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2022 First Wednesdays
JASON REYNOLDS - OCT 3
Dear Friends,

Throughout our lives, we all explore what it means to be human. We collectively discuss and think about what makes up a good life, such as the responsibilities of citizenship, how to be of service to others, and our relationship to the natural world. These questions arise in our town halls, in our schools, in our backyards, on our village greens, and in our faith communities.

As we’ve rolled out our new strategic plan over the spring and summer, and as we integrate it across our programs, we can see that the humanities come to life through our connections with each other. They help us achieve a better understanding of the past, a stronger analysis of the present, and a more hopeful vision for the future.

As part of our new plan, Vermont Humanities has adopted an updated mission that better reflects who we are now and where we hope to go. The new mission emphasizes the practical and positive impact of the humanities in our communities and the ways that Vermonters use the humanities to make their towns, villages, neighborhoods and cities stronger and more connected. Here it is:

Using the humanities, we connect with people across Vermont to create just, vibrant, and resilient communities and to inspire a lifelong love of learning.

This mission drives us towards a new vision for our work as well, that Vermont’s diverse people and cultures will thrive as we explore bold ideas and complex challenges. Working together, we will spark creativity, connection, insight, and transformation.

There is no doubt that these are difficult times, but we believe that Vermonters are up to the challenges ahead of us, and that the humanities will play a critical role in that work. We were humbled and gratified when the Vermont Legislature passed, and the governor signed into law, a bill recognizing the importance of Vermont’s cultural sector with an additional $9 million in pandemic recovery support for our arts and humanities partners around Vermont.

The National Endowment for the Humanities, our federal partner, has encouraged state affiliates to focus our work on “five pillars” – advancing racial equity, confronting the climate crisis, restoring America’s global standing, responding to the Covid-19 pandemic, and strengthening our democracy.

Here in Vermont, we are taking on that challenge with enthusiasm and optimism.

With Gratitude,

Christopher Kaufman Ilstrup
Executive Director
First Wednesdays begins with Author Jason Reynolds

Jason Reynolds, the #1 New York Times bestselling author of more than a dozen books for young people, will visit Vermont to kick off the 2022-2023 season of our popular First Wednesdays humanities lecture series on October 3, and to lead a special hybrid discussion for Vermont middle and high school students the following day.

Reynolds is the author of Look Both Ways: A Tale Told in Ten Blocks, All American Boys, Long Way Down, Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You, and the upcoming Stuntboy, in the Meantime. The recipient of a Newbery Honor, a Printz Honor, an NAACP Image Award, and multiple Coretta Scott King honors, Reynolds is also the current National Ambassador for Young People’s Literature.

On Monday, October 3 at Wilson Hall on the Middlebury College campus, Reynolds will offer the first talk in the new First Wednesdays season. He’ll discuss his collaborative work on the book Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You, which is a reimagining of Ibram X. Kendi’s Stamped from the Beginning, “remixed” for a Young Adult audience. This free event is open to all and begins at 7:00 pm, and masks are required. We’re grateful for the support of Middlebury College and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in making Jason’s visit possible.

Beginning with The Hate U Give author Angie Thomas in 2020, we have enjoyed partnering with the Vermont Department of Libraries and the Vermont School Library Association to bring authors to speak with middle and high school students about social justice issues and literature.

On Tuesday, October 4 at 10:30 am, Jason Reynolds will visit the Flynn in Burlington for a hybrid presentation about Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You. Students at Burlington, South Burlington, and Winooski middle and high schools will attend in-person, while schools from around the state will tune into a livestream. The engagement is centered around Jason’s discussion with a panel of Vermont ninth-grade students, and we will provide a copy of Stamped to students across the state.

To sign up, Vermont school teachers can visit vermonthumanities.org/jason-reynolds to view the live stream of Jason’s October 4 presentation along with their students.

Cover photo of Jason Reynolds by James J. Reddington
Stories are a way for us to travel without moving. They help us to explore a new or familiar landscape, see the world through the eyes of a cartoonist, reflect on what it means to be an immigrant, and more. We are excited to share a reimagined Fall Festival, “Where We Land: Storytelling that Propels Us,” this October featuring in-person and hybrid events held across the state.

This year’s theme centers on storytelling that moves communities forward, often by examining the past and having thoughtful conversations about the future. “We’re delighted to be leaving the conference center walls and taking our annual tradition out to communities across Vermont,” says Executive Director Christopher Kaufman Ilstrup.

The series kicks off on October 5 and features a concert by The Villalobos Brothers in partnership with the UVM Lane Series on October 21 on the UVM campus (pictured opposite). Many sessions will also center around the themes of our Vermont Reads 2022 selection, The Most Costly Journey. “This new Fall Festival will help us reach into all four corners of our state to consider how we landed where we are and how we can be better neighbors in a world that is often deeply polarized,” says Kaufman Ilstrup.

We look forward to welcoming old friends of the Fall Conference and new friends who are just learning about our work to our re-mixed Fall Festival.

All events are free except for the Villalobos Brothers concert. Details and registration for Fall Festival events can be found at vermonthumanities.org/whereweland.
**FALL FESTIVAL EVENTS**

**VERMONTERS AND THE LAND**
**Wednesday, October 5, 7:00 pm**
Kellogg-Hubbard Library, Montpelier

UVM professor Cheryl Morse reports on how different groups of Vermonters have engaged with land as landscape, place, and environment, and why it matters today.

**AGRARIAN STORYTELLING & MORE**
**Wednesday, October 5, 7:00 pm**
Corinth Town Hall, Corinth

Members of the agrarian community share stories about food sovereignty, resilience, and being rooted in the land in this Fall Festival 2022 event hosted by Rural Vermont.

**WHAT IS GRAPHIC MEDICINE?**
**Wednesday, October 5, 7:00 pm**
Rutland Free Library, Rutland

Author and cartoonist Rachel Lindsay explores the themes of mental illness and psychopharmaceutical advertising, as chronicled in her book *RX: A Graphic Memoir*.

**DIRTY WORK WITH JOURNALIST EYAL PRESS**
**Wednesday, October 12, 7:00 pm**
Manchester Community Library, Manchester

Eyal Press discusses his award-winning book *Dirty Work: Essential Jobs and the Hidden Toll of Inequality in America*, a look into the morally troubling jobs that society tacitly condones, and the hidden class of workers who do them.

**GARIFUNA COLLECTIVE: KEEPING CULTURE ALIVE**
**Friday, October 14, 7:00 pm**
Chandler Center for the Arts, Randolph

Members of the internationally renowned Garifuna Collective relate stories about their ancestors and the displacement of the Garifuna people to Honduras and Belize.

**NON-FICTION COMICS FESTIVAL**
**Saturday, October 15, 11:00 am - 6:00 pm**
Fletcher Free Library, Burlington

The first ever Non-Fiction Comics Festival will feature panel discussions, workshops, and exhibits by cartoonists who create non-fiction and autobiographical work, with a keynote from James Spooner, author of *The High Desert*.

**THE CAPTIVE CHILDREN OF DEERFIELD: THREE NATIONS AT WAR**
**Sunday, October 16, 7:00 pm**
St. Albans Historical Society & Museum, St. Albans

Presenter Donna Toneatti of the Abenaki Nation of Missisquoi explores the Deerfield Massacre from the three angles of her own family history.

**THE VILLALOBOS BROTHERS IN CONCERT**
**Saturday, October 21, 7:30 pm**
UVM Recital Hall, Burlington

Born in Xalapa, Mexico, The Villalobos Brothers are one of today’s leading contemporary Mexican ensembles. Their original compositions and arrangements masterfully fuse and celebrate the richness of Mexican folk harmonies of jazz and classical music.

**MIGRATION PATHWAYS: STORIES OF YESTERDAY AND TODAY**
**Thursday, October 29, 2:00 pm**
Brooks Memorial Library, Brattleboro

Andrew Ingal leads a participatory workshop inspired by a Vermont couple (pictured opposite) who were entrepreneurs and civic leaders in Townshend, VT in the 1980s and 1990s.
Vermont Reads 2022 Panel Discussion Begins The Most Costly Journey Programming

On July 14 we began the programming year for Vermont Reads 2022 with a panel discussion featuring three people central to the creation of The Most Costly Journey (El viaje más caro), a comics anthology based on the stories of migrant farm workers in Vermont.

About 40 people attended the event at 118 Elliott in Brattleboro – and an equal number joined via live stream – for the discussion with Julia Doucet from the Open Door Clinic, Andy Kolovos from the Vermont Folklife Center, and cartoonist Marek Bennett.

Four different exhibits that were on display at 118 Elliot shared images and stories from migrant workers’ journeys here and of their lives on Vermont farms. See the sidebar for information about how to bring one of these displays to your community.

If you weren’t able to join the discussion when it took place, you can view a recording of the event on our website. The video will be especially helpful for those who are hosting—or planning to host—Vermont Reads 2022 projects. Watch the panel discussion and view other Vermont Reads 2022 videos at: vermonthumanities.org/vr22-videos

To date over 40 communities across Vermont have applied to host Vermont Reads 2022 projects. We’re pleased to see how many schools are planning to read, discuss, and study the book as part of their school year, ranging from sixth-grade humanities classes in Londonderry to the UVM Department of Anthropology.

Learn more about Vermont Reads 2022 and The Most Costly Journey (El viaje más caro) at www.vtreads.org.

“SOME OF THE MOST POWERFUL REACTIONS WERE FROM THE STORYTELLERS THEMSELVES. THROUGH THIS BOOK WE ARE BRINGING THESE WORKERS TO THE TABLE AND THEIR VOICES TO THE CONVERSATION.”
– JULIA DOUCET

Reserve Visual Displays for Your Vermont Reads Project

Four easy set-up gallery exhibits made up of vertical banner displays are now available to bring to your community gathering space, library, or school. Each four-panel series expands upon different themes in The Most Costly Journey: crossing borders, the importance of family, physical and mental health issues, and building a life in Vermont. These displays are about two feet wide and six and half feet high, perfect for locations without dedicated gallery wall space.

We’re also coordinating the use of two larger, wall-mounted displays created by the Vermont Folklife Center, depicting the lives of migrant workers on Vermont farms. “The Golden Cage” is a series of stunning portraits of Vermont farm workers from 2007, and the “El viaje más caro” display features portions of comics from The Most Costly Journey.

Learn more about these displays and how to reserve them for your Vermont Reads project at: vermonthumanities.org/vr22-displays.
Vermont Reads Video Shares Migrant Worker Voices

With the help of the Open Door Clinic, Vermont Humanities spoke with several migrant workers who left their homes in Mexico to labor on farms and for businesses in Vermont. Here are selected responses from some of the workers, translated from Spanish:

**Why did you leave your home?**

You are looking out for the well-being of your family, so they will be able to live a better life. You know that you will have to suffer, and you don't have to think twice about it, and ultimately you are happy because your family is living a better life in your country [Mexico] because of it.

**What type of work do you perform here?**

What I like more about this job is the schedule. You are able to work during the day and rest at night, and we usually have weekends off. When I worked on dairy farms, I had a schedule that was not very flexible. I would confuse the days because I worked like four hours in the morning, four hours in the evening, and I had to take naps in the morning or evening and I always felt tired and the feeling never went away.

**What has been challenging about life here?**

My daughters were very small and stayed with my mother. When I came they suffered a lot. The oldest was five years old. I told her “When you miss me, look at the stars, look at the moon, I will be watching them too.” And I left her a little angel and I told her “This angel, hug him, and look at the stars, and you will remember me. And you will feel that I am with you.” My mom tells me that she [my daughter] did it every night for a long time.

**What do you like about life in Vermont?**

There are programs that help us improve our housing conditions on the farms. And there are organizations that are in charge of talking to the bosses and saying, “Look, I think conditions are not the best, you should change.” Before, that didn't happen, so we are improving little by little. Even if it is a slow walk, I think that we are making great changes for the migrant community.

**What do you miss about home?**

Life is very different here than in Mexico. Here, life is very fast. You live working, working, and only working, from work to home and from home to work. And the time that you have free you use to rest and sleep. And you wake up and it's time for work. It's one of the things that is a little bit more difficult than in Mexico.

View the complete conversation on video at vermonthumanities.org/vr22-videos.

Illustration by Glynnis Fawkes, courtesy of Open Door Clinic.
Our seasonal “Words in the Woods” program partners with the Vermont State Parks to allow Vermonters and visitors to enjoy our state’s natural beauty while listening to and reading literature in the outdoors.

This year’s season marked our return to in person events with an incredible outpouring of support at locations across the state, in amazing Vermont State Parks like Boulder Beach State Park in Groton and Wilgus State Park in Weathersfield.

“Words in the Woods reconnects me to the natural beauty of this state and shows how nature can impact peoples lives and compositions in so many different ways,” said Community Programs Office Jacob Pelletier, who has organized and intruduced each of this season’s events.

Poets like Keiselim (Keysi) Montás and Carol Potter engaged with the audience and their surroundings by creating an intimate experience of connection to the landscape using the imagery of words and poetry. Toussaint St. Negritude (pictured above) and Bryan Blanchette mesmerized listeners with their unique blends of powerful words and music.

Thanks to Vermont State Parks and the Vermont Arts Council for their support of Words in the Woods! Words in the Woods events are generously sponsored by a Northeast Kingdom donor in honor of poet Judy Chalmer.

Pictured from left: Bryan Blanchette in Elmore, attendees listen to Carol Potter in Weathersfield, Keysi Montás with his daughter Mia Montás Antigua in Shaftsbury.
Meet the Development & Communications Team

Director of Development & Communications Chelsea Lafayette joins us with over 15 years’ experience working in the arts and culture sector in Vermont. She started at Vermont Humanities in July 2022 as the lead fundraising and communications strategist to grow support for Vermont Humanities and the cultural organizations we fund. She served as the Managing Director of the Burlington Discover Jazz Festival from 2016-2021 in addition to handling event operations at the Flynn Center for the Performing Arts for over seven years. Originally from Dallas, Texas, she attended Tulane University in New Orleans before moving to Vermont in 2007.

A recent transplant to Vermont, Noel Clark joined Vermont Humanities in June as Communications Officer. He has served in nonprofit communications roles across his home state of Minnesota’s Twin Cities and holds a Bachelor’s in Professional Journalism from the University of Minnesota. Noel spent over a decade as a radio journalist and a communications professional for diverse arts and cultural organizations, and his reporting has been featured on NPR stations from KUT in Austin to NHPR in New Hampshire. He now lives in Windsor with his family and several cats.

Development and Data Associate Kathryn Tufano joined our team in February. Kathryn has worked in non-profit cultural institutions in a variety of roles for the last 20 years. She previously held development positions at the Ridgefield Historical Society, the Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum in Connecticut, and MASS MoCA, among others. Kathryn moved to Montpelier in February.

National Book Festival Highlights

In September, Vermont Humanities attended the National Book Festival for the first time in our new role as the Library of Congress-affiliated Vermont Center for the Book. Many Humanities Councils across the nation serve as their states’ Center for the Book, while libraries and universities serve that function in other states and territories.

Dr. Shelly Lowe, a member of the Navajo Nation and the first Native person to serve as Chair of the National Endowment for the Humanities, visited with Executive Director Christopher Kaufman Ilstrup at the Vermont booth. He shared with her the original comic pamphlets from El viaje más caro, the resources that have been anthologized in English as The Most Costly Journey.

Thank you to Cabot Creamery and the Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing for their support!
Vermont Humanities Grant Awards

Over $120,000 in Project Grants were distributed as of June 30 for a diverse array of programs across the state in 2022.

**Bennington Museum**
**Museums as Resources Teachers’ Institute**
Bennington
$5,000 to develop an intensive, six-day academic professional development program to provide instruction on how to maximize the resources of the Museum’s collection to develop engaging new lesson plans.

**Brattleboro Words Trail**
**Amtrak Permanent Station Exhibit**
Brattleboro
$5,000 to create a permanent, accessible, user-friendly and free Brattleboro Words Trail exhibit on the outside wall of new Brattleboro Amtrak station opening May 2023.

**Conversations From the Open Road**
Lincoln
$5,000 to create two 2-week storytelling projects with VT students, culminating in media exploring our responsibility to ourselves, each other, and our home.

**Dorset Village Library**
Dorset
$5,000 to support including as many members of the community as possible in library activities through LGBTQ+ programs including a Drag Queen Story Hour and Family Friendly Drag Show.

**Foul Contending Rebels Theatre**
**The Foul Contending Rebels Theatre Collective Presents: Shakespeare’s Shrew**
Burlington
$2,000 to produce *The Taming of the Shrew* to explore the performativity of gender and misogyny in Shakespeare’s controversial play.

**Friends of the Morrill Homestead**
**The Morrill Land-Grant Acts And Tribal Lands: What Happened, What’s Next**
Strafford
$5,000 for a symposium and community conversations on the expropriation of 10 million+ acres of indigenous land used as the foundation for the Land-Grant University system created by the Morrill Acts of 1862 & 1890.

**Gedakina**
**One Shelf-book Project**
Essex Junction
$5,000 to provide training on Abenaki culture and history and a full set of books on Native and Indigenous themes to 20 Vermont schools and partial sets to 8 schools.

**Green Mountain Book Festival**
Burlington
$5,000 to celebrate and honor free expression, embrace diverse voices, & encourage a deeper understanding of self and community through a shared love of the literary arts.

**Lost Mural Project**
**Reveal & Revel: A celebration of the Lost Mural & Vermont’s immigrant community**
Burlington
$5,000 for programming on the history of Burlington’s Jewish immigrant community centered on the Lost Mural, a cultural treasure rescued from an early 20th Century Synagogue in Burlington’s Old North End.

**Northern Spy Farm**
**The Sheeko Sheeko Project: Deep North**
Sandgate
$5,000 to produce a storytelling project celebrating Somalis resettled in Vermont, consisting of a published book of oral histories, a series of public events, and readings.

**Rapid Response Grants See Strong Interest**

Our Rapid Response Grants provide up to $1000 for humanities-focused community projects that will be completed within three months after the award is made, or new “pop-up” opportunities that offer humanities experiences and require a quick response. To date in 2022, we have awarded $13,400 in Rapid Response grants to 13 different organizations, including the Vermont Student Anti-Racism Network, the Ladybroad Ledger, and the Abenaki Nation of Missisquoi Tribal Council.

Learn more about Rapid Response Grants and our other grant programs at [vermonthumanities.org/grants](http://vermonthumanities.org/grants).

*Image courtesy of the Friends of the Morrill Homestead*
Orleans County Historical Society
**Time Travelers’ Day Camps**
**Brownington**
$5,000 for the Time Travelers’ Day Camp, rooted in the diverse traditions of Northern Vermonter at the Old Stone House Museum & Historic Village including a Community Connection public lecture with Vera Sheehan, Director of the Vermont Abenaki Artists Association.

Outright Vermont
**Camp Outright**
**Burlington**
$5,000 for Camp Outright, a residential summer camp program for LGBTQ+ youth. Campers ages 13 to 17 come together in nature to celebrate queer culture and build community.

Peace and Justice Center
**PJC Author & Artist Series**
**Burlington**
$5,000 for the Peace & Justice Center’s bi-weekly Author and Artist Series which connects community members with artists and authors, creating space for engaging discussions on a variety of topics.

Rokeby Museum
**Public Programming for “Dissent! Abolition & Advocacy in Print”**
**Ferrisburgh**
$3250 to expand the reach of Rokeby Museum’s 2022 exhibit, “Dissent! Abolition & Advocacy in Print” by providing free and accessible programming to the public.

Ruth Stone House
**The Next Galaxy Poetry Retreat**
**Goshen**
$2,500 to contribute to Vermont’s vibrant cultural landscape. Through its programming, the Next Galaxy Retreat is a manifestation of culture-making in action.

The Remedial Herstory Project
**2022 Summer Educators Retreat**
**Palestine, NH**
$1,400 to host a Summer Retreat for Educators from Vermont and New Hampshire on teaching women’s history.

Shire Kids
**Free Community Book Swaps**
**Dorset**
$1,000 to host free Community Book Swap opportunities in 2022 for families to up-cycle gently used books and acquire new books to read at home.

Swanton Public Library
**Four Oceans, Seven Seas, and Three Million Lakes**
**Swanton**
$2,000 for a week-long full-day camp for kids ages 6-12 on the many ways that human communities interact with water resources, based on multicultural history, literature, art, and mythology.

Vermont Marble Museum
**Vermont Marble, A Cultural Investigation: The Carver with a Ripped Apron**
**Rutland**
$5,000 for public humanities projects about a young man who carves a marble headstone. Nameless, he tells a rich story of Vermont marble workers including those that survive to this day.

Vermont Stage Company
**Vermont Young Playwrights**
**Burlington**
$5,000 for an expansion of the Vermont Young Playwrights program to reach a wider, more diverse group of young people through a partnership with Spectrum Vermont, serving housing insecure youth.

Vermont Symphony Orchestra
**Riots, Prayers, and Light: Composer Premieres**
**Burlington**
$5,000 to premiere two newly-commissioned works in Burlington and Rutland by prominent Black composers, Daniel Bernard Roumain and Matthew Evan Taylor, with an emphasis on Black history and language.

Weston Playhouse Theatre Company
**Teacher Workshop 2022**
**Weston**
3,000 for a 1-day workshop that will prepare middle & high school teachers to engage their students in a fall production of ‘Woody Sez’ about American folk music icon Woody Guthrie.

LEARN MORE about our Grants program at vermonthumanities.org/grants.
Featured First Wednesdays Events

Check out these in-person and virtual events - Full schedule at vermonthumanities.org/programs/attend/first-wednesdays

OCTOBER

**STAMPED: RACISM, ANTIRACISM, AND YOU**
*October 3, 7:00 pm*
Wilson Hall*, Middlebury College, Middlebury

#1 New York Times bestselling author [Jason Reynolds](https://www.jasonreynoldsbooks.com) discusses his collaborative work on the book *Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You*, a reimagining of Ibram X. Kendi's *Stamped from the Beginning*, “remixed” for a Young Adult audience. *Masks are required at this event.*

**OUR NATIVE LAND**
*Wednesday, October 5, 7:00 pm*
Goodrich Memorial Library, Newport

Father and son storytellers and musicians [Joseph and Jesse Bruchac](https://www.josephbruchac.org) of the Nulhegan Abenaki Nation use traditional music, storytelling, and the Abenaki language to describe the continuing connection of their people to Ndakinna (our land.)

**MUST FREE SPEECH ENDURE HATE SPEECH?**
*Wednesday, October 5, 7:00 pm*
Norwich Public Library, Norwich

The First Amendment prevents Congress from passing any laws that abridge the freedom of speech. But what does that actually mean? Professor [Meg Mott](https://megmott.org) considers the history of speech laws in the United States, how states and municipalities have tried to curb offensive speech, and how the Supreme Court has ruled on those efforts.

**THE ELECTRIC PERIOD OF MILES DAVIS**
*Wednesday, October 5, 7:00 pm*
Brooks Memorial Library, Brattleboro

The ever-changing music that Miles Davis recorded from 1969 to 1975 angered and bewildered many critics and fans, who accused the trumpeter of “selling out.” Jazz archivist and poet [Reuben Jackson](https://www.reubennjackson.com) shares how recordings from Davis’ “Electric Period”—including 1974’s *Get Up With It*—prove otherwise.

**REFLECTIONS ON WRITING & ILLUSTRATION**
*Wednesday, October 5, 7:00 pm*
Brownell Library, Essex Junction

Writer, Illustrator, and Caldecott Medalist [Jason Chin](https://www.jasonchin.com) describes his passion for nature, science, and art, and discusses the impact of his work with young people.

**DIRTY WORK WITH AUTHOR EYAL PRESS**
*Wednesday, October 12, 7:00 pm*
Manchester Community Library, Manchester

Journalist [Eyal Press](https://www.eyalpress.com) discusses his reporting for his award-winning book “Dirty Work: Essential Jobs and the Hidden Toll of Inequality in America” which examines the morally troubling jobs that society tacitly condones, and the hidden class of workers who do them.

Dirty Work cover image (left) courtesy of the author

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"BEHIND THE SCENES IS WHERE THE DIRTY WORK IN AMERICA UNFOLDS, IN THE CHAMBERS AND RECESSES OF REMOTE INSTITUTIONS SUCH AS PRISONS AND INDUSTRIAL SLAUGHTERHOUSES...”

– EYAL PRESS, *DIRTY WORK*
DIASPORIC IMMIGRANT SUPERHEROES: FROM FOREIGN TO BIPOC & LGBTQ+
Wednesday, November 2, 6:00 pm
St. Johnsbury Athenaeum, St. Johnsbury

While discussing characters such as Superman, Wonder Woman, Black Panther, and La Borinqueña, Middlebury College professor Enrique García reflects on comic artists’ struggles to overcome imperial ideas of white supremacy, heteronormativity, and American exceptionalism.

LANDSCAPE WITH INVISIBLE HAND
Wednesday, November 2, 7:00 pm
Kellogg-Hubbard Library, Montpelier

Why do we see Vermont’s hills as beautiful? What’s attractive about a ruined barn? National Book Award Winner M. T. Anderson, author of the satirical novel Landscape with Invisible Hand, discusses the longings behind our sense of landscape.

FOLLOW THE YELLOW BRICK ROAD: A CONVERSATION WITH GREGORY MAGUIRE
Wednesday, November 2, 7:00 pm
Norwich Public Library, Norwich

In this moderated conversation, Wicked creator Gregory Maguire discusses his “revisionist history” of L. Frank Baum’s fantastic universe, including its ongoing relevance in a world where we too easily put people in boxes labeled “wicked” and “good.”

DRAWING COMMUNITY: CREATING COMICS FROM SHARED STORIES
Wednesday, November 2, 7:00 pm
Brooks Memorial Library, Brattleboro

Using examples from his work with The Most Costly Journey (El viaje más caro) and his Civil War Diary of Freeman Colby series, cartoonist Marek Bennett explores how the act of cartooning can help us forge connections, build empathy, and challenge set definitions of identity and belonging.

MAKING OF THE GRAPHIC NOVEL: 1177 BC THE YEAR CIVILIZATION COLLAPSED
Wednesday, November 2, 7:00 pm
Brownell Library, Essex Junction

Author and illustrator Glynnis Fawkes reads from and discusses her latest work-in-progress and describes how the storytelling elements of comics—panel design, pacing, research, and narrative—are employed in creating non-fiction graphic novels.

NORTH: A READING AND DISCUSSION
Wednesday, November 2, 7:00 pm
Ilsley Public Library, Middlebury

Author Brad Kessler reviews the creation of his moving story about a monk, a Somali refugee, and an Afghan war veteran whose lives converge on a snowy Vermont night.

FICTION READING BY SARA JAFFE
Wednesday, November 9, 7:00 pm
Vermont Humanities Zoom

Sara Jaffe’s stories posit the “problems” of living by one’s politics and values in our messy contemporary age, without suggesting they can be easily, or ever, solved.
DECEMBER

MORE THAN A MARKET: FOOD, COMMUNITY, AND FAMILY IN THE IMMIGRANT-OWNED MARKETS OF BURLINGTON AND WINOOSKI
Wednesday, December 7, 7:00 pm
Brownell Library, Essex Junction

More than a Market, an oral history and documentary, shares stories from food markets operated by immigrants and refugees in Vermont’s urban areas. Historic New England’s Charlotte Barrett describes the need for these social centers in the lives of their customers and owners.

JOURNALISTS CONSIDER COMMUNITY NEWS REPORTING
Wednesday, December 7, 7:00 pm
Kellogg-Hubbard Library, Montpelier

Richard Watts, Director of the Center for Research on Vermont, leads a panel of journalists to explore what journalism means in the digital age, and how youth take part in current journalism trends. Panelists include Meg Little Reilly, Deputy Associate Director at the White House Office of Management and Budget for President Obama.

SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE GAME’S AFOOT
Wednesday, December 7, 7:00 pm
Rutland Free Library, Rutland

Scholar Barry Deitz looks at the life and times of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the creator of Sherlock Holmes, and examines what other writers, actors, and directors have done with the character over the past 30 years.

REVOLUTION IN OUR TIME
Wednesday, December 7, 7:00 pm
Goodrich Memorial Library, Newport

National Book Award finalist Kekla Magoon discusses her award-winning nonfiction book, Revolution in Our Time: The Black Panther Party’s Promise to the People. The Vermont author also considers the importance of reading as a tool for social change, and our individual and collective power to transform our communities.

THE NEW HISTORY OF WATERGATE
Wednesday, December 7, 7:00 pm
Ilsley Public Library, Middlebury

Fifty years after burglars were caught inside the Watergate offices of the Democratic National Committee, the scandal continues to reverberate. Garrett M. Graff, author of Watergate: A New History, discusses how the event shaped modern Washington, and how the events of 1971-1974 are stranger, wilder, and weirder than our popular memory.

PANDEMIC ARCHITECTURE: TWO CENTURIES OF DISEASE AND DESIGN
Wednesday, December 7, 7:00 pm
Brooks Memorial Library, Brattleboro

Champlain College professor David Mills explores how two centuries’ worth of alterations to the built environment in response to public health crises have changed our buildings, skylines, and streetscapes.

CHANGING TIMES: RECONCILIATION OR RETRIBUTION
Wednesday, December 7, 7:00 pm
St. Johnsbury Athenaeum, St. Johnsbury

Changing racial demographics predict that those who identify as white will be in the minority by 2050. Rev. Arnold Thomas considers whether Vermont—one of the whitest states in the nation—is prepared to confront the growing presence of people of color within its own borders.

SUSPICIOUS MINDS: CONSPIRACY THEORY EXPLAINED
Wednesday, December 14, 7:00 pm
Vermont Humanities Zoom

Cultural critic Mark Dery delves deep into the history, causes, and current proliferation of conspiracy theories, including the appeal, social media’s role in spreading them, and the threat they pose to democracy and to the very notions of objective fact and nonpartisan truth.

Book image courtesy of the author
In-Person & Virtual Events Ahead in 2023

Discover more upcoming in-person and virtual events - Full schedule at vermonthumanities.org/programs/attend/first-wednesdays

THE MAKING OF “NO OTHER LAKE”
Wednesday, January 4, 7:00 pm
Vermont Humanities Zoom

In 2021, UVM student Jordan Rowell kayaked the 120-mile length of Lake Champlain. Over a two-week journey, Rowell and local filmmaker Duane Peterson conducted interviews to better understand the challenges facing the lake and to explore our relationship with natural resources in the era of climate change.

Photo credit: “No Other Lake”

YOUTH IN AGRICULTURE: WHY IT MATTERS
Wednesday, March 1, 7:00 pm
Vermont Humanities Zoom

Sarah Monteiro of Massachusetts non-profit Greenagers reflects on the importance of getting youth involved and engaged in environmental conservation, sustainable farming, and natural resource management.

ARE YOUR CITY’S MONUMENTS WORTHY?
TAKE THE QUIZ!
Wednesday, February 1, 7:00 pm
Vermont Humanities Zoom

Many communities recently have questioned the value of long-standing monuments. Seeking dialogue instead of a shouting match, author Raffi Andonian poses four questions for us to consider as communities evaluate historic sites, famous figures, and public monuments.

In-Person & Virtual Events Ahead in 2023

“WE HEAD HOME: THROUGH THE GLOSS OF RAIN OR WEIGHT OF SNOW, OR THE PLUM BLUSH OF DUSK, BUT ALWAYS—HOME, ALWAYS UNDER ONE SKY, OUR SKY.”
– FROM THE INAUGURAL POEM “ONE TODAY” BY RICHARD BLANCO

Richard Blanco, image courtesy of the poet

THE SECRET TO SUPERHUMAN STRENGTH
Wednesday, April 5, 7:00 pm
St. Johnsbury Athenaeum, St. Johnsbury

Celebrated Cartoonist Alison Bechdel discusses her work as a memoirist, including her most recent book, The Secret to Superhuman Strength, a graphic memoir about her lifelong love affair with exercise that won the 2021 Vermont Book Award.

POETRY REFLECTIONS WITH RICHARD BLANCO
Thursday, April 6, 7:00 pm
Norwich Public Library, Norwich

Selected by President Obama as the fifth inaugural poet in US history, Richard Blanco is the first Latino, immigrant, and gay person to serve in such a role. Born in Madrid to Cuban exile parents and raised in Miami, the negotiation of cultural identity characterizes his collections of poetry.
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