



A18-401 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

***Journey of the Universe* Friday, 8:00 PM–10:00 PM
Marriott Marquis–Golden Gate A***

Sponsored by the Sustainability Task Force, the Religion and Ecology Group, and the Forum on Religion and Ecology

Mary Evelyn Tucker, Yale University, Presiding

One day on a Greek island and your perception of the universe will change forever....Ask acclaimed author and evolutionary philosopher Brian Thomas Swimme about our role as humans in this awe-inspiring universe and his insights will light up the night skies. As our host, cowriter, and fellow traveler, he shares his infectious curiosity about life's biggest questions in the epic *Journey of the Universe*. This documentary film project, companion book, and twenty-part educational series is a collaboration of Swimme and historian of religions Mary Evelyn Tucker. They weave a tapestry that draws together scientific discoveries in astronomy, geology, biology, ecology, and biodiversity with humanistic insights concerning the nature of the universe. Using his skills as a masterful storyteller, Swimme connects such big picture issues as the birth of the cosmos fourteen billion years ago to the invisible frontiers of the human genome, as well as to our current impact on Earth's evolutionary dynamics. Through his engaging and thoughtful observations audiences everywhere will discover the profound role we play in this intricate web of life. From the Big Bang to the epic impact humans have on the planet today, this film is designed to inspire a new and closer relationship with Earth in a period

of growing environmental and social crisis.

Panelists:

Brian Swimme, California Institute of Integral Studies

Barbara Holmes, Memphis Theological Seminary

Heather Eaton, Saint Paul University

A18–402 □ □ □ □ □ □

Living Along the Fenceline

Friday, 8:00 PM–10:00 PM

Marriott Marquis–Nob Hill A*

Sponsored by the Religion, Social Conflict, and Peace Group

Kathryn Poethig, California State University, Monterey Bay, Presiding

Living Along the Fenceline, a groundbreaking eighty-minute documentary by award-winning filmmaker Lina Hoshino, tells the stories of seven women whose lives have been affected by the United States military presence in their backyards. Their individual journeys of strength and courage represent the unheard stories of myriad communities across the globe that live alongside U.S. bases and bear tragic hidden costs to their land, culture, and spirit. The film connects the stories of women from Texas, Puerto Rico, Hawai'i, Guam, the Philippines, Korea, and Okinawa (Japan) and their efforts to create genuine security in their home communities. They take us into their homes, walk us through their neighborhoods, and introduce us to their communities. We see how military operations and bloated military budgets have affected their lives as we listen to their experiences and take in their surroundings. Through the power of personal story this film also tells a wider story of the negative impacts of U.S. bases on host communities. It shows the strength and creativity of women's activism in challenging prevailing assumptions about military security.

Living Along the Fenceline

offers provocative insights and information for audiences to think about these contentious issues in new ways. It lifts up alternative ideas of peace and security, embedded in the work of grassroots women leaders who are acting on their visions and beliefs.

A18–403 □ □ □ □ □ □

Highgate United: The Transformation of a Canadian Church

Friday, 8:00 PM–10:00 PM
Marriott Marquis–Nob Hill B*

Sponsored by the Anthropology of Religion Group and the Religion, Film, and Visual Culture Group

Ronald L. Grimes, Radboud University, Nijmegen, and Barry Stephenson, Wilfrid Laurier University, Presiding

Highgate United: The Transformation of a Canadian Church deals with the deconsecration and transformation of a rural, Canadian United Church. The work is part of a larger project, titled “Abandoned Sacred.” Ritual sites have life histories. After they are conceived, they grow, undergo transformations, and eventually die. Sometimes they, or parts of them, are recycled. We are studying buildings and sites that have been abandoned or radically transformed. Abandonment does not necessarily bring down the curtain on a place’s religious significance but can instead be the first act in a larger, longer social drama: a synagogue becomes a mosque; a Hopi kiva, the centre piece of a national park; a city-center church, a thriving pub. Historically considered, religious sites and buildings have often been built by one religion and later appropriated by another. In addition, religious architecture, built for liturgical purposes, may be converted into a theater, home, or condominium. Like people, buildings can be converted, bringing about a sense of heightened emotion and dramatic transformation. The phrase “abandoned sacred” refers to the process of un- and re-making that can overtake consecrated buildings and locales. Even when this process seems to propel a site from sacred to secular, sacralized residues, such as stories and cemeteries, may remain. Using a combination of ethnographic, visual, and historical methods, we are examining this at sites selected to illustrate the range of transformative possibilities. Typically, research on sacred places has focused on statically conceived symbolic meanings of religious architecture. Our project emphasizes moments of change in the uses and meanings of sacred places, because studying sacred sites during moments of crisis offers valuable insight into the dynamic interactions of religion and culture. The film is based on fieldwork conducted in 2010, tracking events surrounding the deconsecration of a United Church. The film braids together the deconsecration service, stories told by members of the Church community, interviews, and a concert designed to relaunch the building as an arts and community center. The research and film is a joint project of two researchers.

A19–406 □ □ □ □ □ □

Enlighten Up!

Saturday, 8:00 PM–10:00 PM

Marriott Marquis–Nob Hill A*

Sponsored by the Yoga in Theory and Practice Group

Stuart R. Sarbacker, Oregon State University, Presiding

Filmmaker Kate Churchill's *Enlighten Up!* is a documentary that explores a range of contemporary yoga traditions through the lens of the personal journey of a skeptical would-be modern yogi. The film follows Nick Rosen, a writer and yoga novice, as he experiments with a range of contemporary traditions, encountering a number of prominent figures in modern yoga, such as B. K. S. Iyengar and Pattabhi Jois. The film examines the potential for spiritual transformation in yoga, while keeping an eye on the commodification of yoga and the often-skeptical perspectives of scholars of yoga's history in India and in the transnational context.

Panelists:

Shreena Gandhi, Kalamazoo College

Eric Shaw, California Institute of Integral Studies

Mark Singleton, St. John's College, Santa Fe

Stefanie Syman, Brooklyn, NY

A19–407 □ □ □ □ □ □

"NO!": Breaking Silences Around Black Women and Rape

Saturday, □ 8:00 PM–10:00 PM

Marriott Marquis–Nob Hill C*

Sponsored by the Black Theology Group and the Womanist Approaches to Religion and Society Group

Carla Jean-McNeil Jackson, Independent Scholar, Presiding

Speak with an intergenerational panel following the screening of *NO!*, the internationally acclaimed, award-winning, feature-length documentary that unveils the reality of rape, other forms of sexual violence, and healing in African-American communities.

NO!

also explores how rape is used as a weapon of homophobia. The featured panelists will discuss how religion, race, and politics can both negatively and positively influence attitudes and solutions to end rape and other forms of sexual violence. They will engage in a conversation that will explore some of the issues highlighted in the documentary: 1) Black feminist/womanist Christian and Islamic perspectives that address the wrongfulness of the rape of women; 2) Black men as profeminist/womanist allies in rape prevention; 3) Rape as a community issue that reinforces interlocking systems of oppression, such as racism, sexism, classism, and heterosexism; and 4) Activism and spirituality as healing modalities. Gender-based violence is an international atrocity that knows no boundary. This panel will address these global acts of violence through the first-person testimonies, scholarship, activism, and cultural work of African-Americans. As Alice Walker, the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of

The Color Purple

says, "If the Black community in the Americas and in the world would save itself it must complete the work

NO!

begins."

Panelists:

Aishah Shahidah Simmons, AfroLez® Productions

Traci C. West, Drew University

Gwendolyn Zoharah Simmons, University of Florida

Obery M. Hendricks, New York Theological Seminary

A19–408

***UMEMULO: A Girl's Rite of Passage in the Context of AIDS
in South Africa***

Saturday, 8:00 PM–10:00 PM

Marriott Marquis–Nob Hill B*

Sponsored by the Anthropology of Religion Group and the Religion, Film, and Visual Culture Group

Jone Salomonsen, University of Oslo, Presiding

This ethnographic film documents how a township family in KwaZulu Natal and their extended kin and community adapt an old Zulu rite of passage to protect a sixteen-year-old girl from the risk of being infected with HIV. Women cross customary norms and take ritual leadership by reference to the authority of Dr. Jesus and the calling from the ancestors, transmitted in dreams. Animal sacrifice and the mediated exchange of meat, blood, skin, grass, herbs, blessings, and honorary song-and-dance movements are integral to the rite, which culminates in a big feast. The overall aim is to forge protection for the girl by invoking and memorizing a new-old bond between ancestors, humans, animals, plants, and the land, and alternatively celebrating life and community. The DVD (31') was edited in December 2008 with video footage and still pictures from the actual ritual performance in February 2005.

A20-404 □ □ □ □ □ □
Of Gods and Men
Sunday, □ 8:00 PM–10:00 PM
Marriott Marquis–Nob Hill A*

Sponsored by the Religion, Film, and Visual Culture Group

Antonio D. Sison, Catholic Theological Union, Presiding

This film is the cinematic retelling of the true story of eight French Cistercian Trappist monks who were caught in the eye of the protracted civil war in Algeria during the 1990s. In the crossfire between the authoritarian government and brutal Islamic extremists, the monks came to the difficult, altruistic decision of remaining with their impoverished Muslim flock at the risk of their own lives. The film evinces the delicate dance between the monastic call to solitude and contemplation and the Christian imperative to love one's neighbor, here expressed in profound interreligious solidarity and sociopolitical engagement. Based largely on John Kiser's *The Monks of Tibhirine: Faith, Love, and Terror in Algeria* (Saint Martin's Press, 2002), the film has been applauded in religious and critical circles and won the Prize of the Ecumenical Jury at the 2010 Cannes Film Festival.

A20-405 □ □ □ □ □ □
Poetry
Sunday, □ 8:00 PM–10:00 PM
Marriott Marquis–Nob Hill B*

Sponsored by the Religion, Film, and Visual Culture Group

Craig Detweiler, Pepperdine University, Presiding

Mija has been diagnosed with early onset Alzheimer's. She enrolls in a poetry class, perhaps eager to put words to life before they fail her. Mija's grandson is implicated in a horrible crime. Can Mija find poetry amidst tragedy? Prior to making movies, director Lee Chang-dong served as South Korea's culture minister. He coaxed legendary actress Yun Jung-hee out of retirement to play Mija. This award-winning picture awakens our senses. Shocking, mesmerizing, and rewarding, *Poetry* lives up to its title.

A20-406 □ □ □ □ □ □

Syrian Bride

Sunday, 8:00 PM–10:00 PM

Marriott Marquis–Nob Hill C*

Sponsored by the Religion, Film, and Visual Culture Group

Ken Derry, University of Toronto, Presiding

The Syrian Bride (2004) is a romantic comedy that considers the Arab–Israeli conflict through the lens of two families that are about to be joined by an arranged marriage. Mona, the bride-to-be, must cross the demilitarized zone that lies between her Druze home in Golan Heights and Syria, where her husband and his family wait for her. The problem is that, according to Syria, Mona's home is in fact Syrian, while Israel claims the territory as its own. The focus of the narrative is thus Mona's attempt to overcome both sides' refusal to agree on where the border lies, so that she can cross it. Along the way the film has a very good time exploring issues of family, relationships, commitment, and history. Directed by Eran Riklis, *The Syrian Bride*

is the winner of several international awards, including the "Grand Prix" for best film at the 2004 Montréal World Film Festival.

A20–407 □ □ □ □ □ □

Connected

Sunday, □ 8:00 PM–10:00 PM

Marriott Marquis–Nob Hill D*

Sponsored by the Religion, Film, and Visual Culture Group

Jeanette Reedy Solano, California State University, Fullerton, Presiding

With wonderful heart and an impressive sense of scale, Tiffany Shlain’s vibrant and insightful documentary, *Connected*, explores the visible and invisible connections linking major issues of our time — the environment, consumption, population growth, technology, human rights, and the global economy — while searching for her place in the world during a transformative time in her life. Employing a splendidly imaginative combination of animation and archival footage, plus several surprises, Shlain constructs a chronological tour of Western modernization through the work of her late father, Leonard Shlain, a surgeon and best-selling author of *Art and Physics: Parallel Visions in Space, Time, and Light* (William, Morrow, and Co., 1991) and *The Alphabet Versus the Goddess: The Conflict Between Word and Image* (Viking, 1998). With humor and irony, Shlain family life merges with philosophy to create both a personal portrait and a proposal for ways we can move forward as a civilization.

Connected

illuminates the beauty and tragedy of human endeavor while boldly championing the importance of personal connectedness for understanding and coping with today’s global conditions.

A21–400 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

La Mission

Monday, □ 8:00 PM–10:00 PM

Marriott Marquis–Nob Hill C*

Sponsored by the Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society Group

Néstor Medina, University of Toronto, Presiding

Growing up in the Mission district of San Francisco, Che Rivera (Benjamin Bratt) has always had to be tough to survive. He's a powerful man respected throughout the Mission barrio for his masculinity and his strength, as well as for his hobby building beautiful lowrider cars. A reformed inmate and recovering alcoholic, Che has worked hard to redeem his life and do right by his pride and joy: his only son, Jes, whom he has raised on his own after the death of his wife. Che's path to redemption is tested, however, when he discovers Jes is gay. To survive his neighborhood, Che has always lived with his fists. To survive as a complete man, he'll have to embrace a side of himself he's never shown.

A21-401 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

We Were Here: Voices from the AIDS Years in San Francisco

Monday, 8:00 PM–10:00 PM

Marriott Marquis–Nob Hill A*

Sponsored by the Status of LGBTIQ Persons in the Profession Committee

Melissa M. Wilcox, Whitman College, Presiding

We Were Here documents the coming of what was called the “Gay Plague” in the early 1980s. It illuminates the profound personal and community issues raised by the AIDS epidemic as well as the broad political and social upheavals it unleashed. It offers a cathartic validation for the generation that suffered through, and responded to, the onset of AIDS. It opens a window of understanding to those who have only the vaguest notions of what transpired in those years. It provides insight into what society could, and should, offer its citizens in the way of medical care, social services, and community support. Early in the epidemic, San Francisco's compassionate, multifaceted, and creative response to AIDS became known as "The San Francisco Model." The city's activist and progressive infrastructure that evolved out of the 1960's, combined with San Francisco's highly politicized gay community centered around the Castro Street neighborhood, helped overcome the obstacles of a nation both homophobic and lacking in universal healthcare. In its suffering, San Francisco mirrors the experience of so many American cities during those years. In its response, The San Francisco Model remains a standard to aspire to in seeking a healthier, more just, more humane society. 2011 marks thirty years since AIDS descended. Like an unrelenting hurricane, the epidemic roiled San Francisco for two decades and only began granting some reprieve with medical advancements in the late 1990s. The death years of AIDS left the City ravaged and exhausted, yet, as in most of the

developed world, the worst seems past. Though thousands are still living with HIV, and new infections continue at an alarming rate, the relentless suffering of the 1980s and 1990s has given way to a kind of calm, and, understandably, a degree of willful forgetfulness.

We Were Here

utilizes San Francisco's experience with AIDS to open up an overdue conversation both about the history of the epidemic, and the lessons to be learned from it.

A21-402 □ □ □ □ □ □
Mysteries of the Jesus Prayer
Monday, □ 8:00 PM–10:00 PM
Marriott Marquis–Nob Hill B*

Sponsored by the Eastern Orthodox Studies Group

Norris J. Chumley, Columbia University and New York University, Presiding

Come on a pilgrimage to the heart of an ancient spirituality. *Mysteries of the Jesus Prayer*, a new HarperOne book and documentary feature film from SnagFilms (Comcast and Fios On-Demand, iTunes, Amazon, and YouTube Rentals), American Public Television (PBS station short version), and Passion River Films (Theatrical, DVD, and CD), focuses on the mysteries behind the prayer that is thought to have first been practiced by the Apostles some 2,000 years ago. The prayer is still chanted by monks and nuns in far away caves and monasteries but is mostly unknown to the rest of the Western world. Many say that with this prayer, it is possible to communicate directly with God. Dr. Norris J. Chumley and Very Rev. Dr. John A. McGuckin bring you to ancient lands of peace and solitude, filming for the first time hermits, monks, and nuns in caves, monasteries, and convents who share this ancient mystical prayer. Visit

JesusPrayerMovie.com
for Study Guides and additional information.

**Room locations are subject to change. Please check your Program Book onsite to confirm the location when you arrive at the Annual Meeting.*