

December 20, 2010  
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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**  
***Toledo: Multicultural Challenges of Medieval Spain***  
Friday & Saturday, February 4 & 5, 2011  
Herbst Theatre, San Francisco

Humanities West continues its 2010-2011 season celebrating Mediterranean culture with ***Toledo: Multicultural Challenges of Medieval Spain***, a two-day program of lectures, discussions, and music exploring the history of this great city's complex cultural relationships resulting from centuries of both Moorish and Spanish rule. The program takes place on Friday, February 4, from 8 pm to 10:15 pm and Saturday, February 5, from 10 am to 4 pm, at Herbst Theatre, 401 Van Ness Avenue in San Francisco.

Tickets for ***Toledo: Multicultural Challenges of Medieval Spain*** are priced as follows: Single tickets for the Friday program are \$45 orchestra/dress circle and \$30 balcony; single tickets for the Saturday program are \$65 orchestra/dress circle and \$40 balcony, combo tickets for both days are \$100 orchestra/dress circle 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](http://www.cityboxoffice.com). A limited number of free tickets for students age 25 and under are available; contact [info@humanitieswest.org](mailto:info@humanitieswest.org).

***Toledo: Multicultural Challenges of Medieval Spain*** brings together an extraordinary panel of historians, scholars, and performers to explore Toledo's reputation of *Convivencia*, the relatively tolerant and synergistic co-existence of Muslims, Christians, and Jews. For centuries under both Moorish and Spanish rule, Toledo thrived as a cultural, religious, and political center for these three major religious communities. Its artists influenced one another, blending styles in art and architecture and remaining influential enough to still attract El Greco late in the 16th Century. Its philosophers and scientists created a vibrant center of learning, while Latin translations of major Arabic works spread Toledo's influence throughout Medieval Europe. Moderated by **Fred Astren** (Professor and Chair, Jewish Studies; Faculty, Middle East and Islamic Studies, SFSU) this two-day program of lectures and discussions will examine whether Toledo deserves its reputation of *Convivencia* or if its greatness was the paradoxical result of simmering tensions that finally boiled over with the Spanish expulsion of the Jews (1492) and Muslims (1502).

On Friday evening, **Teofilo Ruiz** (Professor of History, UCLA) provides a broad view of the history of Toledo from its Roman foundation to the aftermath of the conquest of the city by the Christian armies of Alfonso VI in 1085. Focusing on discreet aspects of Toledo's history and on its unique location in the center of the peninsula, Ruiz explores the contradictions inherent in Alfonso VI's definition of himself as the emperor of the three major religions (Islam, Christianity and Judaism) and the parallel development of the growing antagonisms between these religious groups in the city and the realm.

A musical performance follows, introduced by **Clifford (Kip) Cranna** (Director of Musical Administration, SF Opera). Soprano **Susan Rode Morris**, percussionist **Peter Maund**, viola-da-gambist **David Morris**, and vielle/violinist **Shira Kammen** present a program indicative of the astonishing diversity of the music of late Medieval and Renaissance Toledo and Spain. From the Spanish secular storytelling villancicos to Sephardic love songs and laments, to the Moorish muwashah, this concert explores the rich and unusual blending of the coexisting cultures.

On Saturday, **Mary Elizabeth Perry** (Research Associate, UCLA Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies) discusses the Purity of Blood Statute passed by the city government of Toledo in 1449. This law signaled a major change from past toleration of difference to official condemnation of difference as deviance. Perry cites historical records, literature, art, and architecture of Toledo exposing deep anxieties about the rising intolerance. **Deborah Loft** (Art History Professor, College of Marin) presents a lecture on the artistic interchange across lines of political power in Toledo. Works of art ranging from medieval mosques, synagogues, and churches to the paintings of El Greco—himself a product of several cultures—provide examples of the city's complex cultural relationships.

Following these two talks is a performance by virtuoso guitarist **Richard Savino** (Professor of Music, CSU Sacramento) capturing the spontaneity of Spanish period music on the guitar and *vuihuela, el rey de los renacimiento instrumentos español* (the king of Spanish renaissance instruments).

Finally, keynote speaker **Teofilo Ruiz** (UCLA) returns with a talk on the limits and pitfalls of *Convivencia*. This lecture critically examines the historiographical debate about *convivencia*, the supposedly peaceful interaction of Jews, Muslims, and Christians in medieval Toledo and Spain. By tracing the historical roots for this concept and its development over time, Ruiz seeks to provide a new assessment of what the term meant for those different religions co-existing in medieval Toledo and Iberia, and what the presence or absence of real *convivencia* tells us about medieval Spain and about our own conflicted experiences of toleration and intolerance in the modern world.

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

For a complete program schedule and additional information about the presenters please visit [www.humanitieswest.org](http://www.humanitieswest.org).

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**Humanities West**, a non-profit serving the Bay Area since 1983, is devoted to exploring history to celebrate the mind and the arts. The only independent non-profit offering humanities and arts programs of this scale, Humanities West presents a diverse series of lectures and performances encompassing fine and performing arts, social history, music, politics, and philosophy of the arts. These interdisciplinary programs are designed to entertain and educate audiences and to illuminate and elevate the human spirit through exploration of the many sources of modern culture.

This program is presented with support from Grants for the Arts/SF Hotel Tax Fund; Bank of the West; Stanford Humanities Center; Center for Middle East Studies, Institute of European Studies, and the Office of Resources for International and Area Studies at UC Berkeley, and individual donors.

In cooperation with American Decorative Arts Forum Northern California; California Academy of Sciences; Commonwealth Club of San Francisco; Docents Council, Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco; Fromm Institute for Lifelong Learning; Humanities Department, San Francisco State University; Mechanics' Institute; Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI), UC Berkeley; San Francisco and Oakland Unified School Districts; Stanford Center for Medieval and Early Modern Studies; Stanford History Department; Stanford University Libraries; Summit Photographic Workshops; Townsend Center for the Humanities, UC Berkeley

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

### **WHAT: *Toledo: Multicultural Challenges of Medieval Spain***

Humanities West presents ***Toledo: Multicultural Challenges of Medieval Spain*** a two-day program of lectures, discussions, and musical performances. For centuries under both Moorish and Spanish rule, Toledo thrived as a cultural, religious, and political center for its Muslims, Christians, and Jews. This program examines Toledo's reputation of "Convivencia", the relatively tolerant and synergistic co-existence of these three major religious communities.

**WHEN: 8pm to 10:15pm, Friday, February 4, 2011**  
**10am to 12noon and 1:30pm to 4pm, Saturday, February 5, 2011**

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

Group tickets: [info@humanitieswest.org](mailto:info@humanitieswest.org)

Free Tickets for students 25 years old and younger:  
[info@humanitieswest.org](mailto:info@humanitieswest.org)

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

## **Related Events for Toledo: Multicultural Challenges of Medieval Spain**

With the support of collaborating organizations, ancillary programs providing opportunities to learn more about the featured topic and related issues complement this two-day event.

### **Humanities West Toledo Book Discussion**

**5:30pm, Wednesday, January 19, 2011**

where: Board Room, Commonwealth Club of San Francisco  
595 Market Street, SF, CA

cost: Free

rsvp: [tickets.commonwealthclub.org](http://tickets.commonwealthclub.org)

Join a discussion on *The Ornament of the World: How Muslims, Jews and Christians Created a Culture of Tolerance in Medieval Spain* by Maria Rosa Menocal.

Co-Sponsored by the Humanities Member-Led Forum.

### **The Book in Medieval Toledo**

**5:30, Thursday, January 27, 2011**

where: Mechanics' Institute  
57 Post Street, SF, CA

cost: \$12 (Free for Humanities West donors & Mechanics' Institute members)

rsvp: [milibrary.org](http://milibrary.org)

Independent art historian **Kerrin Meis** leads a presentation, "The Book in Medieval Toledo," on the vast libraries of books found after Alfonso VI conquered Muslim Toledo in 1085. Among these books were philosophic, scientific and medical treatises from Ancient Greece as well as important works by Avicenna, Averroes and Maimonides. A group of scholars: Jews, Muslims and Christians engaged in the complicated process of translating them from Arabic into Latin. Illustrations from these translations as well as the Qur'ans, Bibles, Haggadot, and Commentaries on the Bible from that time will be examined.

### **Fireside Chat with George Hammond - A Toledo Preview**

**7pm, Tuesday, February 1, 2011**

where: Orinda Library,  
26 Orinda Way, Orinda, CA

cost: Free

Join in a Fireside Chat previewing Humanities West's presentation of *Toledo: Multicultural Challenges of Medieval Spain*.

### **Toledo Through the Centuries**

**5:30pm, Wednesday, February 2, 2011**

where: Commonwealth Club of San Francisco  
595 Market Street, SF, CA

cost: \$20 (\$12 for Commonwealth Club members)

rsvp: [tickets.commonwealthclub.org](http://tickets.commonwealthclub.org)

**Peter O'Malley Pierson** (Lee & Seymour Graff Professor of History Emeritus, Santa Clara University)

leads a discussion on *Toledo Through the Centuries*. Set on a hill defined by a horseshoe loop in the River Tagus, Toledo's history goes back at least to the Bronze Age. Celtic tribes fortified it. The Romans captured it in 193 BC. The Visigoths made it their capital. Toledo survived the fragmentation of Moorish Spain as the center of a minor Muslim kingdom. The Kings of Castile took it back. Charles V made it the Imperial City of his Holy Roman Empire, but his son Philip II moved to Madrid. This presentation will illuminate this fascinating history and the art of El Greco it eventually inspired. Co-Sponsored by the Humanities Member-Led Forum

### **Toledo Salon - Imperial Power and Financial Excess During the Reign of Charles V**

**5:30, Thursday, February 10, 2011**

where: Board Room, Commonwealth Club of San Francisco  
595 Market Street, SF, CA

cost: Free

rsvp: [tickets.commonwealthclub.org](http://tickets.commonwealthclub.org)

**Dryden G. Liddle** (PhD, History, Open University, UK) leads Humanities West's Salon, focusing on the connection between the dynastic policies of Charles V (Holy Roman Emperor) and the development of credit to finance these policies. Charles's imperial policies led to the accumulation of enormous debt and the development of finance capitalism through taxation of the towns of Castile, which secured loans extended principally by German and Genoese bankers. Some of the financial techniques find an echo in our present circumstances (e.g. loans anticipating future revenues, restructuring of debt

principal and exchange of maturities). A liquidity crisis was followed by a solvency crisis and both Spain and France defaulted on their 'sovereign' debt in the late 1550s.  
Co-Sponsored by the Humanities Member-Led Forum.

**Humanities West Toledo Book Discussion**

**5:30pm, Wednesday, March 2, 2011**

where: Board Room, Commonwealth Club of San Francisco  
595 Market Street, SF, CA

cost: Free

rsvp: [tickets.commonwealthclub.org](http://tickets.commonwealthclub.org)

Join a discussion on *The Arts of Intimacy: Christians, Jews, and Muslims in the Making of Castilian Culture* (Council on Foreign Relations Book Series) by Jerrilynn Dodds

Co-Sponsored by the Humanities Member-Led Forum

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