PITTSBURGH HUMANITIES FESTIVAL 2017

EXPLORING WHAT IT MEANS TO BE HUMAN

MARCH 24-26, 2017
TRUSTARTS.ORG/SMARTTALK
412-456-6666 | GROUPS 10+ 412-471-6930
BOX OFFICE AT THEATER SQUARE
The Pittsburgh Cultural Trust and the Humanities Center at Carnegie Mellon University welcome you to the 2017 Pittsburgh Humanities Festival.

This three-day gathering in the Cultural District brings together internationally-renowned academics, artists, and intellectual innovators offering interviews, intimate conversations, and select performances focused on art, literature, music, science, policy, politics, and more—all helping us to explore what it means to be human. It’s smart talk about stuff that matters.

SPECIAL THANKS

90.5 WESA | 91.3 WYEP
Andy Warhol Museum
Carnegie Mellon International Film Festival
Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh
Center for the Arts in Society, Carnegie Mellon University
City of Asylum
Crazy Mocha
Eventioneers
The Heinz Endowments
Humanities Center, University of Pittsburgh
Humanities Scholars Program, Carnegie Mellon University
Institute for the Arts and Humanities, Penn State University
NEXT Pittsburgh
Pennsylvania Humanities Council
Pittsburgh Arts and Lectures
Gary and Valerie Schaffer
World Affairs Council

THE WRITERS OF THE ONION
FRIDAY, MARCH 24 | BYHAM THEATER
The award-winning satirical news organization is “arguably the most popular humor periodical in world history” (The New Yorker).

BASSEM YOUSSEF: THE JOKE IS MIGHTIER THAN THE SWORD
SATURDAY, MARCH 25 | BYHAM THEATER
The “Jon Stewart of the Arab World” was the host of AlBernameg, the first-of-its-kind political satire show in the Middle East.

KATHLEEN NEAL CLEAVER & DENISE OLIVER-VELEZ
SUNDAY, MARCH 26 | AUGUST WILSON CENTER
These history makers (and former Black Panther Party members) will speak to issues facing women and people of color today.

CORE CONVERSATIONS
MARCH 25 & 26
At the heart of the Festival are 25 intimate conversations helping us to explore what it means to be human. Find the schedule and speaker biographies on following pages.

PARTNER EVENTS (MORE INFO AT TRUSTARTS.ORG/SMARTTALK)

Diversity in Dance | Dance Theatre of Harlem & Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre
MARCH 19 | AUGUST WILSON CENTER

Zeyba Rahman: Managing Art and Social Impact
presented by CMU Center for the Arts and Society
MARCH 23 | CMU: HAMBURG HALL, A301

Anthropocene
in partnership with Carnegie Mellon International Film Festival & Carnegie Nexus’ Strange Times series
MARCH 24 | CMOA THEATER, CARNEGIE MUSEUM OF ART

Abacus: Small Enough to Jail
in partnership with Carnegie Mellon International Film Festival
MARCH 24 | HARRIS THEATER (CULTURAL DISTRICT)
MARCH 25 | CMU MCCONOMY AUDITORIUM

Field Recordings: The Bang On a Can All Stars
presented by Carnegie Nexus’ Strange Times series and as part of The Warhol Sound Series
MARCH 25 | CARNEGIE LECTURE HALL (OAKLAND)
### PRICING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>GENERAL ADMISSION</th>
<th>STUDENT RATE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CORE CONVERSATIONS PASS</strong></td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>$10</td>
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<tr>
<td>25 intimate conversations, interviews, &amp; performances on Saturday and Sunday</td>
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<td><strong>FEATURED EVENTS (PER SHOW)</strong></td>
<td>$50 (best seats)</td>
<td>$45 (best seats)</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Writers of the Onion, March 24</td>
<td>$25 (best value)</td>
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<td>Bassem Youssef, March 25</td>
<td>$20 (best price)</td>
<td>$15 (best price)</td>
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<tr>
<td>K. N. Cleaver &amp; D. Oliver-Velez, March 26</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ALL ACCESS</strong></td>
<td>$120 (best seats)</td>
<td>$105 (best seats)</td>
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<td>All Core Conversations + All Featured Events</td>
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<tr>
<td>$70 (best value)</td>
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<td>$60 (best price)</td>
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<td><strong>PARTNER EVENTS</strong></td>
<td>Tickets Sold Separately</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dance Theatre of Harlem w/ PGB Ballet Theatre, Zeyba Rahman, Anthropocene, Abacus: Small Enough to Jail &amp; Field Recordings</td>
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**TRUSTARTS.ORG/SMARTTALK**

**BOX OFFICE AT THEATER SQUARE**

**412-456-6666**

**GROUPS 10+ TICKETS 412-471-6930**
## SCHEDULE

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SATURDAY, MARCH 25</strong></td>
<td><strong>10:00 AM</strong></td>
<td>Michael Bérubé: Life as Jamie Knows It</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>11:30 AM</strong></td>
<td>Martín Espada: An Interview with Jim Daniels</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>1:30 PM</strong></td>
<td>Virginia Johnson: Art in Our Time</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>3:00 PM</strong></td>
<td>Steve James: Documentary Filmmaker</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>4:30 PM</strong></td>
<td>More Just Communities -From Stories to Action</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>12:00 PM</strong></td>
<td>Yona Harvey in Conversation with Ed Piskor</td>
<td>PAGE 14</td>
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<td>Elaine Frantz Parsons: The Ku Klux Klan in the History of White-on-Black Violence</td>
<td>PAGE 15</td>
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<td><strong>1:30 PM</strong></td>
<td>Have-A-Chat for Humanity: PJ Gaynard</td>
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<td>Have-A-Chat for Humanity: Bergitba Bugarija</td>
<td>PAGE 16</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3:00 PM</strong></td>
<td>Robert Christgau: “The Dean of Rock Critics”</td>
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<td>Sharon Dilworth</td>
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<td><strong>4:30 PM</strong></td>
<td>Osama Alomar</td>
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<td>Ambassador John F. Maisto in Conversation with Ambassador Dan Simpson</td>
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<td>A Conversation with Kathleen Neal Cleaver &amp; Denise Oliver-Velez</td>
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### FEATURED EVENTS

- **The Writers of The Onion**
  - Members of the creative staff offer an intimate glimpse inside the writers' room of America's Finest News Source. PAGE 20

- **Bassem Youssef: The Joke Is Mightier Than The Sword**
  - Dubbed the Jon Stewart of the Arab World, Youssef was the host of the popular TV show *AlBernameg* - which was the first of its kind, political satire show in the Middle East. PAGE 21

- **A Conversation with Kathleen Neal Cleaver & Denise Oliver-Velez**
  - Former members of the Black Panther Party and other organizations, participating in human rights, Civil Rights, women's rights, and AIDS activism movements since the late 1960s. PAGE 22
**MARTÍN ESPADA: AN INTERVIEW WITH JIM DANIELS**

Saturday, March 25
10:30–12:30 PM
HARRIS THEATER

Martín Espada will be interviewed by Jim Daniels, Poet and Screenwriter, Carnegie Mellon University.

Espada has published almost twenty books as a poet, editor, essayist and translator. His latest collection of poems from *Norton is Vivas to Those Who Have Failed* (2016). Junot Díaz writes that this book represents “Espada at his brilliant best, the poet laureate of our New America, with a voice that breaks heart, gives courage and burns all illusions.” His honors include the Shelley Memorial Award, the National Hispanic Cultural Center Literary Award, the PEN/Revson Fellowship and a Guggenheim Fellowship. The *Republic of Poetry* was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize. His book of essays, *Zapata’s Disciple* (1998), was banned in Tucson as part of the Mexican-American Studies Program outlawed by the state of Arizona, and reissued in 2016 by Northwestern University Press. A former tenant lawyer in Greater Boston’s Latino community, Espada is a professor of English at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst.

martinespada.net

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**DEMEATRIA BOCCELLA IN CONVERSATION WITH KARIN LEGATO**

Saturday, March 25
10–11 AM
Trust Arts Education Center
4th Floor

Demeatria Boccella is the founder of FashionAFRICANA—one of the leading African-inspired Fashion and Art events in Pittsburgh. Established in 2001, FashionAFRICANA celebrates the beauty and diversity of the African Diaspora through design, dance, music and curated exhibitions. The intent of FashionAFRICANA has always been to share the breadth and richness of African textures, ethos and history through the language of fashion.

Karin Legato, together with her late husband James, “were” Emphatics. They traveled the world seeking the most innovative and cutting edge designers. *Emphatics* brought them to Pittsburgh, becoming one of the country’s premier and internationally-respected high-fashion designer retailers.

danagioia.com

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**CORE CONVERSATIONS**

Michael Bérubé will read from and discuss his new book, *Life as Jamie Knows It*, a sequel to *Life as We Know It*, which introduced Jamie Bérubé to the world as a sweet, bright, gregarious little boy who loves the Beatles, pizza, and making lists. At four, he is like many kids his age, but his Down syndrome prevents most people from seeing him as anything but disabled. Twenty years later, Jamie is no longer little, though he still jams to the Beatles, eats pizza, and makes endless lists of everything. In *Life as Jamie Knows It*, Michael Bérubé chronicles his son’s journey to adulthood and his growing curiosity and engagement with the world.

michaelberube.com

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**DANA GIOIA: CAN POETRY MATTER?**

Saturday, March 25
10–11 AM
Trust Arts Education Center
Peirce Studio

Dana Gioia will be interviewed by Susan Balée, Journalist and Doctoral Student at the University of Pittsburgh.

Gioia is an internationally acclaimed and award-winning poet. Former Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, Gioia is a native Californian of Italian and Mexican descent. He received a B.A. and a M.B.A. from Stanford University and an M.A. in Comparative Literature from Harvard University. The current Poet Laureate of California, Gioia will take part in conversation about the state of poetry, literature, and the arts in contemporary American society.

Gioia has published five full-length collections of poetry, most recently *99 Poems: New & Selected*. His poetry collection, *Interrogations at Noon*, won the 2002 American Book Award. An influential critic as well, Gioia's 1991 volume *Can Poetry Matter?,* which was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle award, is credited with helping to revive the role of poetry in American public culture. In 2014 he won the Aiken-Taylor Award for lifetime achievement in American poetry.

danagioia.com
People are often skeptical of, if not surprised by, the notion of classical ballet in Harlem but, for the past 48 years, Dance Theatre of Harlem has been a shining example of exactly how powerful such an unexpected flowering can be. Sometimes providing an alternate view on a traditional perspective is just what is needed to bring a venerated art form like ballet into the present moment and by so doing define the role of art in our time.

Virginia Johnson is the Artistic Director of Dance Theatre of Harlem.

dancetheatreofharlem.org

Suzie Silver, a Professor of Art at Carnegie Mellon University, will present works from the Fairy Fantastic! series including The Sausage, Stinkhorn, and Better Out Than In.

Created by Suzie Silver and Hilary Harp, Fairy Fantastic! is a fairy and folk tale video series that celebrates and promotes gender diversity. By showing a wide variety of gender expressions within visually beautiful, complex and ancient tales, Fairy Fantastic! supports children of all ages in the discovery of their true selves.

Additionally she will provide a brief intro to her other collaborative projects in queer media and performance TQTV and TQ Live. TQTV is a playful and provocative video variety show reveling in the diversity of genders and sexualities.

TQ Live in an annual queer variety show presented at the Andy Warhol Museum and created in collaboration with Scott Andrew.

suziesilver.com

This talk traces the arc of the history of the birth control pill, from life-changing and revolutionary to life-enhancing and commonplace. In its first decade, the pill extended the reach of pharmacy beyond the treatment or prevention of disease and brought about a contraceptive revolution by changing the ways people thought about, discussed, and used birth control. By the 1990s, the pill had become part of the contraceptive establishment in America, prescribed and used more often than any other method. The transition in the pill’s status reveals sweeping changes in the trajectories of women, birth control, and pharmaceutical use over the last six decades.

Elizabeth Watkins, PhD, is Dean of the Graduate Division, Vice Chancellor of Student Academic Affairs, and Professor of History of Health Sciences at the University of California, San Francisco. She lived in Squirrel Hill for 12 years, from 1992 to 2004.

markclaytonsouthers.com
Friedl Dicker-Brandeis, a multitalented artist and designer and a gifted teacher, was deported to Theresiendstadt Ghetto and Concentration Camp in 1942; there she employed her Bauhaus methods in her teaching of hundreds of the camp’s young students to observe, draw, feel, and find light in one of the century’s darkest places. As a school dedicated to training a generation of young people from around the world to unite art and craft and to design their uses for a new, utopian society, the Bauhaus (1919-1933) was the twentieth century’s most influential art institution. With the Bauhaus’s closure under the Nazis, its members went on to start Black Mountain College and Chicago’s New Bauhaus, and to teach at Yale and Harvard. Less well known is that many Bauhaus members stayed in Europe, and some were victims of the Nazi persecution and genocide. Elizabeth Otto, art historian and Executive Director of the University at Buffalo Humanities Institute, gives a fresh look at a little-known side of the Bauhaus.

For centuries we’ve believed that work was where you learned discipline, initiative, honesty, self-reliance—in a word, character. A job was also, and not incidentally, the source of your income: if you didn’t work, you didn’t eat, or else you were stealing from someone. In recent decades, through everyday experience, these beliefs have proven spectacularly false. In his new book, No More Work, James Livingston explains how and why Americans still cling to work as a solution rather than a problem—why it is that both liberals and conservatives announce that “full employment” is their goal when job creation is no longer a feasible solution for any problem, moral or economic.

Livingston is professor of history at Rutgers University–New Brunswick. He is the author of six books on topics ranging from the Federal Reserve System to South Park.

Steve James will be interviewed by Joseph L. Lewis, III, a television producer, journalist, and media specialist. He’s worked on several documentary projects that aired on NBC, Bravo, PBS, and the A&E Network. Joe is the acting director of the Black Bottom Film Festival.

James (Hoop Dreams, The Interrupters, Life Itself) will be interviewed about his newest film, Abacus: Small Enough to Jail. Abacus tells the incredible saga of the Chinese immigrant Sung family, owners of Abacus Federal Savings of Chinatown, New York. Accused of mortgage fraud by Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus R. Vance, Jr., Abacus becomes the only U.S. bank to face criminal charges in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis. The indictment and subsequent trial forces the Sung family to defend themselves – and their bank’s legacy in the Chinatown community – over the course of a five-year legal battle.

See Abacus: Small Enough to Jail (USA, 2016, 88 min). Entry fee applies.

Friday, March 24 | 6 pm | Harris Theater

Saturday, March 25 | 5:30 pm | Carnegie Mellon University’s McConomy Auditorium (University Center)

The screening is presented by the CMU International Film Festival.

Friedl Dicker-Brandeis, a multitalented artist and designer and a gifted teacher, was deported to Theresiendstadt Ghetto and Concentration Camp in 1942; there she employed her Bauhaus methods in her teaching of hundreds of the camp’s young students to observe, draw, feel, and find light in one of the century’s darkest places. As a school dedicated to training a generation of young people from around the world to unite art and craft and to design their uses for a new, utopian society, the Bauhaus (1919-1933) was the twentieth century’s most influential art institution. With the Bauhaus’s closure under the Nazis, its members went on to start Black Mountain College and Chicago’s New Bauhaus, and to teach at Yale and Harvard. Less well known is that many Bauhaus members stayed in Europe, and some were victims of the Nazi persecution and genocide. Elizabeth Otto, art historian and Executive Director of the University at Buffalo Humanities Institute, gives a fresh look at a little-known side of the Bauhaus.

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The screening is presented by the CMU International Film Festival.
More Just Communities: From Stories to Action

SUNDAY, MARCH 26
4:30–6 PM
HARRIS THEATER

Explore storytelling and conversation, artmaking and artviewing as intentional processes that bring people together to take action and build a better shared future. Panelists will describe their work in documentary film, creative placemaking, and humanities-based resident engagement in a conversation moderated by Pittsburgh Post-Gazette Columnist and Associate Editor Tony Norman.

Panelists include:

Chris Ivey, a seasoned filmmaker in Pittsburgh, created the East of Liberty documentary series, which explores issues of race and class and addresses resident’s fears about gentrification.

Jason Schupbach oversees design and creative placemaking grantmaking and partnerships at the National Endowment for the Arts, including Our Town and Design Art Works grants, the Mayor’s Institute on City Design, the Citizens’ Institute on Rural Design, and the NEA’s federal agency collaborations related to community development.

Lindsay Houpt-Varner, a historian, directs Greater Carlisle Heart & Soul, an initiative to strengthen Greater Carlisle through storytelling and community engagement, using the Orton Family Foundation’s nationally recognized Community Heart & Soul® method.

Yona Harvey in Conversation with Ed Piskor

SUNDAY, MARCH 26
12–1 PM
HARRIS THEATER

Yona Harvey, poet and writer, will discuss current comics projects and experiences with comic illustrator Ed Piskor.

yonaharvey.com
edpiskor.com

Elaine Frantz Parsons: The Ku Klux Klan in the History of White-on-Black Violence

SUNDAY, MARCH 26
12–1 PM
TRUST ARTS EDUCATION CENTER | 4TH FLOOR

While the Ku Klux Klan is often seen as bizarre or mysterious, the Klan’s violence has long been just a particularly sensational example of violence white racist individuals and groups have consistently brought against black people since the middle of the 19th century. This talk explores how the Klan’s terrorism, in the 1860s, 1920s, 1960s, and recently, has mirrored and shaped this much broader culture of white-on-black violence.
elainefrantzparsons.com

Ambassador (Ret.) John F. Maisto in Conversation with Ambassador Dan Simpson: Foreign Affairs Challenges Past and Present—A Western Pennsylvania Perspective

SUNDAY, MARCH 26
12–1 PM
TRUST ARTS EDUCATION CENTER | PEIRCE STUDIO

Ambassador (ret.) John F. Maisto is a former Foreign Service Officer (33-year career) born, raised, and school-educated in a Monongahela Valley steel town—Braddock. He reflects on how that life helped craft a diplomatic career in Latin America and Asia. Plus, experience a free-wheeling discussion of the issues then and now, satisfactions and regrets, and how to learn from experience (maybe) as we face foreign affairs dangers, conundrums, and opportunities in the Trump era.

Ambassador Dan Simpson is a former American diplomat, with service at home and abroad, including as U.S. Ambassador to the Central African Republic, Somalia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, with assignments also to Nigeria, Libya, Burundi, South Africa, Bulgaria, Iceland, Lebanon, Bosnia-Herzegovina and as deputy commandant of the U.S. Army War College and the National Defense University. He is current Associate Editor of the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, writing daily editorials and a column on international affairs, U.S. politics, and economics.
Bugarija’s presentation is an insightful dive into the migrant journey. She explores what migrants learn along their way and how this can infuse a sense of humanity with fresh hope, helping us to see it all in a different light. Bugarija will flesh these ideas out using a compelling framework and vivid verbatims from interviewed individuals.

**BERGITA BUGARIJA**

**SUNDAY, MARCH 26**
**1:30–2:30 PM**
**TRUST ARTS EDUCATION CENTER | 4TH FLOOR**

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Robert Christgau will be interviewed by David Shumway, Professor of Literary and Cultural Studies, Carnegie Mellon, and author of Rock Star: The Making of Cultural Icons from Elvis to Springsteen.

The interview will focus on rock criticism’s beginnings during the 1960s and its evolution through the punk and hip-hop years into the a present where it takes many different forms--some explicitly commercial, others anything but, almost all beset by the economic challenges of journalism in the internet age.

robertchristgau.com

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Robert Christgau: “THE DEAN OF ROCK CRITICS”

**SUNDAY, MARCH 26**
**3–4 PM**
**HARRIS THEATER**

Robert Christgau will be interviewed by David Shumway, Professor of Literary and Cultural Studies, Carnegie Mellon, and author of Rock Star: The Making of Cultural Icons from Elvis to Springsteen.

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robertchristgau.com

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David Bennett explains that we know Bach mainly through his monumental organ pieces and large choral works. By examining his solo cello repertoire, we can become acquainted with a more personal side of Bach - a man struggling with the tragic loss of his beloved wife of 13 years, Maria Barbara. The presentation is a discussion of some of the personal details from Bach’s life that influenced his beautiful unaccompanied cello suites and a live performance of four movements.

**DAVID BENNETT**

**SUNDAY, MARCH 26**
**1:30–2:30 PM**
**TRUST ARTS EDUCATION CENTER | PEIRCE STUDIO**

Bennett explains that we know Bach mainly through his monumental organ pieces and large choral works. By examining his solo cello repertoire, we can become acquainted with a more personal side of Bach - a man struggling with the tragic loss of his beloved wife of 13 years, Maria Barbara. The presentation is a discussion of some of the personal details from Bach’s life that influenced his beautiful unaccompanied cello suites and a live performance of four movements.

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Sharon Dilworth is an award-winning fiction writer and Director of Carnegie Mellon University's Creative Writing program. She’s the author of three short story books including Year of the Ginkgo, Women Drinking Benedictine, and The Long White. Her work is also featured in the collection of short stories, Here: Women Writing on Michigan’s Upper Peninsula.

John Allison, Editorial Page Editor for the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette will interview Dilworth. They will talk about fiction and writing about Pittsburgh and other places.

sharondilworth.com
People expect robots to behave appropriately and competently. There has been progress in meeting these expectations but this is not always feasible or desired. How humans react to robots that violate these expectations reveals how we view ourselves in relation to other intelligent entities.

Aaron Steinfeld is a Professor of Robotics at Carnegie Mellon University specializing in human-robot interaction. The central themes of his work are what he prefers to term constrained user interfaces and operator assistance.

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette reporter Chris Potter will be in discussion with writer, editor, and Director of Digital and Feature Content for WESA Patrick Doyle, regarding journalism in the age of social media.

Osama Alomar will be interviewed by Ross Harrison, faculty member at the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University and scholar at The Middle East Institute in Washington, DC. He also teaches a course in Middle East politics at the University of Pittsburgh. Born in Damascus, Syria in 1968 and now living in Chicago, Osama Alomar is one of the most well-respected Arabic poets writing today, and a prominent practitioner of the Arabic al-qisa al-qasira jiddan, the “very short story.” He is the author of Fullblood Arabian in English, and three collections of short stories and a volume of poetry in Arabic. Alomar’s first full-length collection of stories, The Teeth of the Comb, will be published by New Directions in April. His short stories have been published by Newyorker.com, Noon, Conjunctions.com, The Coffin Factory, Electric Literature, and The Literary Review. He also performs as a musician.

Linn Meyers will be interviewed by Jessica Beck, Associate Curator of Art at the Andy Warhol Museum.

Linn Meyers will show slides of her paintings, drawings, and site-specific installations, and discuss her practice.

Hammer Museum Senior Curator Anne Ellegood characterized Meyers’s work as “evidence of an action; they are traces or indexes of an event requiring intense stamina and patience.” She notes that “Meyers shares Pollock’s fascination with ‘baseness,’ with the most fundamental of human behaviors... She is after a purity of making... a directness wherein the materiality of the work is evident...”
THE WRITERS OF THE ONION

FRIDAY, MARCH 24
8 PM
BYHAM THEATER

Seena Vali is a New Jersey native who began contributing to The Onion in 2011 and now serves as both sports editor and senior writer. He is a graduate of Fordham University and prefers short, concise bios.

Matt Spina is a New Jersey native and staff writer who has been with The Onion since 2015. He is startled by loud noises and crowds and should only be approached with the assistance of a certified handler.

The Onion is an award-winning satirical news organization, delivering unrivaled journalism and reaching millions of fans through print, broadcast, radio, online, and mobile outlets.

Founded in 1988 as a student newspaper at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, The Onion now has a devout following of 2 million readers per week in print and has been described as “arguably the most popular humor periodical in world history” by The New Yorker. Its 23-time Webby Award-winning website, TheOnion.com, described by TIME as “the funniest site on the Internet,” averages 40 million page views per month.

The Onion brings humor and intellect into every live engagement. A typical presentation features two members of the creative staff offering the audience an intimate glimpse inside the writers’ room of America’s Finest News Source, as well as behind the scenes access to its video and television arm, the Onion News Network. The talented writers and editors walk the audience through the history of the satirical news behemoth, taking them beyond its famous headlines, and—provided the proper headset mics—they dance. Topics can range from an overview of The Onion’s year in news to a harsh analysis of today’s corporate landscape to what new media means for the publishing industry.

THE JOKE IS MIGHTIER THAN THE SWORD

SATURDAY, MARCH 25
8 PM
BYHAM THEATER

Dubbed the “Jon Stewart of the Arab World,” Bassem Youssef was the host of the popular TV show AlBernameg – which was the first of its kind, political satire show in the Middle East. Originally a 5-minute show on YouTube, AlBernameg became the first online to TV conversion in the Middle East and the most watched show across the region with 30 million viewers every week. It received global acclaim with coverage in major media outlets, topped off by Youssef’s appearance on the Daily Show with Jon Stewart twice and, later, his hosting of Jon Stewart on AlBernameg in Cairo.

Throughout its three seasons AlBernameg remained controversial through its humorous yet bold criticism of the ruling powers, which led to tens of lawsuits being filed against the show and its host. Youssef was even issued an arrest warrant in 2013 and turned himself in the next day where he was questioned for five hours and released on bail. In recognition of his success, in 2013, Youssef was named among Time Magazine’s most influential list, was awarded the International Press Freedom Award by the CPJ, and was chosen by Foreign Policy magazine as a Leading Global Thinker.

Youssef’s most recent projects include Democracy Handbook—a ten-part series exploring topics of democracy on fusion.net, and the launch of a new book, Revolution for Dummies: Laughing Through the Arab Spring in the spring of 2017.

Youssef majored in cardiothoracic surgery, passed the United States Medical License Exam (USMLE) and is a member of the Royal College of Surgeons (MRCS).
A CONVERSATION WITH  
KATHLEEN NEAL CLEAVER  
& DENISE OLIVER-VELEZ

SUNDAY, MARCH 26
7 PM
AUGUST WILSON CENTER

Kathleen Neal Cleaver was the Communications Secretary of the Black Panther Party from 1967 to 1971. She currently holds an appointment as a senior lecturer and research fellow at Emory University School of Law and is Senior Lecturer at Yale University in the Dept. of African American Studies.

Denise Oliver-Velez was a former member of both the Young Lords and Black Panther Party. She is currently an adjunct Professor of Anthropology and Women’s Studies at SUNY New Paltz, and is a Contributing Editor for the progressive political blog Daily Kos.

Both of these history makers believe in the political, social, economic, and sexual equality of women and girls and will speak to this and other matters facing women and people of color today.