

# ALBANY INSTITUTE OF HISTORY & ART

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## News

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### ALBANY INSTITUTE OF HISTORY & ART ANNOUNCES 2009 LECTURE SERIES

ALBANY, NY—The Albany Institute of History & Art has announced the following lectures and book signings for the 2009 Lecture Series.

#### **Book Signing and Lecture**

**Jennifer Lemak, Senior Historian and Curator of African-American History, NYS Museum**

*Albany's Rapp Road Community*

**February 22, 2009, 2:00 pm**

Dr. Lemak's most recent work, *Southern Life, Northern City: The History of Albany's Rapp Road Community* (SUNY Press, 2008) traces the history of a little known African-American community located in Albany's Pine Bush. Most of its original residents migrated from Shubuta, Mississippi, to Albany in the 1930s and 1940s under the direction of a preacher named Louis W. Parsons. This presentation will chronicle the history of the migrants from Mississippi to Albany, challenges in preserving the Rapp Road Community's history, and discuss tools for community-based research projects.

#### **Lecture**

**Joe Bruchac, Writer and Storyteller**

*First Voices of the River: American Indian Stories and Traditions of the Hudson*

**March 1, 2009, 2:00 pm**

Joseph Bruchac is a traditional storyteller and writer whose work often reflects his Abenaki Indian ancestry and his lifelong interest in American Indian history and culture. Winner of the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Native Writers Circle of the Americas, and Storyteller of the Year from the Wordcraft Circle of Native Writers and Storytellers, his work has appeared in hundreds of publications from *American Poetry Review* to *National Geographic*.

#### **Lecture**

**Daniel Bernard Roumain, Musician and Composer**

*Composing for the River: Soundtrack for a Shared Dream*

**March 15, 2009–2:00 pm**

Daniel Bernard Roumain was one of three diverse contemporary composer/musicians commissioned by the Empire State Plaza Performing Arts Center to create new music to honor the beauty of the Hudson River Valley and celebrate its rich cultural history. An innovative composer, performer, violinist, and band leader, the Haitian-American artist melds his classical

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music roots with his own cultural references and vibrant musical imagination. His compositions range from orchestral scores and chamber pieces to music for film, the theater, modern dance, and electronica. A native of Margate, Florida, Roumain studied music as an undergraduate at Vanderbilt University's Blair School of Music, completing his masters and doctoral work at the University of Michigan under the tutelage of Pulitzer Prize-winning composer William Bolcom.

#### **Lecture**

**John Cronin**

**Director and CEO, The Beacon Institute for Rivers and Estuaries**

*The Hudson and Its Watershed*

**April 3, 2009, 6:00 pm**

The director of the Beacon Institute, a science, policy, and education research center, John Cronin is also the co-chair of the Environmental Consortium of Hudson Valley Colleges and Universities. He lectures on the environment at higher education institutions nationwide. He is a Shannon Fellow with the International Thomas Merton Society, at Bellarmine University, where his topic of study is the Ecological Theology of Thomas Merton. He is also an instructor at Bard College's Lifetime Learning Institute.

#### **Lecture**

**Tom Lake, Hudson River Estuary Program Naturalist, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation**

*The Ancestral Lure of the Hudson Estuary*

**April 5, 2009, 2:00 pm**

Tom Lake is an archaeologist who teaches anthropology at SUNY Dutchess Community College in Poughkeepsie. He also works for the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation's Hudson River Estuary Program as its Estuary Naturalist, where he conducts wildlife monitoring, research, education, and edits the *Hudson River Almanac*, a natural-history journal now in its 16th year.

#### **Lecture**

**Len Tantillo, Artist**

*Painting the Valley: History and Process*

**April 26, 2009, 2:00 pm**

Len Tantillo was born and raised in upstate New York, and attended Rhode Island School of Design. In 1980, Tantillo was commissioned to depict a series of 19th-century structures from archeological artifacts and historic documents. Similar projects followed, many of which were located along the banks of the Hudson River near Albany. In 1984, Tantillo left commercial art and began the full-time pursuit of fine art. He has spent the last 25 years creating numerous historical and marine paintings, which have continued to draw a wide audience. Tantillo's work clearly shows the combined influence of the luminists of the 19th century and the great marine artists of the past. The blending of his visual story-telling ability and a wonderful sense of adventure and excitement is evident in all of his paintings. Detailed observations are translated directly onto canvas and the images are brought to life with his ability to create a magical sense of time and place.

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**Lecture****Connie Brown, Artist and Mapmaker*****The Hudson and Its Watershed: The Making of a Map*****May 1, 2009, 6:00 pm**

The *Hudson and Its Watershed* is a definitive modern map created by Connie Brown and Duncan Milne of Redstone Studios for the Beacon Institute for Rivers and Estuaries. The map commemorates the Hudson River and its watershed and was created to encourage a sense of environmental, cultural, and historical stewardship of the entire watershed. Brown makes maps on canvas, using acrylic wash and pencil or pen. Her maps serve to celebrate or commemorate a place and are intended to be beautiful and geographically correct.

**Book Signing and Lecture****T.J. Stiles, Author*****The First Tycoon: The Epic Life of Cornelius Vanderbilt*****May 3, 2009, 2:00 pm**

T.J. Stiles has held a Gilder Lehrman Fellowship in American History at the New York Public Library, taught at Columbia University, and served as advisor for the PBS series, *The American Experience*. His book *Jesse James: The Last Rebel of the Civil War*, won the Ambassador Book Award and the Peter Seaborg Award for Civil War Scholarship, and was a *New York Times* Notable Book of the Year. He lives in San Francisco. His latest book, *The First Tycoon: The Epic Life of Cornelius Vanderbilt*, will be published in April 2009 by Alfred A. Knopf.

**Lecture****Art Cohn, Executive Director, Lake Champlain Maritime Museum*****What Lies Beneath: The Archaeological Legacy of Lake Champlain and the Hudson River*****May 17, 2009, 2:00 pm**

Art Cohn is the co-founder and Executive Director of the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum at Basin Harbor Vermont. A professional diver and nautical archaeologist, Cohn is also on the adjunct faculty of the University of Vermont and the Institute of Nautical Archaeology at Texas A&M University. He has served as coordinator of the State of Vermont's Underwater Historic Preserve Program since 1985. He led the 10-year Lake Survey project, which systematically mapped the Lake Champlain's lake floor, finding more than 70 previously undiscovered shipwrecks. A 2000 and 2001 United States delegate to the United Nations Educational, Science, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Conference on the protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage in Paris, Cohn is the author of many publications, including his latest, *Lake Champlain's Sailing Canal Boats: An Illustrated Journey from Burlington Bay to the Hudson River*.

The Albany Institute of History & Art is located at 125 Washington Avenue in downtown Albany, one block from the New York State Capitol. For more information on our events and activities, please visit [www.albanyinstitute.org](http://www.albanyinstitute.org) or call (518) 463-4478.