



## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

**Kim Nelson**

Director of the Humanities Research Group

The past two years have been a time of intense adaptation and circumspection. As we peer hesitantly into the future, our goal is to return to a monthly ritual of communal engagement with ideas and each other. Over the next year, we will offer a series of events that inspires our audience to think about where more than two years of isolation and introspection will take us. This year's theme is *drawing meaning*. Our talks will consider ways we draw meaning from life, art, history, and laws.

This fall we will launch—what we hope will be a return to an in-person season—with internationally celebrated author **Lawrence Hill** speaking about the historical novel. Subsequent events will include German scholar and curator **Cornelia Lund** on new forms of immersive documentary that bring people together, acclaimed novelist **Gord Grisenthwaite** on survival guilt in his novel *Home Waltz*, the prolific author and scholar **Randy Boyagoda** on the enduring lessons of *Dante's Inferno*, and the stimulating philosopher **Jeff Noonan** reflecting on no less than “the good” in human life. We will cap our series with our Fellowship lecture, presented this year by our 2022-2023 **HRG Fellow Emmanuelle Richez**. Her talk will explore the history and ramifications of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

I would like to extend a warm thank you to Lydia Miljan for her stellar job directing the HRG over the last year. She organized and oversaw an outstanding slate of speakers and events and kept the HRG thriving through our second year of online offerings. Thanks, as ever, to the Dean's Office of FAHSS and Dean Cheryl Collier for their strong commitment and support of the HRG.

And thanks to our audience. Please spread the word about our public events and join our HRG email list—if you haven't already. You can email your request to sign up to [HRGmail@uwindsor.ca](mailto:HRGmail@uwindsor.ca). The HRG will follow university COVID protocols, and the listserv is a great way to keep up to date on events and any changes to venues or on-campus rules. And please send your comments and suggestions there as well. You can also find out what we are up to at any time at [uwindsor.ca/hrq](http://uwindsor.ca/hrq). We all hope to see you soon and often.

# HRG 2022 - 2023 UPCOMING CALENDAR OF EVENTS

September 22, 2022 @ 5:00pm – Performance Hall, Armouries



**Lawrence Hill** will describe his passion in merging the past, present and future with fiction, and his attempts to explore, dramatize and popularize little known corners of Black history and culture in Canada and around the world. He will draw from, discuss, and read brief snippets from his novels *The Book of Negroes*, *The Illegal* and *Beatrice and Croc Harry*, and describe his novel-in-progress about the thousands of African-American soldiers who helped to build the Alaska Highway in northern British Columbia and in Yukon during World War II.

Lawrence Hill is the award-winning author of eleven books of fiction and nonfiction, including *The Book of Negroes* and *The Illegal*. In 2022, Harper Collins Canada published Hill's latest novel, *Beatrice and Croc Harry*. Hill has volunteered with Crossroads International, The Black Loyalist Heritage Society, and The Ontario Black History Society. A professor of creative writing at the University of Guelph, he also teaches and visits with book clubs in federal penitentiaries. Hill is writing a new novel about the thousands of African-American soldiers who helped build the Alaska Highway during World War Two.

October 13, 2022 @ 5:00pm – Performance Hall, Armouries



**Cornelia Lund** will explain her current research on audiovisual documentary performances, a practice that combines elements of documentary cinema with live audiovisual performance. With sound and images performed live and in real time, these performances create an approach to documentary that challenges the viewing and listening habits shaped by traditional, more linear or narrative documentary structures. Lund will discuss how audiovisual documentary performances can be situated within the theoretical discourses and documentary practices, including live audiovisual performance, expanded cinema, and a newly developed focus on the senses in cinema studies in general. Finally, she will ask how these performances relate to the larger context of cinematic and performative approaches sharing similar aesthetic concerns, for example works by the Sensory Ethnography Lab (SEL), founded at Harvard University in 2006.

Dr. Cornelia Lund is a Berlin-based art, film, and media scholar and curator. She works in research and teaching, mainly on documentary film and practices, audiovisual artistic practices, design theory, and de- and postcolonial theories. Since 2004 she has been the co-director of fluctuating images, an independent platform for media art and design. From 2012 to 2018, she has been a Senior Research Fellow in the project "The History of German Documentary Cinema 1945-2005" at Universität Hamburg, funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG). Currently, she is a Research Fellow at the University of the Arts Bremen. Her curatorial work includes numerous screenings and exhibitions in Germany, the United States and Africa.

November 24, 2022 @ 5:00pm – Performance Hall, Armouries



**Jeff Noonan** will reflect upon a quarter-century of work as a philosopher considering the goods of human life. His peregrinations have led to the general conclusion that our practical, intellectual, and artistic engagement with the world of things, creatures, and other people are the source of the values that make life as an embodied, mortal, human being good. While the content of this good varies across historical time and cultural space, the shared material problems posed by life on Earth point us toward three shared forms of value. Life is *sensuously enjoyable* when our natural and social needs are satisfied. Life is *meaningful* when our work contributes to the satisfaction of other's needs. Life is *fulfilling* when we accept that each person has a beginning and an ending and free ourselves from the desire for more than what such a finite life can provide.

Jeff Noonan is a professor in the Department of Philosophy at the University of Windsor. He is the author of *Critical Humanism and the Politics of Difference* (2003), *Democratic Society and Human Needs* (2006), *Materialist Ethics and Life-Value* (2012), *Embodiment and the Meaning of Life* (2019), *The Troubles with Democracy* (2020), and the forthcoming *Embodied Humanism: Toward Solidarity and Sensuous Enjoyment*. He has also published widely in academic journals, the alternative press, and online, at [www.jeffnoonan.org](http://www.jeffnoonan.org).

## January 19, 2023 @ 5:00pm – Performance Hall, Armouries



**Gord Grisenthwaite** explains that his talk will explore “the problem I faced in writing *Home Waltz* was how to tackle its sometimes brutal topics. Sugar-coating the ugliness of a story is a disservice to it. And applying 21st century values to characters in the early-1970s is just wrong. The previous sentence is an argument waiting to happen, so, as Charles Durning’s character Governor sings in *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas*: Ooo, I love to dance a little sidestep, now they see me, now they don’t / I’ve come and gone, and ooo I love to sweep around the wide step ....

Because, as a writer, the only thing over which I have any control is how to tell the story. And even then, the story often dictates the direction it will take, which characters will live inside it, and how it needs to be told. Arguing Story’s control of the writer is moot, because belief can’t be proven. So in this talk I will explore the process of negotiating story details between writer and Story.”

Gord Grisenthwaite is nle?kepmx, member of the Lytton First Nation, and has earned an MA in English Literature & Creative Writing at the University of Windsor (2020). He also completed his BA (Hon) from the University of Windsor in 2018, almost 30 years after he started his post-secondary education. His first novel, *Home Waltz*, was a finalist for the 2021 Governor General’s Award for fiction.

## February 16, 2023 @ 5:00pm – Performance Hall, Armouries



**Randy Boyagoda** will make a case for why who and what we read can be life or death decisions. He will do so by exploring signal moments in Dante’s *Divine Comedy* with life and death stakes based on the decisions individuals make about who and what they read, how, and why. In turn, having read a canto a day of the *Divine Comedy* for the past five years while writing a Dante-inspired novel, he will read from *Dante’s Indiana* (Biblioasis), about ordinary people whose lives have been radically changed by the books they took up at high and low points in their lives.

Randy Boyagoda is a novelist and professor of English at the University of Toronto, where he also serves as Vice-Dean, Undergraduate, in the Faculty of Arts and Science. He is the author of six books, including four novels, most recently *Dante’s Indiana* (2021). He writes essays and reviews for the *New York Times*, the *Atlantic*, *First Things*, and the *Financial Times* (UK). He lives in Toronto with his wife and four daughters.

## March 23, 2023 @ 5:00pm – Performance Hall, Armouries



In her talk, Dr. Richez will discuss how Canada adopted the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1982 and entrenched it in its constitution. A revolution ensued, whereby rights and freedoms contained in the Charter were successfully mobilized in and enforced through the courts by ordinary citizens who now had access to new sources of funding and legal expertise. Central to this rights revolution was the Court Challenges Program (CCP), funded by the Government of Canada but eventually working independently from it. Since its creation at the end of the 1970s in response to unconstitutional language laws in the province of Quebec, the CCP has had a controversial history. It has been several times abolished under Conservative governments and revived by Liberal governments. Through the decades, the CCP has financed hundreds of judicial cases pertaining to linguistic rights and human rights, making it a powerful tool for constitutional change in the country. The talk will aim to measure its impact.

**Emmanuelle Richez** is an Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Windsor. Her research examines law and politics in Canada, with a current focus on official language rights. She is a federally appointed member of the Official Languages Rights Expert Panel of the Court Challenges Program of Canada. Emmanuelle is a researcher affiliated with the Centre d’analyse politique – Constitution et fédéralisme of UQAM and the Centre d’Études et de Recherches Comparatives sur les Constitutions, les Libertés et l’État of the Université de Bordeaux. She is also a board member of the Canadian Study of Parliament Group.



## WHO WE ARE

The Humanities Research Group is an interdisciplinary council comprised of University of Windsor faculty, students, staff, and community members. We support humanities research and facilitate events where thinkers and audience members grapple with issues relating to the human condition. Our goal is to bring people together to challenge, inspire, and stimulate, in a space of open dialogue, sharing, and exchange.

### HRG ADVISORY BOARD

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## Announcing HRG/FRG Student Fellows!

Thanks to a generous donation as part of the legacy of the University of Windsor's **Feminist Research Group**, we are proud to announce that we will be awarding a student fellowship each year, over the next five years, to a graduate student conducting feminist research or creative activities in the humanities. For details on how to apply, please go to:

<https://www.uwindsor.ca/humanities-research-group/301/fellowships-scholarships-application-support>

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