

Amherst College
CHI
CENTER FOR
HUMANISTIC
INQUIRY

Annual Report
Center for Humanistic Inquiry
May 17, 2023

The Center for Humanistic Inquiry (CHI) administered the second year of the **Presidential Scholars** series on the themes of race and the Black experience. This year's scholars included pianist, composer and MacArthur Fellow Jason Moran; Latinx and gender scholar Karma Chávez; Pulitzer prize-winning author, journalist and curator Hilton Als; and literature scholar Saidiya Hartman.

The CHI served as a partner for the college's eighth annual literary festival, **LitFest 2023**, which featured authors Valeria Luiselli, Meghan O'Rourke, Ingrid Rojas Contreras and poets Victoria Chang and Tyehimba Jess. The festival also featured Presidential Scholar Hilton Als, who, in partnership with the Mead Art Museum, curated the exhibit *God Made My Face: A Collective Portrait of James Baldwin*.

The **CHI Salon** series included twenty-four presentations throughout the year featuring humanities scholarship and creative work at the college.

The CHI sponsored the following **CHI Research Seminars** with over 50 faculty and staff participants:

- Digital Humanities at Amherst
- Religion, Nature, Culture: Thinking with Other-than-Human Beings
- Free Speech and Academic Freedom
- Thinking Democratically
- Disinformation
- The Premodern at Amherst

Under the rubric of the **Humanities and the Practice of Hope** initiative, a Mellon Foundation-funded curriculum development program designed to connect coursework with social justice work, two of the research seminars above have produced several courses across the college.

The 2023 cohort of the **Folger Undergraduate Fellowship** included:

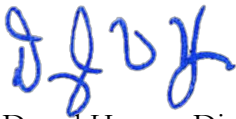
- Regina Deri '25, "Trends in Early Modern English Spelling Reform: Analyzing Spelling Changes Computationally"
- Xe Enfys '25, "Re/unmarking Transness: Queer Signifiers of Gender Variance"
- Christian Pattavina '24, "Psychosexual Disillusionment in *Macbeth*: A Hermeneutical Retrospective"
- Cole Warren '24, "Mapping Identities: Contextualizing Ethnographical and Cultural Depictions of mid-Atlantic Algonquian Peoples in English Illustrations and Literature"

- Imari Yasuno '24, "Lamentations and Sin: The Representation of Collective Trauma in the European Early Modern Period"
- Rachel Zhu '24, "Cordelia's Death: Women Corpses in Shakespeare"

The **CHI Fellows**, the post-doctorate research fellows at the center, finished the second and final year of their residency with a symposium on race and the Black experience (dovetailing with the Presidential Scholars series above). The CHI Fellows brought to the college over a dozen scholars across the disciplines to speak on topics ranging from Black visibility to post-Soul Afro-Latinidades, and to respond to Presidential Scholar Saidiya Hartman's work.

The CHI is poised to move to the **Aliki Perroti & Seth Frank Lyceum**, a new Leeds Platinum facility where it will reopen in the fall.

Respectfully submitted,



Darryl Harper, Director
Center for Humanistic Inquiry

On behalf of the CHI Advisory Board:

Martin Garnar (Library)
Rafeeq Hasan (Philosophy)
Maria Heim (Religion)
Sheila Jaswal (Chemistry)
Emily Potter-Ndiaye (The Mead Art Museum)
Austin Sarat (Law, Jurisprudence, and Social Thought)
Olufemi Vaughan (Black Studies)
Niko Vicario (Art and the History of Art)
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