

# Folklore Studies

NEWSLETTER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OREGON FOLKLORE PROGRAM

Spring 2010

## Folklore and Anthropology Scholars Receive Guggenheim Fellowships

The University of Oregon's folklorists and anthropologists are developing a reputation for excellence as the recipients of highly competitive John Simon Guggenheim fellowships. Guggenheim fellowships, designed to allow a scholar to pursue independent research and study, are awarded at mid-career to men and women who have already demonstrated exceptional capacity for productive scholarship. In 2008, Philip

Scher, associate professor of folklore and anthropology, received a Guggenheim Fellowship, which allowed him to pursue work concerning the implications for anthropology of the copyright and legal protection of expressive culture and folklore, as well as a study of World Heritage sites in the Caribbean. This year, Professor Carol Silverman has been awarded a 2011 Guggenheim Fellowship in support of her scholarship exploring the relationships between the rise in discrimination against Roma and the current globalization of Gypsy music.

As an anthropologist and folklorist, Professor Silverman has devoted over twenty years to the study of Balkan music and culture, working closely with Roma populations. Focusing much of her work in Bulgaria and Macedonia, she has investigated the relationship among politics, ethnicity, ritual, and gender. Her book, *Romani Routes: Cultural Politics and Balkan Music in Diaspora*, will be released this year by Oxford University Press. As the chair of the Department of Anthropology, Professor Silverman shares her knowledge with students in classes on the Balkans, Jewish folklore, ethnographic theory, feminism, and performance.



Professor Silverman writes, "When Madonna was booed last August in Romania after she bemoaned the plight of East European Gypsies, she epitomized the paradox that Roma are loved for their music yet hated as people." As Europe's largest minority, Roma people are socially, economically, and politically marginalized in virtually all arenas of society; however, their music has gar-

nered success at European and American festivals, in dance clubs, and on CDs, DVDs, and YouTube. The recent explosive success of bands like Gogol Bordello, DeVotchKa, and Balkan Beat Box, which combine Gypsy stylistic elements with rock beats and punk style, capitalize on the underdog identity of Gypsy mythology to refresh the rebellious spirit that pop music demands. Although some of the current purveyors of Romani music claim Romani heritage, many are non-Romani DJs and members of pop and fusion bands. Professor Silverman is interested in what attracts these artists and their audiences to Romani music. What sorts of visual and sonic fantasies of the Gypsy are created, and who participates in and benefits from the popularization of the music?

Professor Silverman will spend next year conducting fieldwork within the active Gypsy music scenes in Frankfurt, Berlin, Vienna, New York City, and San Francisco and analyzing her Internet research. Her research will culminate in a book on global Gypsy culture. Professor Silverman will be returning to the University of Oregon as head of anthropology in the fall of 2012.

**We're on the web!**  
[www.uoregon.edu/~flr/](http://www.uoregon.edu/~flr/)

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**About Our Program**  
The University of Oregon's Folklore Program is one of the nation's most progressive centers for folklore studies. The interdisciplinary nature of the program allows independent-minded students to design their own programs according to their interests. Each year, students and faculty members present at conferences nationwide, publish articles, and produce award-winning films. The program is also home to the Randall V. Mills Archives of Northwest Folklore, which houses nearly 20,000 documents and films.

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# Notes from Program Director Lisa Gilman

Dear Friends of the Folklore Program,

It has been an invigorating first year as director. At a time when many folklore programs across the country are experiencing cutbacks, we have been fortunate that ours has grown this year; with the continued support of our donors, this trend can continue into the future.

We are especially indebted to our excellent faculty members who, in addition to their commitments to their home departments, generously contribute their dedication, research expertise, teaching, and time. Of special note, Carol Silverman was awarded the highly competitive John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship and Doug Blandy was awarded the prestigious National Art Educator Award by the National Art Education Association. Sharon Sherman's important contribution as a folklore filmmaker was once again celebrated when she was invited to give the keynote presentation at the "Future Past—Cultural Heritage and Collaborative Film Work" at the Institute for Cultural and European Anthropology at the University of Göttingen, Germany.

We are delighted to welcome to our cross-disciplinary core faculty two new members. Loren Kajikawa joined the music faculty in fall 2010. His courses on American and global popular musics greatly augment our curricular offerings to undergraduate and graduate students. John Fenn joined the tenure-line faculty of the Arts and Administration Program as a media management specialist. His advising and courses are especially valuable to students pursuing professions in the public sector.

As our annual highlight, we once again welcomed a motivated new cohort of students into our MA program who join existing students to inspire us with their cross-disciplinary interests and active engagement with academic and professional goals. Several students in the English department's PhD program are pursuing cutting-edge research through the Folklore Structured Emphasis Program, and we are very proud of our undergraduates graduating this year with folklore certificates.

A long-term goal of the program will finally be realized when the folklore MA and MS degree, currently an interdisciplinary studies: individualized program offered through the Graduate School, is transferred to the Folklore Program in September 2010. With this shift, we will propose a new MA track in public-sector folklore next year as well as undergraduate major and minor degrees.

Folklorists in the state and across the country were concerned when the Oregon Folklife Program was dissolved in June 2009. We are happy to announce that starting in fall 2010, the UO will serve as the hub of a newly established and reinvigorated statewide public folklore organization called the Oregon Folklife Network (OFN), a collaboration between several units on campus and entities across the state. This integration of the academic mission of the Folklore Program with statewide public programming will provide excellent research, programming, and professional opportunities for our students, faculty members, and stakeholders in the state.

The Randall V. Mills Archives continues to be at the center of innovative developments in folklore archives nationally. Under the leadership of our new archives manager, Nathan Georgitis, we launched an electronic catalog of the archives holdings in spring 2010, and we have begun digitizing image collections.

As you know, succeeding in all these initiatives requires bolstering our funding at a time when the economy struggles. We are very grateful to those of you who contribute to the program and look forward to additional support for graduate education, student paper prizes, speakers, and archives initiatives.

I look forward to another productive year in 2010–11. My attentions will be focused on continuing to develop our degree programs and organizing a public folklore symposium. Please stop by and visit our program any time.

Sincerely,  
Lisa Gilman



# The Best Seat in the House: New Archives Manager Spearheads Digitization of Archives, Providing Access From Anywhere

The Folklore Program is delighted to welcome Nathan Georgitis as the Randall V. Mills Archives' new archives manager. Nathan is a metadata librarian at the UO's Knight Library, and his expertise will help the Randall V. Mills Archives become a more accessible site for research and instruction for students, researchers, and community members.

In addition to his archival skills, Nathan also has a personal investment in folklore practices and preservation. After receiving his MLS from Simmons College in Boston, Massachusetts, he worked with folklorist Mary Hufford, researching the effect of West Virginia strip top mining on people's relationship with the environment. After a stint at the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress and another as Minnesota Public Radio's first archivist, Nathan joined the UO community.

The Mills Archives is one of the Folklore Program's strongest assets. The current collections include roughly 5,000 photographic slides, and at least 4,000 student projects, as well as a number of rare books and donated research. The holdings are currently available to view during archive hours; however, schedule conflicts and geographic distance can impede would-be visitors' access to these rich materials. The Folklore Program and Georgitis are currently working on an exciting project: digitizing archival images and making them available to the students and the larger "virtual" community through the university's online visual collections.

Furthermore, folklore graduate students in John Fenn's Public Folklore and Cultural Programming class have used the course as an avenue to create a grant proposal to assess, preserve, digitize, and catalogue the entirety of the Mills Archives photographic slide collection.

The proposed project, seeking funding through the Library Services and Technology Act Program's 2010 grants, would provide easier access to the digital images in an online database and would ensure the images' preservation and availability for generations to come. The digitization of the photographic slides is the first of many steps the Folklore Program hopes to take in creating a digital catalog for the Mills Archives.

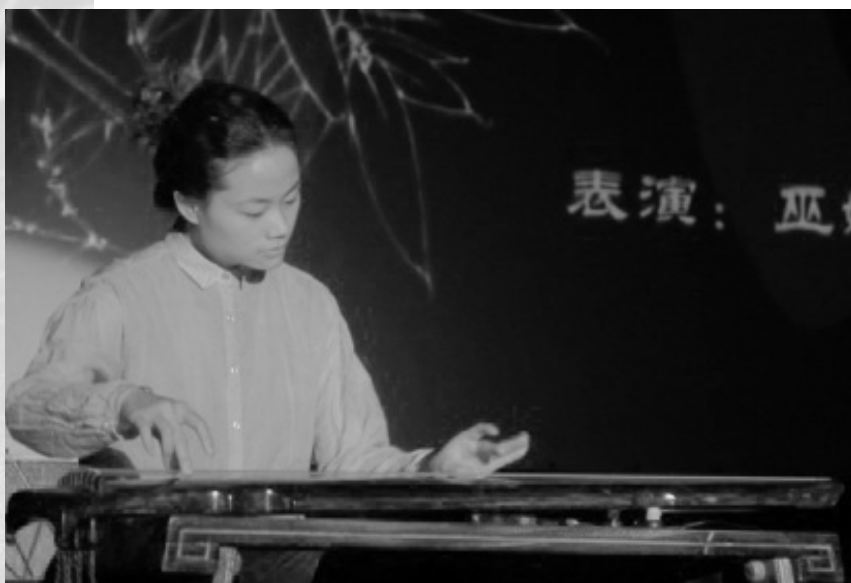


*UO Folklore Program representatives at the Western States Folklore Society Conference in Salem, Oregon. included from left, folklore MA students Zack Schwartz, Sarah Carpenter, Erin Swartz, and Shelise Zumwalt; Associate Professor Daniel Wojcik; folklore MA students Caroline McNabb and Tiffany Christian; folklore MA graduate Ziyi You; and Professors Sharon Sherman and Carol Silverman.*



# The Scholar's Zither and Underground Rock: ChinaVine Explores Elements of Classical Tradition in Beijing's Experimental Music Scene

Since its inception in 2008, the ChinaVine project has consistently developed innovative scholarship and transnational collaboration. Spearheaded by Doug Blandy, assistant dean of academic affairs for the UO School of Architecture and Allied Arts, and Kristin Congden, professor of film and humanities at the University of Central Florida, ChinaVine is a collaborative effort to document and interpret China's intangible cultural heritage, with the particular aim of educating English-speaking audiences about China's traditional cultural expressions.



*Guqin musician Wu Na uses a traditional Chinese instrument in innovative ways.*

Blandy and Congden have made numerous trips to China, have established an educational partnership with the Folk Art Institute at Shandong University of Art and Design, and created Chinavine.org, an interactive website that uses photographs, text, and streaming videos to exhibit Chinese folk art. Over the past year, ChinaVine has expanded its examination of Chinese folk art, investigating the ways in which traditional folk expressions are influencing newer musical styles in urban areas.

Last summer, Blandy, assistant professor John Fenn, and other members of the ChinaVine team traveled to Beijing to explore the contemporary music scene. Beijing's underground music scene is home to burgeoning punk, noise, and experimental musicians, many of whom play traditional instruments in new ways. Blandy and Fenn spent time with artists and music critics, investigating these musicians' relationship to traditional Chinese culture in terms of their music's approach

to language, traditional instrumentation, and philosophical ideas. The collision of evolving musical styles and traditional knowledge highlights shifting dynamics in Chinese folklore.

Fenn recalls working with Wu Na, a classically trained musician who plays the guqin, or scholar's zither, an ancient seven-string instrument often referred to as "the father of Chinese music" that has been played for over 3,000 years. Ms. Na, trained from an early age in both Chinese and Western music and the only person in China holding a master's degree in guqin performance, has collaborated with distinguished composers on contemporary opera and also performs with some of China's foremost rock stars in large, stadium shows.

"There are thousands of years of history encoded in this object (the guqin) and the traditions surrounding performance with it are on the one hand 'set in stone' yet on the other are debated and argued even today," Fenn says. "Wu Na takes the guqin and she plays it in this experimental context, with one of the most well-known rock musicians in China, with noise musicians. She's classically trained but ready to push the music in these really interesting directions."

When people visit the ChinaVine website, they will be exposed not only to elements of folklore that inform their previous impressions of Chinese traditions, but also to dynamic, new ways that folklore and tradition are informing current artistic trends. "This broadening of horizons—that's really part of public-sector folklore orientation in general education—getting people to look beyond surfaces to the values that are embedded in cultural practice," Fenn says.

Fenn and Blandy plan to return to Beijing late this summer to continue their research. The ChinaVine project is available online at [www.chinavine.org](http://www.chinavine.org).



## **‘Tiger to Ride as Stallions’ Yi Poet and Folk Performer Aku WuWu Visits from China**

On the slopes of the Liangshan Mountains in upper Sichuan province, past the rushing Yalong River, the grasses murmur and ghosts abound. This is the land of the Nuosu, a branch of the Yi ethnic group of Southwest China.

Yi poet Aku WuWu grew up in these mountains amidst potato flowers and nature spirits, observing sunyi (animist shamans) call back the souls of children stolen by ghosts. As Yi cultural and religious autonomy became threatened, WuWu began to use his poetry to preserve traditional lore and cultural knowledge. Images of his childhood and the cultural identity of his people saturate his work. As a professor of Yi studies and ethnic minority literature at the Southwest Nationalities University, WuWu guides Han and Yi students alike in the continued study of this rich culture and its literary traditions.

In November 2009, Professor WuWu honored the UO Folklore Program with a performance of his poetry in the Nuosu language, accompanied with English translation, at the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art. His performance style, a blend of song, chant, and recitation that echoed Yi folksong and folk tale presentations, was alternatively charismatic and melancholy, evoking both the boom of thunder and the hush follows. He paired his performance with a slideshow and lecture about the cultural practices and beliefs of the Yi people, as well as current issues facing the Yi population in China.

WuWu sees his own work as a bridge connecting the Yi literary tradition of epics and oratory and the current reality of Yi life. “I have a responsibility and purpose on behalf of my own descendants to leave behind this generation’s literature and knowledge. . . I also take up this generation of Yi people’s difficult life—facing the disappearance of their history and culture, their heavy spiritual burden, their floating spirits—and want to give them a picture of themselves and their spirit.”

Support for “Tiger Tracks: Poetry and Performance from Southwest China” was provided by the Folklore Program, the Asian Studies Program, the Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures, the Arts and Administration Program, the Department of English, the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art, and the Center for Asian and Pacific Studies.

## **Oregon Folklife Program Finds New Home at the University of Oregon**

Oregon’s state public folklore entity, the Oregon Folklife Program (OFP), formerly housed at the Oregon Historical Society, was dissolved in June 2009, a casualty of the economic downturn. After a year-long strategic planning process involving stakeholders across the state, including folklore faculty members Lisa Gilman, Doug Blandy, and John Fenn and James Fox, head of UO Libraries Special Collections and University Archives, the University of Oregon has been identified to be the new hub for statewide public folklore in Oregon.

The OFP has been renamed the Oregon Folklife Network (OFN) to reflect a partnership model representing collaboration between multiple UO units (at the center of which is the Folklore Program along with the Arts and Administration Program), cultural organizations across the state, and state agencies and nonprofit organizations involved in arts and heritage. The OFN will emphasize a combination of service, research, cultural development, and community outreach, fostering vital links between the university, the state, and the local community.

This new partnership will provide Oregonians access to quality arts learning opportunities, deliver technical assistance to individual folk artists and folk art organizations, produce high-quality folk art programming, and educate the public about Oregon’s rich abundance of folk life and cultural heritage.

Folklore students will gain professional training and experience when they participate in OFN activities, such as conducting original research on folk art and folk life, creating exhibits, organizing festivals, developing K-12 curriculum, and constructing interactive websites.

# What Do Ronald Reagan and Dr. Dre Have in Common? Perhaps More Than You Think.

Thirty years ago, hip-hop music and culture was mostly unknown to people living outside the Bronx. Fast forward a few decades and hip-hop is deeply embedded in American mainstream culture, often serving as a decadent symbol for conspicuous consumption, replete with Kristal and diamonds. Assistant Professor Loren Kajikawa attempts to make sense of the explosion in popularity of a formerly marginalized musical style in terms of its relation to the larger culture and politics of its time. He positions his investigation of Dr. Dre and gangsta rap within the political and economic context of the Reagan, Bush, and Clinton presidencies, exploring the ways in which Dr. Dre's transformation of gangsta rap engages with and comments on neoliberal ideas of free markets and economy-stimulating consumption to bring hip-hop more firmly into the mainstream of American music.

As a new faculty member in the School of Music and Dance, and an affiliated faculty member in both folklore and ethnic studies, Kajikawa works with students to tackle the complex webs that influence music in his musicology and ethnomusicology classes. He is interested in exploring music in its sociohistoric context and expresses his desire to open up music classes that historically only addressed European classical traditions in order to cover a



cc Loïc Le Meur

more widespread, inclusive array of music's offerings. For Kajikawa, including traditions that have been academically marginalized adds to the complexity and richness of the philosophical and ethical ideas that affect the discipline as a whole.

In a discussion about blues and jazz, Kajikawa notes, "What do you do with music that's not written down? There are different values that are expressed through oral cultures and oral approaches to music making that are technologically sophisticated, but different because you don't have a score. What does it mean in this sense to transcribe this music and study it based on that transcription? I think some of these ideas can also help students make sense of people like John Cage and other art music composers that have challenged conventional approaches to the relationship between the composer, the score, and the audience members. I think it's really exciting and I think it helps students make connections between the music that we were trained to play and the world that surrounds them."

Kajikawa is excited to strengthen the bridges between the folklore and music programs, citing the rich potential for cross-disciplinary research. He encourages students to think about their own relationship to music, and the folkloric potential for study present in people's relationship with popular music.



*New folklore core faculty member*  
Professor Loren Kajikawa

"I think a lot of people whose vernacular is popular music—pop, rock, or whatever—don't tend to come from a musicology or conservatory trained background but they're the people who have an intimate experience with the music. This experience could translate into things that would be really insightful and interesting from a scholarly perspective. There are people who avoided pop music for a long time because it was too commercial, it wasn't authentic enough, it wasn't 'folk' enough, and musicologically because it wasn't art music, so for completely different reasons it fell through the cracks for a long time. I think both musicology and ethnomusicology have gotten over those issues to a large degree and are now saying, 'Okay, this stuff is culturally relevant and aesthetically interesting and valid music, so we need to engage with that.'"

Assistant Professor Kajikawa received his doctoral and master's degrees in musicology from UCLA, and a bachelor's degree with honors in ethnic studies from UC Berkeley. He teaches Music of the Americas, Introduction to Musicology, History of Hip Hop, and Black Music Historiography in the music school.



## Te Late El Mate?

### By Beth Dehn

¿Te late el mate? With an idea taken from my former classmates in the folklore MA program, two other Americans and I sat outside the teacher training college where we work with a handwritten sign, cameras, and a digital voice recorder. The idea was to learn a bit about the tradition of mate in Uruguay, an herbal tea drunk out of the mate gourd that Uruguayans are rarely seen without, but mostly to interact with as many students as possible. This sort of informal cultural exchange is an exciting part of my spare time as a Fulbright English teaching assistant (ETA) grantee in South America.

From March through November of 2010 I will be working as an English teaching assistant in the public school system in Uruguay. The grant divides twenty hours a week between an elementary school and a teacher training college and allows the remaining twenty hours of time to be devoted to a personal project. In the words of Senator J. William Fulbright, the underlying idea is, "Fostering leadership, learning, and empathy between cultures. . . ."



*Folklore MA graduate and Fulbright ETA grantee Beth Dehn with students in Uruguay.*



*Folklore MA graduate and Fulbright ETA grantee Beth Dehn enjoys mate in Uruguay*

A unique aspect of the ETA program in Uruguay is that four months of the program take place in a province and the other four months in the capital city of Montevideo. At the moment I am located in Salto, a town in the interior of the country. I live in a historic hotel where a cutout of the tango singer Carlos Gardel greets you at the door and a maze of hidden patios ensues!

I'm most proud of the extracurricular lecture series my colleagues and I call, "Our American Lives," which we developed to fulfill cultural exchange with the community. Every week we hold an event that rotates between an English conversation hour and a presentation on youth culture in the U.S. Some topics have included "Road Trips in the USA," "Dating and Marriage," and "Higher Education and Jobs."

To build my professional experience I am conducting interviews and participating in activities at a local museum called Museo del Hombre y la Tecnología. Through comparative work

I'm learning more about museum education practices in Uruguay and generating ideas I can use when I return to the U.S. I am also dabbling a bit in folklore fieldwork with the goal of creating a podcast. My first topic has been collecting oral histories about a unique monthly tradition related to Uruguay's Italian heritage called Día de los Ñoquis when, on the twenty-ninth day of each month, people prepare a humble meal of gnocchi as a reminder of the eighth-century legend.

Of course, there's plenty of time for fun. Weekends usually include asados (BBQs) with friends, walks along the river that divides Uruguay and Argentina, and traveling through the beautiful countryside that reminds me a lot of my Midwestern roots. My best discoveries in Uruguay: dulce de leche on everything, grass-fed beef, and sitting in lawn chairs in the plaza with friends as a pastime!

If you're curious to learn more about my experience, I invite you to check out our blog at [estasfulbright.blogspot.com](http://estasfulbright.blogspot.com).





## Donations to the Folklore Program Help Fund Student Work

In 2001, Susan Fagan and her husband, Tom Fagan, established the Kate Martin Undergraduate Folklore Award, given for the best fieldwork project by an undergraduate in a folklore class, and the Alma Johnson Graduate Folklore Award, for the best project completed by a graduate student in an English or folklore graduate course. The annual awards are named for Susan's grandmothers who were, as she realized once she began the study of folklore, the original spark for her lifelong interest in this field.

The winners of the 2010 Kate Martin Undergraduate Folklore Award are:

**Ingrid Gomez:** "Salvadorian Christmas Recipes." Fieldwork project for FLR 250 Introduction to Folklore.

**Brett Nichols and Meghan Cole:** "Rockin These Tale Feathers." Film made in FLR 407 Seminar: Video Fieldwork.

The winners of the 2010 Alma Johnson Graduate Folklore Award are:

**Sarah Sandri:** "'Not Just a Fantasy': Negotiating Identity, Community and Representation in African Dancing the U.S." Paper written for FLR 607 Folklore Fieldwork.

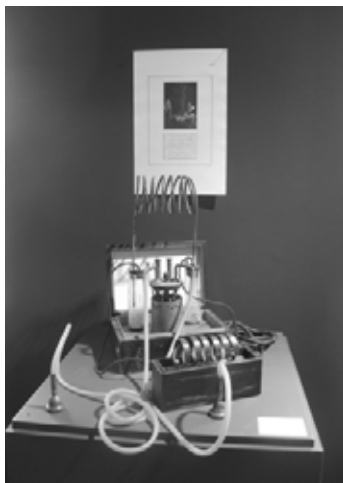
**Kristen Gallerneaux Brooks:** "From the Academy to the Street: The Decline of Psychical Research and Rise of Vernacular Ghost Hunting Groups in the 21 st Century." Paper written for FLR 511 Folklore and Religion.

## Spotlight on Creative Projects



*DIVA visitor enjoys Kristen Gallerneaux Brooks' The Revenant Archives*

tools that helped spiritualists communicate with the dead, vernacular "spirit" photographs, ancient cauls preserved under glass, and soil samples accompanying painstakingly detailed cartographies of haunted sites, created with pigments of the soil taken from the sites in question. Like the Museum of Jurassic Technology in Los Angeles, Kristen's installation work presented curiosities and relics that question our understandings of the boundaries between concrete and liminal, authentic and fraudulent, story and fact, and confronted the complexity and breadth of the human experience in and with the world around it through detailed and thought-provoking "visual legendry."



*Device for communicating with spirits; displayed in The Revenant Archives*

**Kristen Gallerneaux Brooks' The Revenant Archives**, an exploration of spiritualism and cultural history that meditates on the nature of curatorial practice and the constitution of reality, was featured this spring at DIVA, Eugene's Downtown Initiative for the Visual Arts. *The Archives*, exhibited from April 2 to May 28, showcased

The Newport Fishing Project, a collaboration between folklore MA student **Al Bersch**, photographer-educator Leslie Grant, and sound artist Nina Pessin-Whedbee, opened June 5 at the Maritime Museum on the Newport, Oregon, bay front. The exhibit featured audio, photography, and video works, and brought together commercial fishing experiences, both past and present. An audio installation overlooking Yaquina Bay included oral histories from the Lincoln County Maritime Heritage Project, mixed with stories from Newport fishers recorded in 2009–10, while several concurrent slide shows featured snapshots from fishers' personal collections, a series of photographs of boat cabins from the Newport fleet, and selections from Lincoln County Historical Society archives, including Jim Heron's portraits of Newport fishermen and boats. "We want the project to focus not only on fishing, but also on the creative work fishermen do and have done to tell their stories," said Pessin-Whedbee. "And the idea is to create a collage of these stories so people can connect the pieces in their own way."



*Newport Fishing Project, courtesy of Jerry Risley*



*Crabber Lee Taylor in 1985, posing with his gear, courtesy of Jim Haron.*

## A New Day in the Neighborhood: Folklore Students and the Sustainable Cities Initiative Team Up for Community Cultural Development in Gresham

Public Folklore and Cultural Programming—John Fenn

Assistant Professor John Fenn's classes often approach cultural topics with a balance of critical inquiry and practical on-the-ground skills, and his Public Folklore and Cultural Programming course was no exception. The class endeavored to explore ways to apply public folklore and cultural programming in everyday settings to generate and improve community identity, vitality, and growth. Partnering with the city of Gresham and the UO's Sustainable Cities Initiative, a program that promotes research, education, service, and public outreach related to the development of sustainable cities, Fenn's project-based class generated grant proposals that have the potential to manifest concrete innovations for local municipalities.

Located just south of the Portland airport, Gresham used to be a bedroom community for Portland. It has since grown into its own city, yet lacks an organized city center or identity. Last year, Gresham petitioned and won the support of the Sustainable Cities Initiative, which resulted in detailed research on public use of space and infrastructure. What researchers noticed was that although the area had some public policy plans, the plans generally neglected to include elements of local culture.

Rockwood, one of Gresham's multiple city "hubs," is one of the area's most diverse in terms of race, cultural background and heritage, and socioeconomic status. The Sustainable Cities Initiative and Fenn's class revealed that these markers of diversity, if foregrounded rather than ignored, could produce vibrant events and organizations that promote local, shared identity.

"People have started to realize that we take communities for granted as geographically bounded areas," Fenn says. "Rarely do people understand that that community is multiple. It's not homogeneous, it's heterogeneous; it's many different people with different backgrounds who may not see eye to eye, but who share where they live and goals for development—this requires an ethnographic awareness to understanding what the community might need." By finding out about local artists and events that may not be on the city council's radar, public folklorists gain insight about how a town might guide development in ways that would speak directly to its citizens and their cultural

identities.

Although Fenn admits students encountered some inevitable roadblocks, he remarks that these pitfalls are par for the course in real-world interactions and inspire students to rely on inventiveness and entrepreneurial spirit. "Students are getting more hands-on experience with things that they're probably not going to encounter reading case studies," Fenn notes. Folklore MA student Shelise Zumwalt adds, "It's ideal to have classes like John Fenn's that provide opportunities for real-life experiences tailored to students' educational and professional interests. Working on this project has given me much more insight into the archives and granting processes."

Students are learning that folklorists can be pivotal in citizens' renewed engagement and investment in their towns by providing avenues to marry individuals' assets and civic pride and identity. By helping people reflect on what their responsibilities are as artists and community members to the landscape they traverse, folklorists provide practical ways to remap our towns as truly our own.

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African Folklore—Associate Professor  
Lisa Gilman

Fabric, designed to be worn as skirts or tailored into blouses, often serves expressive, metaphorical purposes for the wearer and the people around the wearer. For instance, women in Togo describe how fabric decorated with birds flying free from their cages sends a particular message to husbands: that if husbands are free to go out whenever they please, their wives should be able to do the same. Students discuss the ways in which identity, power, gender, and class inform expressive artistic practices and the ways in which people choose to express themselves. The class also explores the relationships among politics, power, aesthetics, history, and personal identity through various folkloric forms, such as tourist art, dance, music, and different types of oral narratives.

Students often enter class greeted by visual images or sounds of different African expressive practices, much of the documentation Gilman's own, collected during extensive fieldwork in various countries. Graduate students also share their knowledge, contributing presentations on topics informed by their own experiences and fieldwork, on topics as varied as the evolution of popular music styles in Kenya to villagers' use of NGO health theater narratives to comment on their own communities in rural Senegal. The class also featured a dynamic guest lecture by Lee Haring, an acclaimed expert on the oral literature of Madagascar, Mauritius, Comoros, and Reunion, and professor emeritus of English at Brooklyn College of the City University of New York.

Students appreciate the complexity, respect, and fun Gilman brings to her classes. Undergraduate Deb Sheehan notes that Gilman's book, *The Dance of Politics: Gender, Performance, and Democratization in Malawi*, shows a depth and appreciation of not just folklore, but of African life in general. "My love of the African continent has been enriched by my contact with Lisa Gilman. She is not only an accomplished scholar; she is a down-to-earth and subtly humorous human being," Sheehan says. Graduate student Laura Massengale remarks that the class has informed her own study of identity and change for Fulani livelihoods in Senegal. "It has been helpful to learn how an understanding of webs of power leads to a rich and multidimensional ethnography of gender, class, and power relations. I have also gained theoretical tools to begin thinking about identity in a more sensitive and nuanced way."

# The Gospel According to Dugaw

The Bible as Folklore, Myth and Belief— Professor Dianne Dugaw

Why isn't the Gospel of Judas included in the Bible? How does Judith embody the traditional literary figure of a heroine? What does the Bible have to do with nation building projects? What is lost or gained in translation of Biblical language? How is Jesus a legendary figure, in folkloric terms? In *The Bible as Folklore, Myth, and Belief* (ENG and FLR 199), Professor Dianne Dugaw and her students explore these and other questions, positioning the Bible as work of literature and an important cultural reference point.

Dugaw describes her impetus for the course, citing conversations with curious students who did not grow up with the Bible, and yet recognized its importance in literary studies and cultural history. The class uses the King James Bible to explore issues of changing tradition and translation. Starting with mythic sections addressing Adam and Eve and flood narratives, students then apply models of heroism and legendry to key figures. "The narratives present a worldview that is linear and heroic. It reflects a very individualized expression of Christianity," Dugaw says.

The students also address the oral nature of the Bible's prose and lyric poetry, discussing the personal sense and emotional voice that define the Psalms. "This is a text meant to be read," Dugaw notes. "It is enlisted in ritual ways, in church, and so forth, but almost entirely in its spoken or sung form."

Students also discuss the sociopolitical influence of the Bible for specific historical moments. “We talk about the ways in which the Bible interacts with history—from its emergence during Solomon’s temple-building period to the influence of England’s Protestant Reform.” Acknowledging that stories are complex threads, students use the text to investigate how stories are constructed, what gets included or left out, and how these decisions shape culture.



cc Amy Allcock



## Muggle Quidditch and Fly-fishing Baskets: Folklore Comes Alive on Film

### Video Fieldwork—Professor Sharon Sherman

The Video Fieldwork course is one of many exciting opportunities available to students through the Folklore Program. The course begins with an introduction to film ethnography and culminates with each student creating a short film that can be presented in local academic venues and entered into student film festivals on campus.

The range of student films that have come out of the Video Fieldwork course is vast—from Chinese food ways to exotic dancing to local artists and musicians—and this term is no exception. Students made films on topics including folk dances on campus, Muggle Quidditch, and traditional creelmaking. According to Professor Sharon Sherman, participating in the research process is a necessity for students aspiring to become folklorists and anthropologists.

“It’s about going out of the library and into the human realm. It’s another skill—not just the use of video, but how to develop a fieldwork plan, establish rapport, examine ethical issues, interview people, and become a perceptive observer of traditional expressive behavior,” she states.



*Video Fieldwork students Zack Schwartz, Kristen Gallerneaux Brooks, and Sheila Rabun work in the editing lab*

## Spotlight on the Faculty

As the UO Folklore Program grows and expands, we are constantly gaining new partners and affiliates from other campus departments who find folklore studies to be in direct and pertinent relationship to their own fields and research. Through association with the Folklore Program, these individuals gain support for offering classes and engaging inquiries that might otherwise be overlooked while greatly broadening and enriching the theoretical and academic perspectives and opportunities available to folklore students. While this year we turn the spotlight on a small sampling of these individuals in recognition of their important recent contributions to the Folklore Program, we will feature different faculty members each year in forthcoming issues. Full biographical and research information for other affiliated faculty members may be found online at [uoregon.edu/~flr/faculty/fac.htm](http://uoregon.edu/~flr/faculty/fac.htm).

## Car Lovers Unite!—Gordon Sayre, English

Gordon Sayre is an English professor whose work on colonial and early America has sparked research in a web of topics including the literature of French Louisiana, Native American studies, eco-criticism, captivity narratives, autobiography, and early natural history writing of the Americas. He has explored eighteenth- and nineteenth-century tall tales from the Mississippi Valley, and investigated the role shamanism played in colonial Louisianan medical care. Sayre is the editor of *Regard sur le monde atlantique: 1715–1747*, a manuscript memoir by Jean-François Benjamin Dumont de Montigny, a historian and memoirist of French Louisiana, published in 2008. However, Professor Sayre’s interests also include a topic that plays a part in most of our daily lives: cars.



Sayre is currently developing a class on car culture, a class that he will teach for the Folklore Program in fall 2010. “Years ago I became interested in the history of automotive design and policy. I began to wonder how people related to their cars differently in the 1920s than they do today,” Sayre says. He plans to approach the topic through social history and ethnography, giving particular attention to types of cars that have defined social groups in the United States and the ways in which members of those groups think about themselves.

“People use their cars to generate conversation and to signify membership in some specific club,” Sayre explains. The class will spend time exploring the cultures surrounding (among others) low riders, pick-up trucks, and biodiesel converted vehicles. The biodiesel trend is interesting to Sayre, because of its synthesis of environmentalism and vehicle worship. “It’s a way for people to be anticar and still be a car aficionado,” Sayre remarks. Students of folklore, choppers and hybrids alike, can look forward to exploring these issues with Professor Sayre next year.

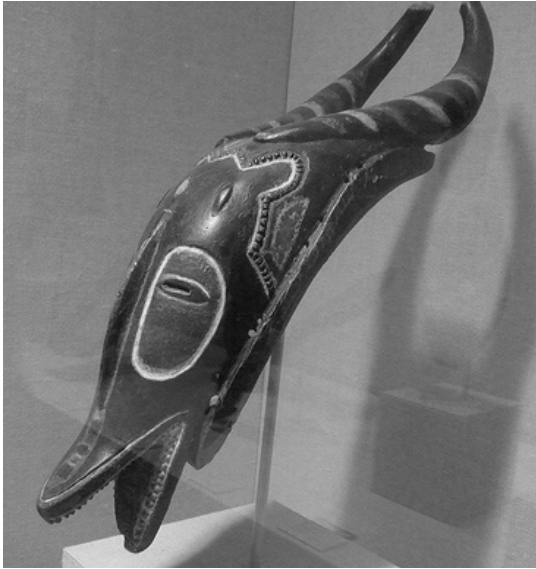
# Antelope Masking and Farming Practices in Mali—Stephen Wooten, anthropology and international studies

Anthropologist and affiliated folklore faculty member Assistant Professor Stephen Wooten's new book, *The Art of Livelihood Creating Expressive Agri-Culture in Rural Mali*, represents the culmination of over ten years of research in Mali. The book describes the ways in which both masked dancing and farming practices express processes of performance for the people of the Mande Plateau.

Wooten, a sociocultural anthropologist whose research interests range from local-global dynamics to agrarian change to political economy and ecology to expressive cultures, first became interested in Mali after a brief Peace Corps stint (unfortunately cut short due to illness) in the West African nation. The strong connection he had developed with the people and culture impelled him to return to Mali to conduct his doctoral research with the Mande people in 1992. "From the beginning," Wooten says, "my goal was to objectively engage with people, find out what was most meaningful to them, and let that guide my study."

It quickly became apparent that farming was something intrinsically important to people's everyday livelihood and was a practice through which Wooten could engage with people. "It became an entry point for me to learn about what communities valued and thereby begin to access larger systems of meaning." There are clear traditional scripts about farming, but people interpret them based on interplay with the world of commerce, Islamic influences, and evolving community identity. In his classes at the UO, Wooten strives to dispel essentialized (positive or negative) notions about Africa, and focuses on the creativity and innovation present in Mande culture.

Wooten's work draws from art history, folklore, and performance studies, and he finds it is this disciplinary freedom that most strengthens his scholarship. "I am allowed to use all sorts of insightful tools to help me in my work. I think it's the product of that interplay, these different ideas working together, that produces truly innovative work—working on the margins and bringing stuff back to the mainstream." Wooten values the connections he is able to make with students and faculty members across campus, adding, "I think people gain a lot of appreciation for their colleagues (outside their department) because of this overlap. These intellectual communities are so important—they're part of what make the university setting so dynamic right now."



cc Tom Athon

Next year, Assistant Professor Wooten will teach Anthropological Perspectives on Africa (ANTH 327), Think Globally, Eat Locally (INTL 199), Culture, Capitalism, and Globalization (INTL 260), Africa Today (INTL 345), and Introduction to African Studies (HUM 315) as well as a graduate proseminar for international studies master's degree students.

## Folklore Students Active in a Wide Variety of Conferences

Folklore graduate students have developed a reputation for excellent performances at professional conferences, and this year was no exception. Students joined faculty members presenting at the American Folklore Society's annual meeting in Boise, Idaho, as well as at the Western States Folklore Society's 2010 meeting at Willamette University in Salem, Oregon. Folklore students also contributed to Crossing Borders, the University of Oregon's first graduate student symposium, as well as the university's Understanding Superheroes conference, and the national Console-ing Passions conference, also hosted at the UO.



From left: Folklore MA students Robert Dobler and Kristen Gallerneaux Brooks, and folklore MA graduates Kate Ristau and David Enslinger present at the Western States Folklore Society Conference in Salem, Oregon.



From left: UO alumni Joe O'Connell, Kate Ristau, and Kelley Totten, Associate Professor Daniel Wojcik, and UO graduate students Al Bersch, Robert Dobler enjoy catching up at the American Folklore Society's annual meeting in Boise, Idaho, in October 2009.



# Folklore Program Faculty Members

## **Doug Blandy, arts and administration, folklore**

Doug Blandy is currently the associate dean of academic affairs for the School of Architecture and Allied Arts, a professor and program director in the Arts and Administration Program, and the director of the Institute for Community Arts Studies at the University of Oregon. As director of the institute, he inaugurated the online advisory CultureWork. In addition, he teaches and advises students at both the graduate and undergraduate level who have an interest in arts administration and community arts. His research attends to community arts, civil society, program accessibility, and art education. He provides service to professional organizations internationally, nationally, regionally, and locally. Doug's most current research is a collaboration with scholars in China and the United States to interpret China's cultural heritage for English-speaking audiences. This project can be found at ChinaVine.org.

## **Dianne Dugaw, English, folklore**

Dianne Dugaw has presented lectures and performances at colleges, libraries, conferences, and festivals throughout the U.S. and Canada. Current work has focused on Anglo-American ballads and folk songs. Her definitive discussion of the term "ballad" will appear in *The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*. Her essay, "Heroines Gritty and Tender, Printed and Oral, Late-Breaking and Traditional: Revisiting the Anglo-American Female Warrior" (forthcoming in Anita Guerrini and Patricia Fumerton, eds., *Ballads and Broadides in Britain, 1500–1800*) revisits the topic of her first book, *Warrior Women and Popular Balladry, 1650–1850*, and her CD *Dangerous Examples—Fighting & Sailing Women in Song* (cdbaby.com), and examines gender and sexuality in folksongs, literature, and history. During the summer of 2010, Dugaw will conduct research in Mexico on the spiritual and political aspects of the culture of the baroque era.

## **John Fenn, arts and administration, folklore**

John Fenn received his PhD in folklore and ethnomusicology from Indiana University in 2004. Drawing on his background in folklore, ethnomusicology, media studies, public cultural programming, and international fieldwork, Assistant Professor Fenn's classes offer an ethnographically grounded perspective on cultural production. His current research on experimental Chinese music with the ChinaVine project has involved research trips to Shandong and Beijing, where he will return this summer for more fieldwork. Fenn presented a paper and multiple workshops on the use of digital audio in a fieldwork setting and digital preservation at the American Folklore Society's 2009 annual meeting, in addition to presenting papers at the Digital Media and Learning Conference and the Experience Music Project Pop Conference. His article, "Why might building boutique effects pedals constitute improvisation?" will appear in volume 20 of the *Leonardo Music Journal*.

## **Lisa Gilman, director of Folklore Program, English**

Lisa Gilman received her PhD in folklore with a minor in African studies from Indiana University in 2001. In her research and teaching, she explores relationships between expressive forms and sociopolitical issues. She is the author of *The Dance of Politics: Gender, Performance, and Democratization in Malawi* (Temple University Press, 2009) and a number of articles that engage various aspects of women's political performances in Malawi; the most recent is "Complex Genres, Intertextuality, and the Analysis of Performance" in the *Journal of American Folklore* 122 (2009). She is currently involved in two projects with American veterans of the Afghani and Iraqi conflict. *Boots on the Grounds* is a documentary film project about veterans involved in the antiwar movement, and she is researching the musical listening of American troops when deployed to the war in Iraq, exploring relationships between musical practices, experience, identity, and memory. In summer 2010, she is launching a new research project on the politics of intangible cultural heritage in Malawi. She teaches courses in folklore about identity, politics, gender, sexuality, and African studies.

## **Loren Kajikawa, music, folklore**

Loren Kajikawa received his doctoral and master's degrees in musicology from UCLA, and a bachelor's degree with honors in ethnic studies from UC–Berkeley. He has previous teaching experience at USC, Loyola Marymount, and UCLA. His current research on hip hop, rhythm and blues, jazz, and rock builds connections between popular music at the end of the twentieth century and the political contexts of the Reagan, Bush, and Clinton years. His article, "Eminem's 'My Name Is': Signifying Whiteness, Rearticulating Race," appeared in the fall 2009 issue of the *Journal for the Society of American Music*. Assistant Professor Kajikawa presented "The Analogue Sound of Digital Production: Dr. Dre's G-Funk in Post-Rebellion L.A." at the Experience Music Project's annual conference in Seattle and "Black Skin, Metal Mask: MF Doom's Supervillainy" at the American Comparative Literature Association's annual conference in New Orleans, both in April 2010.



## Folklore Program Faculty Members, continued

### Philip Scher, *anthropology, folklore*

Philip W. Scher has been at the University of Oregon since 2002. His area of focus is the Caribbean, with primary research interests in the politics of heritage and cultural identity, popular and public culture, folklore, cultural studies, and political economy. His publications include two edited volumes, *Perspectives on the Caribbean: A Reader in Culture, History and Representation* from Blackwell Publishers (2009) and *Trinidad Carnival: The Cultural Politics of a Transnational Festival* from Indiana University Press (2007). Other recent publications include his book, *Carnival and the Formation of a Caribbean Transnation* (University Press of Florida, 2003), and two journal articles—"Copyright Heritage: Preservation, Carnival and the State in Trinidad" (*Anthropological Quarterly*, Summer 2002), and "The Devil and the Bedwetter" (*Western Folklore*, Summer 2007). His latest work concerns the implications for anthropology of the copyright and legal protection of expressive culture and folklore as well as a study of World Heritage sites in the Caribbean. He is the 2008–9 recipient of a Fulbright Senior Scholar award and a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship.

### Sharon Sherman, *English, folklore*

Sharon R. Sherman is a professor emerita of English and former director of the Folklore Program at the University of Oregon where she continues to teach part-time. Her current classes are Film and Folklore, Video Fieldwork, and Magic, Myth, and Religion. She has produced over a dozen films and videos, all of which address the interconnection between tradition and the creative process. She presented the keynote speech, "Collaborative Ethnographic Films and the Negotiation of Cultural Identities," at the symposium, "Future Past—Cultural Heritage and Collaborative Film Work," at the Institute for Cultural and European Anthropology at the University of Göttingen, Germany. Professor Sherman also continues to serve on the board of Folkstreams ([www.folkstreams.net](http://www.folkstreams.net)), a website devoted to streaming folklore films. Professor Sherman presented a paper at the Western States Folklore Society meeting in Salem, Oregon, and a rough cut of her film, *Whatever Happened to Zulay*, at the American Folklore Society meeting in Boise, Idaho.

### Carol Silverman, *anthropology, folklore*

Carol Silverman is professor of cultural anthropology and folklore at the University of Oregon and head of the Department of Anthropology. She had three publications appear in 2010 related to her work on Balkan culture and politics. Two articles are featured in journals: "Performing Ethnic, National, Transnational, and Gendered Identities: Esma Redžepova, 'Queen of Gypsy Music,'" in *Cultural Politics*, and "Music and Transnational Identity: The Life of Romani Saxophonist Yuri Yunakov," in *Džaniben*, the Czech Journal of Romani Studies. Her book, *Romani Routes: Cultural Politics and Balkan Music in Diaspora*, will be released this year by Oxford University Press; it will have an extensive website containing video and audio examples and photographs. In January, Professor

Silverman was the plenary speaker at the Romani Mobilities Conference at Oxford University. She presented papers this year at annual conferences for the American Folklore Society, Western States Folklore Society, and the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies, and at an invited conference, "Immigrant Cultural Production," at the University of Florida. She has received two research fellowships for the 2010–11 academic year, one from the Oregon Research Council and another from the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation. Her 2010–11 research will explore the explosion of Gypsy sound in a global music context coupled with the continued economic, political, and social marginalization of the Roma people. She will investigate how the image and sound of the fantasy Gypsy is created, and who participates in and benefits from the popularization of Gypsy music.

### Daniel Wojcik, *English, folklore*

Daniel Wojcik continues to teach courses and conduct research in the areas of belief studies, subcultures, new religions, and vernacular and "outsider" art. His article, "Avertive Apocalypticism: Using Spiritual Techniques to Prevent Worldly Catastrophe," was published in the *Oxford Handbook of Millennialism*. He was the invited speaker for the eleventh annual Meertens Ethnology Lecture in Amsterdam in September 2009. During August 2009, he conducted research in Venice, Siena, Rome, and the Marche and Umbria regions of Italy for a new class on Italian folklore. He participated in and organized sessions for the annual meetings of the American Folklore Society and the Western States Folklore Society. He was awarded a research fellowship from the Oregon Humanities Center, and throughout 2010–11, he will be on research leave and completing publications on self-taught visionary artists and contemporary apocalyptic beliefs.



Professor Sharon Sherman speaking at the Institute for Cultural and European Anthropology at the University of Göttingen, Germany

Ina Asim, history  
 Martha J. Bayless, English  
 Carl R. Bybee, journalism and communication  
 Matthew Dennis, history  
 Patricia Dewey, arts and administration  
 James D. Fox, library  
 Marion Sherman Goldman, sociology  
 Lori Hager, arts and administration  
 Kingston Heath, historic preservation

Kenneth I. Helphand, landscape architecture  
 Lamia Karim, anthropology  
 Kathleen Rowe Karlyn, English  
 Loren Kajikawa, music and dance  
 Mark Levy, music and dance  
 Phaedra Livingstone, arts and administration  
 Gabriela Martinez, journalism and communication  
 Anne Dhu McLucas, music and dance  
 Debra L. Merskin, journalism and communication

Julianne H. Newton, journalism and communication  
 Jeffrey Ostler, history  
 Dorothee Ostmeier, German and Scandinavian  
 Priscilla P. Ovalle, English  
 Gordon M. Sayre, English  
 Kartz Ucci, art  
 Stephanie Wood, Center for the Study of Women in Society  
 Stephen R. Wooten, international studies

**Dorothy Bayern** is interested in the way people relate to other times and societies through costume, particularly the current and potential applications of historical and ethnic clothing as learning tools in museum exhibits, educational programming, and cultural events. She has a BA in anthropology from the University of Oregon and is the exhibitions coordinator at the UO Museum of Natural and Cultural History.

**Kristen Gallerneaux Brooks** recently finished her MFA in art at Wayne State University (Detroit, Michigan), where she established *The Revenant Archives*, an ongoing project concerning the visual evidence and research of the supernatural. Within this framework she presents folklore research that looks like art. Her current areas of interest include ghost tourism, paranormal societies, obsolete devices and ephemera related to the latter, byproducts of belief in society, and archives. She spent a summer researching poltergeists at the American Society for Psychical Research, and hopes to return soon.

**Sarah Carpenter** holds two bachelor's degrees, one in Spanish and one in English: professional writing. She studies folklore, English, and Romance languages, and is currently exploring online Star Wars fan culture.

**Tiffany A. Christian** earned her BA in English literature and creative writing from Pacific University, and she holds an MFA in creative writing from Chapman University. Her research interests include apocalypse (primarily postapocalypse) studies, cyber studies, popular culture, and film in an American context. Tiffany presented "Neo-Paganism and the Mediation of the Sacred in Cyberspace" at the 2010 Western States Folklore Society's annual meeting at Willamette University. Tiffany is also a vocalist and songwriter, and she can claim "world musics" among her myriad interests. Currently, Tiffany is working on ideas for film projects involving karaoke performance and local disaster preparedness groups.

**Nathan Georgitis** is a librarian at the University of Oregon. He earned a BA in literature at Brown University, studying oral epic poetry, and an MLS from Simmons College. Nathan's interests include archives management and audio preservation; folklore and public media and personal

experience narratives; and canoeing and boatbuilding traditions.

**Mira Johnson** received her BA in TheGreat Books from St. John's College, Annapolis, Maryland. A second-year master's degree student, she is combining folklore, English, and anthropology studies to investigate the relationship between spirituality and place, particularly natural environments. Her thesis project will focus on the Catholic mountain pilgrimage site of Croagh Patrick in County Mayo, Ireland, and an emergent nature pilgrimage in Prescott, Arizona.

**Jesse LeRoy Mabus** is a master's degree student working with the Folklore Program and the anthropology and religious studies departments. He is currently on leave, working with the Clatsop Community College library in Astoria, Oregon, and studying Spanish. His previous work has focused on calendrical events in Olympia, Washington, the WTO protests in Seattle, the current antiwar protests, as well as the neopagan tradition of reclaiming.

**Caroline Louise McNabb** is a second-year master's degree student focusing on Mexican and Mexican-American women's narratives. She is particularly interested in female mythic and legendary characters, and is exploring negotiations of power, cultural heritage, and identity. Caroline spent summer 2009 pursuing research in Oaxaca, Mexico, and plans to finish her research in Eugene this year. She presented her papers, "Commodification of Devotion: The Virgin of Guadalupe in Popular Culture" at the 2010 Western States Folklore Society's annual meeting at Willamette University and "Blurring Identities: Interdisciplinarity in Folklore and Research with Chicana Storytellers" at the University of Oregon's 2010 Crossing Borders conference. In her spare time, Caroline enjoys removing bones from road kill and painting them.

**Robb Norton** is a Eugene native whose primary research interests include new media and digital culture. He has studied documentary filmmaking and cultural studies in England, as well as Japanese language and culture in Japan. He was one of the filmmakers of the award-winning feature film *Pizza Girl* produced in Eugene.

**Sarah Sandri** is in her first year of the master's degree program, working in the Folklore Program as well as in anthropology and ethnomusicology. She studies performance and race, focusing on the representation and reception of African dance in the U.S., and will spend the summer doing fieldwork at several African dance festivals in Vermont and New Hampshire. She presented "Livin' Dirty, A Little Bit Crunk: Performances of Race in Hipster Brooklyn" at the 2010 Western States Folklore Society's annual meeting at Willamette University. She received a BA in comparative literature in English and French from Smith College.

**Erin Swartz** is in her first year of the master's degree program, studying folklore, English, and arts and administration. In the past she has done work on gender performance in MTV's *Jackass*, Internet communities, "lolcats," and apocalyptic beliefs. She hopes to put together a terminal project that analyzes gender performance, racial tension, and tradition at the Pendleton Round-Up, which will celebrate its 100th year in 2010.

Passions Conference at the University of Oregon in April 2010. She has an MFA in creative nonfiction writing from Goddard College and a BA in English and journalism from Boise State University.

**Rosemary Woodward** received a BA in music at the University of Oregon in 2008 and is now a first-year master's degree student focusing on folklore, ethnomusicology, and anthropology. Her interests include healing through music; herbal and plant-based medicine; female archetypes such as the green witch, the goddess, and the crone; and food traditions in various cultures throughout the world.

**Shelise Zumwalt** is a first-year master's degree student with a BA in religious studies and an undergraduate certificate in folklore from the University of Oregon. Her areas of focus include folklore, arts and administration, and anthropology. She is interested in public folklore.



*From left: UO graduate students Zach Schwartz and Kristen Gallerneaux Brooks chat with Associate Professor Daniel Wojcik at the opening gala for Kristen's installation, The Revenant Archives, at the Eugene Downtown Initiative for the Visual Arts.*

**Kevin Taylor** is a master's degree student. He received his BA from the University of Oregon in philosophy and religious studies. His areas of focus within folklore are religious studies and arts and administration. Current research interests include new religious movements, apocalyptic eschatology, and prophetic tradition.

**Jenée Wilde** is in the English PhD program with a structured emphasis in folklore. Her research interests include contemporary American literature and popular culture, sexual identity and representation, sexual subcultures, fairy tales, and queer theory. Her essay titled "Queer Matters in *The Dark Knight Returns*, Or Why We Insist on a Sexual Identity for Batman" will be published in the forthcoming book, *Batman Meets the Academy*. She also has presented the essay at the 2009 Popular Culture Association national conference and at the University of Oregon's Understanding Superheroes conference. Wilde presented "Gaytown, Foucault, and the Disruption of Homophobic Discourse" at the national Consoling



*Folklore MA graduate Ziyong You and MA student Tiffany Christian*



This June, **Al Bersch's** terminal project will culminate in an exhibit about commercial fishing at the Maritime and Heritage Center in Newport, Oregon, featuring photographs and sound collections from Newport-based fishers and the Lincoln County Historical Society, as well as original work produced with collaborators Leslie Grant and Nina Pessin-Whedbee. After graduation, he is moving to the Bay Area of California, where he will continue to build a critical documentary practice focusing on representations of resource extraction industries and labor communities.

**Vincent Bisson's** interest in moving images and history has led him to investigate popular culture, history, and audience reception. Vincent presented "New Media Technology's Qualitative Effect on Interviews" at the American Folklore Society's 2009 annual meeting in Boise, Idaho. His thesis project, "Historical Film Reception: An Ethnographic Focus beyond Entertainment," integrates perspectives from folklore, popular culture, and history in order to investigate audience "lore" and the reception of historical films. Vincent will be getting married this coming October and will be taking a year or two off from his graduate studies. He plans to continue to pursue his interests of folklore, popular culture, and popular history in the near future.

**Robert Dobler** graduated in summer 2010 with a master's degree from the Folklore Program. In the fall, he will continue his studies in the University of Oregon's PhD program in English with a structured emphasis in folklore. Robert was the 2007 recipient of the Don Yoder Prize for Best Student Paper in Folk Belief or Religious Folklife, and the 2008 recipient of the Warren E. Roberts Prize for Best Student Paper in Folk Art. His project, "Alternative Memorials: Death and Memory in Modern America," was selected for the 2009 Folklore Studies in a Multicultural World workshop and book series program supported by the American Folklore Society. Last year, he published a chapter titled "Ghosts in the Machine: Mourning the MySpace Dead" in the book *Folklore and the Internet: Vernacular Expression in a Digital World*, edited by Trevor Blank and published by Utah State University Press. This year, his chapter titled "Ghost Bikes: Memorialization and Protest in City Streets" will be published in the forthcoming book *Grassroots Memorials: The Politics of Memorializing Traumatic Death*, edited by Peter Jan Margry and Cristina Sanchez Carretaro and published by Berghahn.

**Ashley Gossman** graduated in December of 2009 with a MA from the Folklore Program and is currently working at Planned Parenthood to get some experience in the nonprofit sector. She plans to move eventually to Portland and dive into the documentary filmmaking world. Her mission is to connect people to other's stories in an effort to humanize our struggles and embrace the global community. She hosted a folkloric film screening at the Downtown Initiative for the Visual Arts (DIVA) to connect our community with the products of folklore filmmaking efforts. Her film and terminal project, *Kumekucha Amka Wamama, Rise Up Women: It Is Dawn*, is about empowering African women artists and improving relationships between the artists and volunteers from an NGO. She studied folklore, cultural and visual anthropology, photo and video journalism, and Kiswahili and received her BA in cultural and visual anthropology from the University of Florida.

**Suzanne Reed** received her master's degree in folklore this summer, working in the Folklore Program and the arts and administration art departments. She was an employee of the Washington State Arts Commission's Folk and Traditional Arts program for three years. Suzanne has worked with traditional artists in residence at the University of Oregon, documenting their work and creating materials for their use. Her thesis explores the Eugene, Oregon, figure skating community, documenting their lengthy history in the area and their living legacy of coach-apprentice-student training that has spanned generations. She has a BA in fine art and craft from the Evergreen State College, Olympia, Washington.

**Kelley Totten** finished her thesis, "Crafting Memories in the Mantaro Valley of Peru: Performance and Visual Representation in Craftswomen's Souvenir Production." She is currently assistant director of the Center for Intercultural Dialogue at the University of Oregon. Along with cohorts Elaine Vradenburgh and Jennifer Furl, she is a cofounder of The Looplore Experiment.

**Christina Vrtis** completed her MA in folklore this spring after completing her master's degree thesis entitled "Death is the Only Reality: A Folkloric Analysis of Notions of Death and Funerary Ritual in Contemporary Caribbean Women's Literature." She will be continuing at the UO as a PhD student in English with an emphasis in folklore this fall. Current research interests include contemporary women's literature and folklore, ritual theory, and performance studies, especially as these occur in the Caribbean, Africa and the African Diaspora, and Pacific Island regions. Christy has a BA from Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota, in theater arts and psychology, and a second BA in English from the UO.



From left: UO Folklore graduate students Tiffany Christian, Christina Vrtis, Sarah Sandri, Vincent Bisson, and Mira Johnson take in local foodways in Pendleton, Oregon.

UO folklore alumni have gone on to careers in academics, public-sector folklore, and various other interesting and intriguing occupations drawing directly from their folkloristic, theoretical, and fieldwork training in Eugene, Oregon. This year, we've selected a few former program members for the newsletter's spotlight, yet additional biographies and work updates for many others may be accessed online at [www.uoregon.edu/~flr](http://www.uoregon.edu/~flr). Alumni are encouraged to visit the site to catch up with their colleagues and to submit new biographies and updates for themselves.

**Emily West Afanador** continues making music and films since graduating in 2009. She directs and edits independent movies with Eugene's Fleem Productions while playing drums and singing in local bands. She gives guest lectures in University of Oregon classrooms on her terminal project topic of gender dynamics in coed rock bands, and presents her work at folklore conferences.



*Folklore MA students and graduates catch up at the Western States Folklore Conference in Salem, Oregon. From left: (back row) Folklore MA graduate David Ensminger, Folklore MA student Robert Dobler, (front row) Folklore MA students Mira Johnson, Sarah Sandri, Christy Vrtis, Kristen Gallerneaux Brooks, and Folklore MA graduate Kelley Totten.*

**Robert Glenn Howard** is director of the Digital Studies Initiative, associate director of the Folklore Program, and associate professor of folklore, journalism, and religions studies in the Department of Communication Arts at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He is also the editor of the journal *Western Folklore*. His writings, published widely across several fields including communication, religious studies, and folklore, have appeared in *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, *Journal of American Folklore*, and *New Media and Society*. Since 1994, he has sought to uncover the possibilities and limits of individual empowerment through everyday expression on the Internet. After over a decade of qualitative ethnographic fieldwork, his exploration of

conservative Christian religious expression online titled *Digital Jesus: The Making of a New Christian Fundamentalist Community on the Internet* is scheduled for release by New York University Press this winter. This fall, Howard was funded by the University of Wisconsin to found a Digital Studies Program that will include an undergraduate certificate in digital studies, several new faculty positions, and significant resources for graduate student researchers interested in projects that explore digital expression from a qualitative perspective. Howard received his MA from the Folklore and Mythology Program at the University of California at Los Angeles. He went on to complete his PhD emphasizing rhetoric and folklore from the English department of the University of Oregon in 2001. If you would like to contact Rob, you can e-mail him at [rgh@rghoward.com](mailto:rgh@rghoward.com) or check out his most current research and teaching at [rghoward.com](http://rghoward.com).

**Camilla Mortensen** has been introduced to Oregon Gov. Ted Kulongoski, former (and current candidate for) Gov. John Kitzhaber, the state attorney general, and a host of other Oregon luminaries as *Eugene Weekly's* resident doctor of folklore. She balances teaching courses in the UO Folklore Program and in German and Scandinavian, as well as courses in writing at Lane Community College, with a full time position as an investigative reporter at the *Weekly*. Her main beat is the environment, though she's also earned awards for her coverage of issues in education and earned angry letters to the editor for her coverage of subcultures like Eugene's tattooing and fetish scenes. She continues to write and research on academic topics and just finished serving three years on the Modern Language Society's advisory committee on the international bibliography and is the American Folklore Society-MLA liaison. She lives just outside Eugene in a 1975 vintage Airstream trailer with an array of dogs and horses.

In 2009, after teaching English at Parkland College in Champaign, Illinois, for one year, **Casey Schmitt** entered into a PhD program in communication arts at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. His current work combines folkloristic and ethnographic approaches with literary and rhetorical analysis to explore the symbolic depiction of frontier and wilderness landscapes within the natural environment and the extent to which such depictions shape both individual and community identities. Casey's secondary research projects explore the rhetoric of humor and satire, and appropriation of narrative traditions. He is currently teaching several sections of introductory public speaking and working as editorial assistant for the scholarly journal, *Western Folklore*. In the spring of 2010, he presented elements of research conducted in 2009 on national narrative in Buffalo Bill's Wild West spectacle shows at both the OSU-IU Conference for student folklorists and at the annual meeting of the Western States Folklore Society. In the fall of 2010, he will present papers based upon his master's degree thesis and upon his recent work melding folkloristic and rhetorical methodologies at the annual meetings of the American Folklore Society and the National Communication Association.



After completing her MA in the UO Folklore Program, **Mickey Stellavato** applied to the School of Journalism and Communication's PhD program, where she is currently finishing her second year of course work. She is conducting research with the Juventud FACETA Latino youths in conjunction with the Trauma Healing Project. This project involves digital storytelling and photo voice methods, which combines participatory action research with a feminist epistemology, using new-media environments and digital formats.

**Geoffrey G. Vallée** completed the University of Oregon folklore graduate program in June of 2008. He applied folklore toward a study of English and religion, focusing on the intersection of spirituality and nature. Geoffrey's thesis, "The Nature Pilgrim: Spiritual Journeys into the Wilderness," explores past and present pilgrimage scholarship in juxtaposition with current sociological, religious, and folkloric scholarship regarding Western religiosity, and explores spirituality and individual expression and practice of that spirituality as it relates to travel into and within wilderness. Geoffrey is also in the Oregon National Guard. He is a major, the pilot of an air-ambulance helicopter, and commander of the UH-60 helicopter rescue unit based in Salem, Oregon. After graduating, he commanded the Oregon rescue unit as it deployed to and returned from service in Iraq. The unit provided medical evacuation and care to U.S. and coalition soldiers and civilians, insurgents, and Iraqi civilians. Geoffrey is currently exploring his goals to teach community college, striving to add cultural awareness and differing perspectives to education.

**Ziying You's** primary research interests are in storytelling performance, food ways, folkloric documentary, and video production. In her MA thesis at Peking University (2005), she applied folkloristic, historical, and literary perspectives to study the publication of the journal *Stories* as well as the "new story" movement in the 1960s in China. Based on this thesis, she wrote "The Political and Ideological Use of Folklore in Modern China," in which she examined how the tradition of folklore was used by political powers in contemporary China, especially by the Chinese Communist Party, with a focus on the storytelling movement in the 1960s. This essay won the Jonathan T. Y. Yeh Award in 2008 as the best student paper in Asian and Asian American Folklore Studies, awarded by the American Folklore Society. In her second MA thesis completed at the University of Oregon (2009), she focused on the dynamics, variations, and functions of Chinese food ways in the United States, exploring those that have continued through time and across space and that have been transformed by the processes of transnational and transcultural communication and interaction. In addition, she made two videos to present the meanings, functions, and values of Chinese food traditions for both Chinese and Americans. Her first video, *Why Are We Cooking?: Chinese Food ways in America* (2008; thirteen minutes), draws upon behavioral perspectives, developed by Robert A. Georges and Michael Owen Jones, to analyze cooking and eating as expressive processes by Chinese people in the U.S. In her second video, *Chef Jevon's Dinner* (2009; thirty-five minutes), she records how an American chef interacted with people by cooking Chinese cuisine. Currently, Ziying is a graduate student in the Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures at the Ohio State University and is becoming interested in Chinese oral tradition and performance, mythology, legends, and beliefs.



*From left: UO Folklore graduate students Mira Johnson, Christina Vrtis, Tiffany Christian, and Vincent Bisson brave the damp at Multnomah Falls.*



*Photo file: Folklore MA students Shelise Zumwalt and Erin Swartz*





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# Folklore Studies

NEWSLETTER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OREGON FOLKLORE PROGRAM

Spring 2010



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