

February 10, 2009

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Public Info: Humanities West www.humanitieswest.org

Tickets: City Box Office 415/392-4400, www.cityboxoffice.com

HUMANITIES WEST PRESENTS

Confronting Napoleon: European Culture at the Crossroads

An Interdisciplinary Program Exploring History to Celebrate the Mind and the Arts

Friday & Saturday, April 17 & 18, 2009

Herbst Theatre, San Francisco

Humanities West, a Bay Area non-profit, presents *Confronting Napoleon: European Culture at the Crossroads*, a two-day program of lectures, discussions, and musical presentations exploring Napoleon Bonaparte's far-reaching influence following the French Revolution. The program takes place on Friday, April 17, from 8 pm to 10:15 pm and Saturday, April 18, from 10 am to 4 pm, at Herbst Theatre, 401 Van Ness Avenue in San Francisco.

Tickets for *Confronting Napoleon: European Culture at the Crossroads* are priced as follows: Single tickets for the Friday program are \$45 orchestra/grand tier and \$30 balcony; single tickets for the Saturday program are \$65 orchestra/grand tier and \$40 balcony, single tickets for both days are \$100 orchestra/grand tier and \$55 balcony. Special Student/Teacher tickets are available at \$20 balcony for single day admission. Order direct from City Box Office at 415/392-4400 or www.cityboxoffice.com. For more information check the website at: www.humanitieswest.org.

Confronting Napoleon: European Culture at the Crossroads brings together a panel of world-class scholars and a San Francisco pianist to examine Napoleon's far-reaching influence on European culture. The French Revolution unleashed institution-shattering forces. Napoleon successfully refocused these forces on the rest of Europe, and the French tide swept over the continent, and even across the Mediterranean, leaving the remnants of many *ancien regimes* refashioned in its wake. France's reassertion of cultural preeminence provoked responses from uncritical enthusiasm to repugnance, from a love-hate affair with the Russian aristocracy to British resistance against both Napoleon's armies and his cultural influence. Napoleon invaded Egypt yet crafted enlightened policy sympathetic to Islam, resurrected Roman civil law, inspired Beethoven, challenged Goethe and Tolstoy to think again, and bankrolled a return to grandeur in the fine arts. This two-day presentation explores both the charisma and contradictions of Napoleon's character and cultural legacy.

Roger Hahn (UC Berkeley) will moderate the program. On Friday **Steven Englund** (*Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales* and American University of Paris) will discuss the mesmerizing power of Napoleon the man, Napoleon the general, and Napoleon the Emperor; and how this 27-year-old minor Italian nobleman rose to power with the promise of glory for the French following the horrors of the Revolution. **Michael Marrinan** (Stanford University) follows with an illustrated survey of the arts under

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On Saturday **Laurent Mayali** (Lloyd M. Robbins Professor of Law, UC Berkeley Law School) lectures on the civil law reforms instituted by Napoleon, and the other positive cultural legacies of his short-lived empire. **Luba Golburt** (Assistant Professor of Russian Literature, UC Berkeley) will trace some of the stages of Napoleon's dethronement as depicted in Tolstoy's great novel *War and Peace*, examining the character's physique and mannerisms, his mistaken notions of hero-centered warfare, and the contrasting models of leadership. Pianist **Teresa Yu** (San Francisco Conservatory) will perform Beethoven's virtuosic "Eroica Variations," Op. 35, a set of fifteen variations for solo piano dating from 1802, and based on the same theme Beethoven used in the finale of his "Eroica" Symphony (No. 3), composed the following year and originally dedicated to Napoleon. **Juan Cole** (Richard P. Mitchell Distinguished University Professor of History, University of Michigan) completes the program with a presentation on the painters who, in subsequent decades, took up the themes of Napoleon's Egyptian conquest, some glorifying French dominance and others depicting the barbarity of Napoleon's military policies.

For a complete program schedule and additional information about the presenters please visit www.humanitieswest.org.

Founded in 1983, Humanities West, a Bay Area non-profit, is dedicated to "exploring history to celebrate the mind and the arts." Designed to entertain and educate diverse audiences, these programs offer a lively combination of wide-ranging lectures and performances that encompass the fine and performing arts, social history, music, politics, and philosophy of the arts.

This program is supported in part by the Consul General of France in San Francisco; the Cultural Attache of France in San Francisco; Grants for the Arts/ San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund; Bank of the West; Center for Middle East Studies, UC Berkeley; Institute of European Studies, UC Berkeley; Institute of Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies, UC Berkeley; Stanford Humanities Center, Stanford University; Stanford French Workshop; Swedish American Hall; and with cooperation from the following institutions: Alliance Française de San Francisco; Alliance Française de Berkeley; American Decorative Arts Forum of Northern California; Docents Council, SF Fine Arts Museums; Fromm Institute for Lifelong Learning; Humanities Department, San Francisco State University; Mechanics' Institute; Office of Resources for International Area Studies (ORIAS), UC Berkeley; Osher Lifelong Learning Institute; Paris Through Expatriate Eyes; San Francisco and Oakland Unified School Districts; Symposium Great Books Institute; and Theatre Bay Area.

CALENDAR INFORMATION FOLLOWS

CALENDAR LISTING: EVENT/LECTURES/ARTS & CULTURE

WHAT: *Confronting Napoleon: European Culture at the Crossroads*

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WHEN: 8pm to 10:15pm, Friday, April 17, 2009
10am to 12noon and 1:30pm to 4pm, Saturday, April 18, 2009

WHERE: Herbst Theatre
401 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco

TICKETS: \$20 - \$100
Tickets are available through City Box Office at
415/392-4400 or online at www.cityboxoffice.com
Group tickets: info@humanitieswest.org

PUBLIC INFO: www.humanitieswest.org

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