Centennial Filiations
Theory, Aesthetics, and Politics of Literary and Cinematic Fiction

The Invited Speakers

1. Réda Bensmaïa is University Professor of French and Francophone Literature in the Departments of French Studies and Comparative Literature at Brown University. He obtained his doctorate from the École Pratique des Hautes Études in Paris and has held visiting professorships at Harvard and Emory. He served as the Director of the Paris Center for Critical Studies and is a recipient of the prestigious Chevalier de l'Ordre des Palmes Académiques. He has published extensively on French and Francophone literature of the twentieth century as well as on film theory and contemporary philosophy. In addition to numerous articles, he is the author of The Barthes Effect, Introduction to the Reflective Text (Minnesota, 1987); The Years of Passages (Minnesota, 1995); Alger ou la maladie de la mémoire (L'Harmattan, 1997) and Experimental Nations or The Invention of the Maghreb (Princeton University Press, 2003), which received the Scaglione Prize for French and Francophone Literary Studies. He is also the editor of Gilles Deleuze (Lendemains, 1989) and Recommending Deleuze (Discourse, 1998).

2. Timothy Bewes is Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Brown University. His research areas include aesthetic theory, poststructuralist and Marxist literary theory, postmodernism and postcolonialism, and the politics and ethics of literary form. He is the author of Cynicism and Postmodernity (Verso, 1997); Reification, or the Anxiety of Late Capitalism (Verso, 2002); and The Event of Postcolonial Shame (Princeton, 2011). He has co-edited several collections of essays, Cultural Capitalism (Lawrence and Wishart 2001, with Jeremy Gilbert), and Georg Lukács: The Fundamental Dissonance of Existence (Aesthetics, Politics, Literature) Continuum, 2011, with Timothy Hall), as well as a special issue of New Formations titled After Fanon (2002). His articles have appeared in such journals as New Left Review, New Literary History, Parallax, Genre, Differences, Twentieth Century Literature and Cultural Critique. He has served on the editorial board of the journal New Formations since 1998, and as an editor of Novel since 2005.

3. Vincent Debaene is Associate Professor of French at Columbia University. He specializes in twentieth-century French Literature, literary theory, and intellectual history. He holds a Ph.D. from the Université de Paris- Sorbonne and was a fellow at the École Normale Supérieure, Paris, France. He has published numerous articles in edited volumes and in scholarly journals such as Cultural Anthropology, Yale French Studies, Romanic Review, Critique, Europe, and Les temps modernes. He is the author of L’Adieu au voyage: L’ethnologie française entre science et littérature (Paris: Gallimard, 2010); and with Frédéric Keck, of Claude Lévi-Strauss. L’Homme au regard éloigné, (Gallimard, 2009). He also edited several books, notably a critical edition of Claude Lévi Strauss’ Tristes Tropiques (Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 2008). He serves as the Associate Editor of Romanic Review.
4. Richard J. Golsan is University Distinguished Professor and Distinguished Professor of French at Texas A & M University, College Station. He is also the Director of the Melbern G. Glasscock Center for Humanities Research at TAMU. His research interests include the history and memory of World War II in France and Europe and the political involvements of French and European writers and intellectuals with anti-democratic and extremist politics in the 20th and 21st centuries. His most recent book is entitled *French Writers and the Politics of Complicity* (Johns Hopkins, 2006). Professor Golsan served as a Visiting Professor at the University of Paris III-Sorbonne Nouvelle in 2001. He has been recognized by the Italian government in being named to the *Ordina Della Stella Della Solidarieta Italiana* and by the French government by being awarded the *Palmes Academiques*. In summer 2012, he co-directed with Henry Rousso an NEH Summer Seminar for College and University Teachers on the problem of memory in contemporary France at the Institute for Contemporary History (IHTP) in Paris. He has served as Editor of the *South Central Review* (SCMLA) since 1994, and is also the Director of the France/TAMU Centre Pluridisciplinaire, funded by the French government. Professor Golsan is currently writing a book entitled *Corruptions of Memory: Crises of Post-Holocaust Remembrance in Contemporary France*.

5. Alice Kaplan is the John M. Musser Professor of French and Chair of the Department of French at Yale University. Professor Kaplan’s research interests include autobiography and memory, translation in theory and practice, literature and the law, twentieth-century French literature, French cultural studies, and post-war French culture. She is the author of *Reproductions of Banality: Fascism, Literature, and French Intellectual Life* (Minnesota, 1986); *French Lessons: A Memoir* (Chicago, 1994); *The Collaborator: The Trial and Execution of Robert Brasillach* (Chicago, 2001). She has also published *The Interpreter* (Chicago, 2007), a work about racial injustice in the American army witnessed by Louis Guilloux; and *Dreaming in French* (Chicago, 2012), a book about the Paris years of Jacqueline Bouvier, Susan Sontag, and Angela Davis. A French edition of *Dreaming in French* was published by Gallimard in 2012. Professor Kaplan is the translator of Louis Guilloux's novel *OK, Joe!* and Evelyne Bloch-Dano's *Madame Proust: A Biography*. She is a member of the editorial board at *South Atlantic Quarterly* and of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

6. James Le Sueur is Professor of History at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, and a specialist of the intellectual history of France and Algeria. His research areas include terrorism, radical Islam, and decolonization since 1919. He has published extensively on these and other topics such as the French-Algerian War and contemporary Algeria. He is the author of *Algeria since 1989: Between Democracy and Terror* (London: Zed, 2010), and *Uncivil War: Intellectuals and Identity Politics during the Decolonization of Algeria* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001). He has edited numerous volumes, notably *The Decolonization Reader* (London: Routledge, 2003), Mouloud Feraoun’s *Journal 1955-1962* (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 2000) and *The Poor Man’s Son* (University of Virginia Press, 2005), and wrote the introduction to Henri Alleg’s *The Question* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005). In 2002, Professor Le Sueur was appointed Senior Associate Member of the Middle East Centre, St. Antony’s College,
Oxford University. A recipient of several teaching awards, Professor Le Sueur led the NEH Summer Institute on North Africa at Oregon State University in 2013.

7. Giuseppina Mecchia is Associate Professor of French at the University of Pittsburgh. Her research focuses on 19th- and 20th-century French and Italian literature and political thought, but also includes philosophy and critical theory within its scope. She is the author of several articles and book chapters on Marcel Proust, Maurice Blanchot, Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari, Michel Foucault, Antonio Negri, and Jacques Rancière, among others. She is the co-editor, with Tim Murphy, of *The Futures of Empire*, an edited volume on Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri’s *Empire* trilogy (Minnesota, forthcoming); and with Todd Reeser, of *Ideas of France*, a special issue of *Sites: The Journal of French and Francophone Contemporary Studies* (March 2013).

8. Pamela Pears is Associate Professor of French and Chair of the Department of Modern Languages at Washington College in Chestertown, Maryland. She earned her PhD in French at the University of Pittsburgh in 2001. Her research interests and publications focus on the French language writings of authors such as Kateb Yacine, Ly Thu Ho, Yamina Mechakra, Nina Bouraoui, and Assia Djebar. In 2004 her first monograph, entitled *Remnants of Empire in Algeria and Vietnam: Women, Words, and War* was published by Lexington Books as part of their “After the Empire” series. Later this year the same press will publish her second monograph, which is a study of the paratextual elements present in contemporary Maghrebi women’s writing. In the book, she analyzes the iconography used for cover images on a sampling of paperbacks published in France. The interdisciplinary analysis explores the consonance and/or dissonance with the textual message and readers’ responses to the dialogue that is created between the text and the image found on its cover. She is also currently editing a special issue of the journal *CELAAN* (*Revue du Centre d’Etudes des Littératures et des Arts d’Afrique du Nord/Review of the Center for the Study of the Literature and Arts of North Africa*), focusing on filmmaker Abdellatif Kechiche, which will appear in Fall 2015.

9. Gabriel Rockhill is Associate Professor of Philosophy at Villanova University, Director of the Critical Theory Workshop/Atelier de Théorie Critique (Paris) and Program Director at the Collège International de Philosophie (Paris). Professor Rockhill has broad research interests spanning art and politics, contemporary philosophy and critical theory. He is the author of *Radical History & the Politics of Art* (Columbia, 2014); and *Logique de l’histoire: Pour une analytique des pratiques philosophiques* (Hermann, 2010). This book provides a detailed account - via case studies on Plato, Descartes and contemporary thinkers ranging from Foucault and Derrida to Lévinas and Lyotard - of the historical and hermeneutic "shift" in philosophic practice and its consequences for contemporary theory. He is the co-editor, with Philip Watts, of *Jacques Rancière: History, Politics, Aesthetics* (Duke, 2009); with Alfredo Gomez-Muller, of *Politics of Culture and the Spirit of Critique: Dialogues* (Columbia, 2011); and with Pierre-Antoine Chardel, of *Technologies de contrôle dans la mondialisation: Enjeux politiques, éthiques et esthétiques* (Kimé, 2009). In addition to numerous articles on a wide range of topics in
French and English, he also edited and translated Jacques Rancière’s *The Politics of Aesthetics* (Continuum, 2004) and Cornelius Castoriadis’s *Postscript on Insignificance* (Continuum, 2011).

10. Steven Ungar is Professor of Film Studies and Chair of Cinematic Arts at the University of Iowa. His research areas include 20th- and 21st-century French fiction, poetry, and thought; first-person narration; everyday life in word and image; North African writing and film; French film of the 1930s; Left-Bank cinema (of filmmakers such Resnais, Marker, Varda, and Rouch). His book-length publications include *Roland Barthes: The Professor of Desire* (Nebraska, 1983); *Scandal and Aftereffect: Blanchot and France Since 1930* (Minnesota, 1995); *Popular Front Paris and the Poetics of Culture* (Harvard, 2005, with Dudley Andrew); and *Cléo de 5 à 7* (BFI, 2008). He is the coeditor, with Tom Conley, of *Identity Papers: Scenes of Contested Nationhood in Twentieth-Century France* (Minnesota, 2009). He has written essays on writings by Jean-Paul Sartre, Jean Rouch, Jean Vigo, Patrick Modiano, W.G. Sebald, René Vautier, and André Bazin. During 2012-2013, Professor Ungar’s research on *Critical Mass: Social Documentary in France* (1927-1962), was supported by a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship. His most recent articles on French cinema have appeared in the journals *SubStance* and *Yale French Studies*, and in edited volumes with Wiley-Blackwell and Intellect.

11. Richard Watts is Associate Professor and Chair of French at the University of Washington, Seattle. Professor Watts has research and teaching interests in the post/colonial francophone world. He is the author of *Packaging Post/Coloniality: The Manufacture of Literary Identity in the Francophone World* (Lexington Books, 2005), which considers how the presentation of books – their covers, illustrations, dedications, and, most significantly, prefaces – allowed them to pass from the post/colonial space of their production to the largely metropolitan French space of their consumption. Written at the intersection of postcolonial studies and ecocriticism, his current project, tentatively titled *Water Narratives: Imagining Global Environmental Change in the Francophone Post/colonial World*, examines how the pollution, privatization, and manufactured scarcity of water are rapidly altering its previously stable symbolic value in literature, cinema and other forms of cultural production. He has published on these and other subjects in *Modern Language Notes, Research in African Literatures, Traducation-Terminologie-Rédaction, French Forum*, and *Sites*. He was a research fellow at the University of Washington Simpson Center for the Humanities in 2009-2010 and had a residency at the Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Center in Winter 2010.

12. Christian Wood obtained his Ph.D. in Philosophy (with Distinction) from the University of New Mexico in 2010, and is currently a Ph.D. candidate in French Studies at UNM (expected in April 2016). His second dissertation, entitled *The Ethics and Politics of Love in Post-War France: A Study of Beauvoir, Camus and Sartre*, argues that Beauvoir, Camus and Sartre’s respective theories (and life practices) of love—erotic, filial, and communitarian—substantially informed their ethical and political theories circa 1935 to 1960. His thesis is that an exploration of each thinker’s expressions of love—in literature,
in theory, and in biographical practice—yields hitherto uncharted insights into the motivation for, and conceptual framework of, their ethical and political projects of this period. The broader application of his research considers the extent to which one’s theory and practice of love informs one’s ethical and political commitments, from classical Western thought to the 20th- and 21st-century phenomenological traditions.

Dr. Wood’s first dissertation, *Emmanuel Lévinas’s Polyvalent Phenomenology of Totality and Infinity*, argues that instead of betraying an essentially antagonistic structure, “totality” and “infinity”, two of Lévinas’ key technical terms, constitute two distinct phenomenal aspects that reveal a “polyvalent” or Gestalt structure, larger than the sum of its parts, in which the self’s attunement contributes to a given phenomenological field. Dr. Wood is the recipient of two fellowships at UNM, the Barrett Fellowship (Philosophy) and the Carol Raymond Fellowship (FLL). Since 2011, he has been a member of the *Lévinas Research Seminar*, an interdisciplinary group of university scholars specializing in the thought of Emmanuel Lévinas.