

2011 Summer Conversational Series and Teacher Institute

"Creating a Vision: The Power of Place"

A Centennial Celebration of Louisa May Alcott's Orchard House

Biographies of Our Distinguished Presenters

KYOKO AMANO - University of Indianapolis

Kyoko earned MAs in English from Aoyama Gakuin University (Tokyo, Japan) and Indiana State University, and a PhD from the State University of New York at Binghamton. Her specialty is Horatio Alger Jr., Louisa May Alcott, and their juvenile fiction. Kyoko's article, "Bret Harte's 'The Heathen Chinee' in Horatio Alger Jr.'s Pacific Series" appeared in *The Journal of Popular Culture*. She is currently working on a book that uses works by Alger and Alcott to compare and contrast 19th Century novels for children. Kyoko teaches American literature and composition at the University of Indianapolis and lives in Greencastle, IN with her husband and dog Mayah.

FREDERICK (TED) DAHLSTRAND - Ohio State University at Mansfield

Ted received his PhD in History from the University of Kansas in 1977 and began teaching at Ohio State University at Mansfield the following year. During his teaching tenure, he received two Outstanding Teaching awards and the Alumni Award for Distinguished Teaching. For thirteen years, Ted served as Associate Dean at the OSU - Mansfield campus, retiring from that position in 2008. Ted is the author of the notable book, *Amos Bronson Alcott: An Intellectual Biography*, published in 1982, as well as numerous articles on Alcott and New England Transcendentalism.

CATHLIN DAVIS - California State University-Stanislaus

Cathlin first read *Little Women* when she was 11 years old, and she hasn't stopped reading Alcott since. She received her BA in English from Oberlin College, and her MA and PhD in Linguistics from the University of Wisconsin - Madison. Cathlin's specialty is Alcott's juvenile fiction, and she is currently at work on an anthology of Alcott's short stories which will bring to modern readers many tales not published in over a century. Her concordant passion is assisting educators and students in understanding how to use historical materials to learn about the past. This is her seventh year participating in our Summer Series and Teacher Institute.

STERLING (RICK) DELANO - Villanova University

Professor of American Literature, Emeritus, at Villanova University, Rick received a BS from Villanova University, MA from Northeastern University, and a PhD from Southern Illinois University. His recent book, *Brook Farm: The Dark Side of Utopia*, is considered the definitive study of this celebrated Transcendental community, while his earlier work, *The Harbinger and New England Transcendentalism: A Portrait of Associationism in America*, was the first

comprehensive scholarly account of the journal that was the official organ of Associationism and Fourierism in 1840s America, as well as a major forum for Transcendentalist writers. Rick was a recipient of the Christian R. and Mary F. Lindback Award for Distinguished Teaching, and is currently involved in the fifth year of an NEH-funded workshop, "Concord, Massachusetts: Transcendentalism and Social Action in the 19th Century."

ANNE-LAURE FRANÇOIS - Université Charles De Gaulle Lille 3

Currently a doctoral student and teaching assistant, Anne-Laure graduated from the Ecole Normale Supérieure in Paris. She received her MA from the Sorbonne and is a member of the French Association for American Studies. Anne-Laure re-discovered *Little Women* while an undergraduate through Gillian Armstrong's 1994 screen adaptation of Alcott's bestseller. In part because of the film, she decided to focus her doctoral research on Transcendentalism and its presence in the fiction of Alcott, an author still largely unknown to French academics. While maintaining a strong interest in Women's Studies and both American and English Literature Anne-Laure is also, at heart, an educator. Inspired by the depiction of Plumfield Academy, she and her fellow educators and friends are establishing an alternative high school near Montpellier as a living homage to Alcott's pedagogical theories.

JASON GIANNETTI - Dean College

Jason began the current academic year teaching at Dean College in Franklin, MA after being a professor of philosophy at Regis College. Though his background is in Ancient Greek Philosophy and Biblical Studies, he has recently undertaken more research in the areas of Comparative Philosophy - East/West, as well as delving into the New England Transcendentalists.

REED GOCHBERG - Boston University

A graduate of Harvard University currently pursuing her PhD, Reed specializes in British and American literature and received a grant from the Harvard College Research Program to conduct independent research on the Alcott family collection at Houghton Library. She has worked as an Editorial Assistant at *Parnassus: Poetry in Review*, an Archives Assistant for the Henry Clay Frick Collection, and a Special Projects Intern at the New York Historical Society. Reed is also an accomplished flautist and singer who performs with the *Camerata Notturna* and the Tanglewood Festival Chorus.

KAREN GOODNO - Salem State College

Professor of History at Salem State College, Karen is a Historic Interpreter at Louisa May Alcott's Orchard House as well. With dual Master's degrees, Karen studies history and literature hand-in-hand, especially through the memoirs of women, and especially during times of war. She has spoken at conferences around the country regarding the British WWI nurse and writer, Vera Brittain, and is now thrilled to turn her literary historian's microscope on Louisa May Alcott, another one of her "historical best friends!"

ROCHELLE JOHNSON - The College of Idaho

Rochelle is Professor of English and Environmental Studies at The College of Idaho, where her courses focus on early American literature and the environmental humanities. Her most

recent publication, *Passions for Nature: Nineteenth-Century America's Aesthetics of Alienation* (Georgia, 2009), focused on Susan Fenimore Cooper, Henry David Thoreau, and 19th century American environmental aesthetics. Co-editor of three volumes on Susan Fenimore Cooper, Rochelle is currently at work on a biography of Cooper. A past president of The Association for the Study of Literature and Environment, Rochelle is now co-organizer, with Kristen Case, of The Thoreau Society's annual panels at ALA and MLA conferences. Although she grew up down the street a bit from Walden Pond and one of her favorite places on earth is Great Meadows, she now enjoys living with her husband and daughter in the sagebrush deserts of southwestern Idaho.

JANE LANGTON - Author

Jane was born in Boston, MA, studied astronomy at Wellesley College, and did graduate work in Art History at the University of Michigan and Radcliffe College as well as the Boston Museum School. In 1961, she wrote and illustrated her first book, *The Majesty of Grace*. Since then, Jane has authored a dozen books for young people, including eight fantasies about the Hall family of Concord, MA: *The Diamond in the Window*, *The Swing in the Summerhouse*, *The Astonishing Stereoscope*, the Newbery Honor Book *The Fledgling*, *The Fragile Flag*, *The Time Bike*, *The Mysterious Circus*, and most recently, *The Dragon Tree*. She is also well-known for her mystery novels for adults -- the Homer Kelly series -- and has written several stand-alone novels and picture books. Jane lives in Lincoln, MA, which borders Concord, the setting for many of her novels.

EVE LAPLANTE - Author

A sixth great-granddaughter of Judge Samuel Sewall who authored *Salem Witch Judge: The Life and Repentance of Samuel Sewall* in 2009, Eve also wrote two other critically-acclaimed books: *American Jezebel*, a biography of her ancestor Anne Hutchinson, and *Seized*, a narrative portrait of temporal lobe epilepsy. She holds degrees from Princeton and Harvard, and has written for *The Atlantic*, *The New York Times*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, and *Boston Magazine*. Eve lives with her family in New England on land once owned by Judge Sewall, and is currently at work on a new book entitled *Marmee & Louisa: The Untold Story of Louisa May Alcott and Her Mother*.

EVELYN NAVARRE - University of Massachusetts-Boston

Evelyn earned her Doctoral degree in American Studies from SUNY-Buffalo after studying multi-ethnic literature and the culture and history of the Americas. Her dissertation, "In Labor Her Best Teacher: Nineteenth-Century Women's Work as a Transcendentalist *Bildungsroman*," examined the role of work as a vehicle for coming of age in novels by Louisa May Alcott, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, and others. Before, during, and just after earning Master's degrees in English and Women's Studies, Evelyn held a variety of positions in non-profit health, literacy, and women's organizations. An avid practitioner of yoga, she is also interested in Hindu and Buddhist philosophies.

LISA STEPANSKI - Emmanuel College

An Associate Professor of English at Emmanuel College, Lisa teaches courses in American literature, New England culture, and writing. She was recently awarded a second summer fellowship at the Mary Baker Eddy Library in Boston to continue her research into the

friendship between Bronson Alcott and Mary Baker Eddy, as well as the use of emerging technologies by Mrs. Eddy and her followers in the Christian Science Church. Lisa is also interested in children's serial fiction of the late 19th/early 20th century. Her most recent article, "‘Like Sportive Birds’: The Girl Aviators Series and the Culture of Flight in America, 1911-1912", was just published in *The Journal of Popular Culture*. She is currently working on a manuscript about the Alcott family and their home literacy practices.

LAURA DASSOW WALLS - University of Notre Dame

Laura is just stepping into her new role as the William P. and Hazel B. White Professor of English at Notre Dame, where she will continue to teach Transcendentalism, 19th century literature, and literature and science, and also continue work on her biography of Thoreau. During her years at the University of South Carolina she published *The Passage to Cosmos: Alexander von Humboldt and the Shaping of America* (2009), and co-edited *The Oxford Handbook of Transcendentalism* with Joel Myerson and Sandy Petrucci (2010). Her earlier books include *Seeing New Worlds: Henry David Thoreau and 19th-Century Natural Science* (1995) and *Emerson's Life in Science: The Culture of Truth* (2003).