

HUMANITIES LECTURE SERIES (FALL 2007)

Martin Menke, Ph.D.*
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September 10, 2007, 7:00 p.m., Dion Center Reception Room

David Amram: “From Cairo to Kerouac and New York to Nashua”

David Amram has composed over 100 orchestral and chamber works. He has also written two operas and many scores for theater and films, including *Splendor in the Grass* and *The Manchurian Candidate*. He plays French horn, piano, guitar, numerous flutes and whistles, percussion, and a variety of folkloric instruments from 25 countries. “**From Cairo to Kerouac and New York to Nashua**” will include performances of songs mentioned in *On the Road*; “Pull My Daisy,” the title song from the 1959 Beat documentary film Kerouac narrated; “Blue Monk” and other pieces that Kerouac enjoyed. Amram will also perform world music he learned in Egypt and Africa, a poem based on a traditional Cantonese folk song, and a talking blues sing-a-long, *Meanderin’ in Mandarin*, which he composed for the first Beat meets East Festival held in the summer of 2004 in Chengdu, China.

Mr. Amram has collaborated with **Leonard Bernstein, Langston Hughes, Dizzy Gillespie, Thelonius Monk, Charles Mingus, Tito Puente, Sir James Galway**, and many others. **Amram** and **Kerouac** gave the first jazz-poetry reading in New York City in December 1957 and frequently worked together. **Mr. Amram** has participated in many of the annual *Lowell Celebrates Kerouac!* festivals; he will perform with his quintet in Lowell on **September 7** and on **September 9** have his classical orchestral work played by the *Orchestra New England*, where he will appear as a soloist. Both concerts will celebrate the **50th** anniversary of *On the Road*’s publication, and the **50th** anniversary of **Kerouac and Amram**’s first jazz-poetry reading in NYC.

Mr. Amram is the author of three books: the autobiography *Vibrations*, the memoir *Offbeat: Collaborating With Kerouac*, and *Upbeat: Nine Lives of a Musical Cat* to be published this fall by Paradigm Publishers. He is currently working with author **Frank McCourt** on a new setting of the Mass, *Missa Manhattan*, as well as a new orchestral work. Commissioned by the **Guthrie Foundation**, *Symphonic Variations on a Song by Woody Guthrie* will premiere **September 28, 2007**, in San Jose, California. It will be performed by the *Symphony Silicon Valley*, having also commissioned Amram to compose a new piano concerto.

November 6, 2007, 7:00 p.m., Education Building, Demoulas Room

Jean Harzic: “The French Language: A Global Language”

For the past thirty years, **Jean Harzic** has had an important and enduring presence at the Alliance Française: he was the first Délégué général of the Alliance française of Paris in the United States and later became the Secrétaire général of the Alliance Française of Paris.

“Through the use of specific examples, gleaned from over a hundred countries from all across the globe, M. Harzic will endeavor to define the place that France holds in the world today. Without any chauvinism or arrogance, and without getting into any kind of competition with English which is the undisputed leading language, we should then have a look at what is its importance and its influence.

The French language can, however, hold on to its respectable second place. Why do Jodie Foster, Woody Allen and so many other Americans, famous or otherwise, speak French? Why do Walter Salles, the great Brazilian film director and so many other Latin-Americans, writers, filmmakers, or simply average citizens speak French? Do the sixty-three countries of the Francophony carry some weight in the world? What role do they play? If English remains the language of business, how can we explain that French is taught in a hundred companies in London, 50 in Madrid, 33 in Bangkok, etc.?

The aim of the exposé will be to determine as precisely as possible what place the French language holds in the world today: lost, going extinct, as certain French people believe? Or quite the contrary, undergoing a renewed vitality based on real-life situations in a wide variety of areas? The components of the French cultural network, Alliances Françaises, French cultural centers and institutes, French junior and senior high schools all play important roles—we’ll see which ones.” ■

* In addition to serving as JYS Director, **Dr. MARTIN MENKE** serves as Associate Professor of History and Director of Secondary Social Studies Education. He earned his bachelor's degree in history from Tufts University and his doctorate from Boston College. He has published on German political Catholicism in the *Catholic Historical Review* and *Kirchliche Zeitgeschichte*. He regularly presents at regional and national conferences.