



HUMANITIES WEST

*Exploring History. Celebrating the Arts.*

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**Public Info: Humanities West**

[www.humanitieswest.org](http://www.humanitieswest.org)

**Tickets: City Box Office 415/392-4400**

[www.cityboxoffice.com](http://www.cityboxoffice.com)

## **HUMANITIES WEST PRESENTS**

### ***The Celts: History, Culture, Legend***

**Friday & Saturday, May 6 & 7, 2016**

**Marines' Memorial Theatre, 609 Sutter Street, San Francisco, CA**

*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:* (SAN FRANCISCO, XX March, 2016) Humanities West's 2015-2016 Season culminates with ***The Celts: History, Culture, Legend***, a two-day program of lectures, discussions, and a special musical performance celebrating the colorful Celtic past, while uncovering the mysteries of ancient legends and lore attributed to the Celtic people. The program takes place on Friday, May 6, from 7:30pm to 9:30pm, and Saturday, May 7, from 10am to 4pm, at Marines' Memorial Theatre, located at 609 Sutter Street in downtown San Francisco.

Tickets for ***The Celts: History, Culture, Legend*** are priced as follows: Single tickets for individual Friday programs are \$55 orchestra and \$45 balcony and individual Saturday programs are \$80 orchestra and \$55 balcony, single tickets for both days of each program are \$125 orchestra and \$90 balcony. Order direct from City Box Office 415-392-4400 or [www.cityboxoffice.com](http://www.cityboxoffice.com). Free tickets are available in limited quantities for students age 25 or younger; inquire at [info@humanitieswest.org](mailto:info@humanitieswest.org).

From Galatia in modern Turkey to Galicia in northwest Spain, Celtic peoples dominated pre-Roman Europe. Celtic culture outlasted Roman military rule and generated a rich archive of art, religious and cultural traditions, and legends that inspired epic and lyric poetry in Europe's successor languages. Celtic cultural identity remains strong wherever Celtic languages are spoken. Celtic musical and literary contributions to the European culture have been notable—from Thomas Moore, the Bard of Erin, to Seamus Heaney. This program uncovers Celtic myths and misconceptions, explores ancient legends and lore connecting the present to the past, and brings to life the things that mattered most to our Celtic predecessors.

On Friday evening, **Daniel Melia** (UC Berkeley) provides the opening lecture and overview on ***The Celtic World***. Though much of the Celtic past is shrouded in mystery, with the aid of historical records from the Classical world, modern archaeology, and the discipline of historical linguistics, Melia is able to present a vivid and surprisingly full picture of the elusive history of Celtic languages and culture in Europe.

The Friday evening program includes ***O'Carolan's Farewell to Music***, a special one-person musical theater performance about highly regarded Celtic harper and composer Turlough O'Carolan. Conceived and performed by **Patrick Ball**, and written by Patrick Ball and Peter Glazer, this piece brings to the stage the legendary life, the turbulent times and the captivating music of this most celebrated Irish artist.

On Saturday, **Joseph Falaky Nagy** (UCLA) gives a talk on ***Celtic Storytellers and Their 'Bag of Tricks' Through the Ages*** focusing on persistent and recurring themes, story patterns, and narrative motifs found in medieval Irish and Welsh storytelling, from the middle of the first millennium CE to recent times.

Following is a presentation by **Elaine Treharne** (Stanford) ***From Cats to Rattlebags: Medieval Celtic Scribes and Their Books***, regarding the many significant Celtic manuscripts in Latin, Irish, Welsh and Cornish from the Medieval period (c. 600-1500). From *The Mabinogion* to sermons, drama to great national myths, these manuscripts reveal a great deal about the scribes and artists who produced them.

The program continues with ***Making Celtic Art: Materials and Meaning from the Iron Age to the Internet*** with **Karen Eileen Overbey** (Tufts University). Overbey discusses the materials, technologies and motifs of Celtic art across the ages and what these tell us about the people that used them along with their impact on contemporary art and technology.

Catherine Flynn (UC Berkeley) completes the seminar with ***The Celts in Modernist and Contemporary Irish Literature***. From W.B. Yeats' visionary *Celtic Twilight* to James Joyce's taunting "cultic twalette," Professor Flynn's lecture examines strikingly different representations of the Celts in Irish literature in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Reimagined as mystics, craftsmen, hags, and bog bodies, these Celtic figures allow us to understand writers' changing moods and ambitions as they emulate, mock, dig up and speak to a reanimated past.

A panel discussion with the presenters will follow, addressing questions from the audience.

\*Ancillary programs providing opportunities to learn more about the featured topic and related issues complement this two-day event. For a complete program schedule and additional information about the presenters please visit [www.humanitieswest.org](http://www.humanitieswest.org)

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### **About Humanities West**

Serving the Bay Area since 1983, Humanities West Explores History and Celebrates the Arts through time and across the globe, bringing illuminating lectures and dynamic performances that focus on the people, places, and events that have shaped, and still inform, modern cultures.

Each season Humanities West presents a number of programs in which leading scholars and artists present lectures, performances, readings and discussions to audiences in San Francisco's Marines' Memorial Theatre. These one- or two-day events represent an opportunity unique not only to the Bay Area, but also to the entire United States. In cooperation with other institutions, such as the Mechanics' Institute Library and the Commonwealth Club of San Francisco, additional public lectures and panels are presented to further expand upon program topics

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## **CALENDAR LISTING: EVENTS/LECTURES/ARTS & CULTURE**

### **WHAT: *The Celts: History, Culture, Legend***

Humanities West presents *The Celts: History, Culture, Legend*, a two-day program of lectures, discussions, and a special musical theater performance celebrating the colorful and often mysterious Celtic past, while uncovering prevalent misconceptions of ancient legends and lore attributed to the Celtic people.

Presenters include Daniel Melia (UC Berkeley), Joseph Falaky Nagy (UCLA), Elaine Treharne (Stanford), Karen Eileen Overbey (Tufts), and Catherine Flynn (UC Berkeley); with a special one-person musical theater performance conceived and performed by Patrick Ball.

**WHEN: 7:30pm to 9:30pm, Friday, May 6, 2016  
10am to 4pm, Saturday, May 7, 2016**

**WHERE: Marines' Memorial Theatre  
609 Sutter Street, San Francisco**

**TICKETS: \$25 - \$80**  
Tickets are available through City Box Office at 415-392-4400 or online at [www.cityboxoffice.com](http://www.cityboxoffice.com)  
Group tickets: [info@humanitieswest.org](mailto:info@humanitieswest.org)

**PUBLIC INFO: 415/391-9700 or [www.humanitieswest.org](http://www.humanitieswest.org)**

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### **\*Ancillary Programs for *The Celts: History, Culture, Legend***

#### **PERFORMANCE: Music of the Celtic Nations**

Multi-instrumentalists **Shira Kammen** and **Jim Oakden** celebrate St. Patrick's Day with a performance of the music of the Celtic nations—Brittany, Galicia, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, etc.—on piano, bagpipes, and other Celtic instruments.

**When: 6:00pm, Thursday, March 17, 2016**

**Where:** Hotel Rex  
562 Sutter Street, SF, CA

**Cost:** \$25

**TIX:** [www.cityboxoffice.com](http://www.cityboxoffice.com) or 415-392-4400

#### **LECTURE: Women's Roles in the Easter 1916 Rising and its Aftermath**

Join **Sinead McCool**, author of *Easter Widows* for a talk on *Women's Roles in the Easter 1916 Rising and its Aftermath*.

**When: 6:00pm, Thursday, March 31, 2016**

**Where:** Mechanics' Institute

57 Post Street, SF

**Cost:** \$15

**HUMANITIES WEST BOOK DISCUSSION with Lynn Harris**

Humanities West Book Discussion led by Lynn Harris – *How the Irish Saved Civilization* by Thomas Cahill

**When:** 5:00pm, Monday, April 25, 2016

**Where:** Commonwealth Club of California  
555 Post Street, SF, CA

**Cost:** \$5

**Tickets:** www.commonwealthclub.org or 415-597-6700

**PERFORMANCE: Voices of the Easter Rising 1916: A Theatrical Evening of Irish Poetry, Stories, & Song**

Voices of the Easter Rising 1916: A Theatrical Evening of Irish Poetry, Stories and Song expresses the passions of protest and the yearning for Irish independence on the centennial of this momentous event.

Co-sponsored by Mechanics' Institute and the Irish-American Crossroads Festival.

**When:** 7:00pm, Thursday, April 28, 2016

**Where:** Mechanics' Institute  
57 Post Street, SF

**Cost:** TBA

**FIRESIDE CHAT with George Hammond – The Celts: History, Culture, Legend – Preview**

Join Humanities West board member George Hammond for a preview of the two-day lecture/performance series *The Celts: History, Culture, Legend*.

**When:** 6:30pm, Tuesday, May 3, 2016

**Where:** Orinda Library,  
26 Orinda Way, Orinda, CA

**Cost:** Free

**MEETUP with Humanities West at the Hotel Rex Library Bar**

**When:** 6:00pm, Friday, May 6, 2016

**Where:** Hotel Rex  
562 Sutter Street, SF

**Cost:** No-host Bar

**HUMANITIES WEST BOOK DISCUSSION with Lynn Harris**

Humanities West Book Discussion led by Lynn Harris – *The Celts, Celtic Myths & Legends* by Peter Beresford Ellis

**When:** 5:00pm, Monday, May 23, 2016

**Where:** Commonwealth Club of California  
555 Post Street, SF, CA

**Cost:** \$5

**Tickets:** www.commonwealthclub.org or 415-597-6700

**LECTURE: Adam Hochschild on Spain in Our Hearts: Americans in the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939**

Adam Hochschild presents his latest book: *Spain in Our Hearts: Americans in the Spanish Civil War 1936-1939*.

**When:** 6:00pm, Wednesday, May 25, 2016

**Where:** Mechanics' Institute  
57 Post Street, SF

**Cost:** \$15