy and silence in the Holocaust and to ask where the church, and Christians, can make a world of difference today."

José Guerrero

The Art Department recently launched its Visiting Artist in Printmaking Program, which gives students and faculty the opportunity to work with professional artists who conduct printing workshops on campus. The program's first visiting artist was José



Guerrero, a nationally known artist from Chicago, who is a leader of the mural movement in art history and is recognized as one of the cutting-edge Latino artists in America. While at Whitworth, Guerrero worked with Assistant Professor of Art Scott Kolbo and his advanced printmaking class. Guerrero, Kolbo, and the students collaborated on a printing matrix that was completed by advanced art students under Kolbo's supervision.

The completed edition, signed and numbered by Guerrero, will be divided between the artist, Kolbo and the student collaborators, and the Art Department's permanent collection. Another portion will be sold to support the printmaking program that brought Guerrero to Whitworth.