As part of the University’s continuing cooperation with the Duncaster Retirement Community in Bloomfield, monthly lectures are offered on the Duncaster campus. Each lecture begins at 4:45 p.m. and is followed by a light buffet reception, providing an opportunity to talk informally with the speaker and mingle with other participants.

Residents of Duncaster and Fellows of the Presidents’ College may attend the lectures, and the reception following without charge. The cost per lecture for non-resident, non-Fellows is $15.

Duncaster Retirement Community, where the events will be held, is at 40 Loeffler Road, Bloomfield, Ct. There is parking adjacent to the building.

Tuesdays at Duncaster

SPRING 2016

» The Afterlife of the Crusades and Radical Islam  
   —John Elukin  
   Tues., Jan. 12; 4:45 p.m.

» Abstraction and Uncertainty—Power Boothe  
   Tues., Feb. 9; 4:45 p.m.

» Putin’s Way—Mari Firkatian  
   Tues., March 8; 4:45 p.m.

» Woman, Wisdom, and Wrinkles—Mala Matacin  
   Tues., April 5; 4:45 p.m.

   —Ken Steen  
   Tues., May 10; 4:45 p.m.

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REGISTRATION FORM

Please check relevant items and indicate amount paid at right.

☐ Presidents’ College Fellow. Jan.–June 2016 year (parking on campus, library privileges, discounts on courses, information about events). $75 ______

☐ The Afterlife of the Crusades and Radical Islam. Non-resident $15 ______

☐ Abstraction and Uncertainty. Non-resident $15 ______

☐ Putin’s Way. Non-resident $15 ______

☐ Woman, Wisdom, and Wrinkles Non-resident $15 ______


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Online registration now available at hartford.edu/presidentscollege
January 12—The Afterlife of the Crusades and Radical Islam
—John Elukin

The Crusades did not end with the passing of the Middle Ages. They lived on in the minds of Christians as they explored the New World and as they fought against the Ottoman Empire. The Crusades, particularly the Christian attempt to retake and hold the Holy Land, passed very quickly from the consciousness of the Muslim world. It was only in the 19th century, under the influence of European colonialism, that Muslims became aware of their victory over the Christians. In the same way, contemporary Muslim fundamentalists conceive of their current battle against the West as a continuation of the medieval struggle against the Crusaders. Ironically, the Crusades have become more important to contemporary Muslims than to Christians.


February 9—Abstraction and Uncertainty—Power Boothe

The talk will present the idea of abstraction as an emergent order that requires the full participation of the viewer to complete the aesthetic process. Abstraction is defined as “to draw from” and consequently the word can be understood as a simplification or a shortcut. On the other hand, abstraction in art can be a set of non-literal relations that reveal a world of meaning that words cannot describe. The cave paintings in Spain and France, dating from 40,000–11,000 BC, are cathedrals of abstraction and attempts to represent the mysterious forces that these early humans experienced as they began to reflect on their lives. The small goddess figures, found throughout old Europe and dating from before the neolithic era, channel forces of fertility and sexuality that are deeply felt but not fully understood. The talk will ask the question: Do we use art to control that which is uncertain, or to align ourselves with those non-literal forces we cannot convey with words?

POWER BOOTHE is a professor of painting at the Hartford Art School and has had over 20 one-person exhibitions in New York and nationally. His work is in many public and private collections, including the Guggenheim Museum, the Museum of Modern Art, and the Whitney Museum of American Art, as well as the Wadsworth Atheneum and the New Britain Museum of American Art in Connecticut. He has been awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship for painting, a National Endowment Individual Artist’s Fellowship, and a Pollock/Krasner Fellowship. The Fred Giampietro Gallery in New Haven, Ct. represents his work exclusively. March 8—Putin’s Way—Mari Firkatian

Can we anticipate what Putin wishes to do with Russia’s foreign policy? Can any of his past moves or his personal background give us a clue as to what he anticipates? Does he have a plan other than to distract Russians from domestic economic downturns? This talk will touch on all these questions and more as we explore Russia’s newest enigmatic leader.

MARI A. FIRKATIAN is professor of history at the University of Hartford. She has been a Fulbright Scholar and a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellow as well as a Yale University Fellow and a recipient of International Research and Exchanges Board scholarships. She has lived and traveled extensively in southeast Europe and the Soviet Union. Trained as a linguist and a historian, her research interests include minority populations, diplomatic history, and intellectual history.

April 5—Woman, Wisdom, and Wrinkles—Mala Matacin

There is a paradox for American women in regard to body image issues and aging. On the one hand, people are generally viewed as becoming wiser with the aging process. On the other hand, growing old is problematic for women in that they are not supposed to “show their age.” Using research and various cultural messages (e.g., magazines, films, and poetry), Matacin will examine this paradox, and suggest ways in which we may be able to challenge how we think, view, and treat wise women.

MALA MATAČIN has a PhD in social psychology from the University of Cincinnati and a post-doc in behavioral and preventive medicine from Brown University School of Medicine. She is an associate professor of psychology at the University of Hartford. She is the founder and faculty sponsor of Women for Change, a campus-based organization whose mission is dedicated to issues of women’s body image issues and sexuality. She has won a University Outstanding Teaching Award and an Excellence in Service to Students Award from the National Society of Leadership and Success.


Iceland is currently a very popular tourist destination that primarily highlights the largely untouched natural environment of this isolated volcanic island in the North Atlantic. While music has certainly had a place in Icelandic culture through the centuries, including some very intriguing practices, it is now in a flourishing period of musical creativity and production.

KEN STEEN’S music and sound art is recognized internationally for its authentic vitality, and distinctive personal vision. In the last five years, Steen’s work has enjoyed more than 100 performances on five continents. Steen is professor of composition and music theory in The Hartt School, and was the 2012 recipient of the University of Hartford’s Roy E. Larsen Award for Excellence in Teaching.