

Arts & Letters

The Center for Arts & Letters
at Rockhurst University

November/December 2009

Journalist Jon Lee Anderson Discusses America's Foreign Policy, Afghanistan

One of the world's most respected journalists, Jon Lee Anderson, will deliver the Alpha Sigma Nu – Rev. Vincent Daues, S.J., lecture at 7:30 Wednesday, Nov. 18, in Mabee Theater, Sedgwick Hall. Anderson will discuss "The U.S. Dilemma in Afghanistan: Building a Nation or Fighting a War?" As a staff writer for *The New Yorker* magazine and author of several acclaimed books, Anderson has become a renowned authority on Central Asia and the Middle East.

Though he does not see himself as a war correspondent, Jon Lee Anderson is drawn to parts of the world that have undergone or are in the process of undergoing profound social change. The result has been a career of providing some of the most insightful, balanced journalism available in places such as Afghanistan, Peru, El Salvador, Iraq, Iran, Israel, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Ireland, Lebanon and Cuba. Beginning as a reporter in 1979 for the *Lima Times* in Peru, Anderson then wrote for *The New York Times*, *The Nation*, *Time*, *Harper's* and other periodicals.

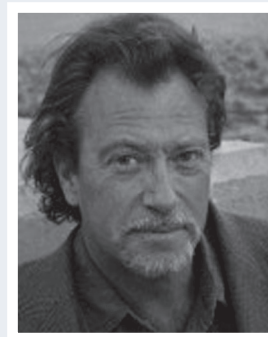
The child of a U.S. diplomat, Anderson spent most of his youth abroad, living in South Korea, Taiwan, Indonesia, Colombia, Liberia, England and the United States. These experiences engendered in Anderson a remarkable capacity to mediate between cultures and to articulate diverse perspectives on life and world events with both clarity and empathy. His peripatetic youth also cultivated a taste for adventure, which has borne fruit in his journalistic career.

Anderson's most recent book, *The Fall of Baghdad* (The Penguin Press, 2004), was universally praised by reviewers for its insight and, what one reviewer called, "unobtrusive voice [that] mediates the

voices of others faithfully and with humanizing integrity, resisting any impulse to convert what he observes into political argument." *The Lion's Grave: Dispatches from Afghanistan* (Grove Press, 2002) provided a vivid account of the situation on the ground in Afghanistan when the American attack on the Taliban began. Anderson's magisterial biography, *Che Guevara: A Revolutionary Life* (Grove Press, 1997), remains the most definitive and objective account of the Argentinian revolutionary who made his fame in Cuba. Anderson's articles in *The New Yorker* continue to illuminate complicated geo-political situations through attentive interviews with both luminaries and common people on the streets.

During the limited time Anderson is not traveling the world, he lives in England with his wife and their three children.

Rockhurst University's Visiting Scholar Lecture Series is proud to host Jon Lee Anderson as he addresses a topic of great significance to U.S. foreign affairs. To register your attendance to this free lecture, call (816) 501-4828.



Submissions Requested for Fine Arts Journal

Rockhurst Review is accepting original, previously unpublished poems, essays, short fiction, drama and artwork for its 2010 journal. Submissions will be accepted Sept. 14 through Jan. 15, 2010.

Submission guidelines: fiction, not to exceed 2,500 words; dramas, not to exceed 10 pages; poems, not to exceed 10 pages with a five-poem maximum; essays, not to exceed 2,000 words; and art, not to exceed five photographs of one's own artwork.

Include a brief biography, address, phone number, e-mail address and cover letter. Mail your entries with a SASE to *Rockhurst Review*, Patricia Cleary Miller, Department of English, 1100 Rockhurst Road, Kansas City, MO 64110. Manuscripts will not be returned.

Events Calendar

Unless otherwise indicated,
all events listed below are free of charge.

October 21 Visiting Scholar Lecture Series

Thomas Hibbs, Ph.D.
"Morality, Art, and
Confession: Big Questions
on the Big Screen"

Wednesday, 7:30 p.m.
Mabee Theater, Sedgwick Hall
Register attendance:
(816) 501-4828

October 22 Midwest Poetry Series

Robert Pinsky
Thursday, 7 p.m.
Mabee Theater, Sedgwick Hall
Admission: \$3

October 28 Plays-in-Progress Workshop

Wednesday, 7:30 p.m.,
Sedgwick Hall 115
Donations accepted at the door

November 9 Return to the Classics "The Bible as Literature"

Monday, 7 p.m., Massman Hall
Cost: \$25 includes a Bible, King
James version
\$10 without Bible
Reservations required:
Call (816) 501-4025

November 12 - 15 Rockhurst Theatre *The Importance of Being Earnest* by Oscar Wilde

Thursday & Friday 8 p.m.
Saturday and Sunday 2 p.m.
Mabee Theater, Sedgwick Hall
Tickets: \$8 at the door

November 16 Midwest Poets Series

Mary Jo Bang
Monday, 6 p.m. reception
7 p.m. reading
Mabee Theater, Sedgwick Hall
Admission: \$3 at the door

November 18 Visiting Scholar Lecture Series

Jon Lee Anderson
"The U.S. Dilemma in
Afghanistan: Building a
Nation or Fighting a War?"

Wednesday, 7:30 p.m.
Mabee Theater, Sedgwick Hall
Register attendance:
(816) 501-4828

December 4 Musica Sacra Chorus and Orchestra

Friday, 7 p.m.
St. Francis Xavier Church
52nd and Troost Avenue
Christmas Concert
Francesco Durante's *Magnificat*
Luigi Boccherini's *Gloria*
Arcangelo Corelli's
"Christmas" Concerto
Tickets: \$18, \$12 students &
senior citizens
Central Ticket Office,
(816) 235-6222
or purchase at the door
or at www.rockhurst.edu/musicasacratickets

December 5 Rockhurst Chorus, Chamber Singers & Women's Chorale *Ceremony of Lessons and Carols*

Saturday, 7 p.m.,
St. Francis Xavier Church
52nd and Troost Avenue
Donations: child's toy,
nonperishable food or
grooming product
Register attendance:
(816) 501-4828
Reception follows
in Massman Hall

Award-Winning Poet Mary Jo Bang Visits Midwest Poets Series Nov. 16

National Book Critics Circle award winner
Mary Jo Bang, one of the preeminent poets in
the country and a long-time St. Louis resident,
can be as linguistically playful as anyone.

The acrobat on the rosinback circled the track
thrice then threw her a kiss.
She could see how well he'd been taught.
— from "The Penguin Chiaroscuro"

She also can rip your heart out.

In last night's dream, they were back again
at the beginning. She was a child
and he was a child.
— from "How Beautiful"

The latter poem comes from Bang's 2007 book, *Elegy*, written in response to the death of her son, Michael, in 2004, at the age of 37. So, take your pick, reader, and you likely will be surprised when Mary Jo Bang takes language on its crazy turns.

Many critics compare her style to that of Emily Dickinson, where Bang and Dickinson often render the same ambiguous feelings. "The poet doubts the redemptive power of her own gift," writes David Orr in *The New York Times*, in discussing Bang's elegies, "while simultaneously using it to find a tone that — in the final line — wavers perfectly between her contempt for consolation and her desire for it."

This is to say that Mary Jo Bang will keep you on the edge of your seat — if that seat happens to be in Mabee Theater on Monday, Nov. 16. The reading begins at 7 p.m.; come earlier for a complimentary reception at 6.

Mary Jo Bang's eighth book of poems, *The Bride of E*, will be released by Graywolf Press in October. Her other books of poems include *Louise in Love* and *The Eye Like a Strange Balloon*. Individual poems have appeared in *The New Yorker*, *Paris Review*, *Fence*, *Verse*, *Volt*, *New Letters* and three volumes of the *Best American Poetry* (1996, 2005 and 2006).

Her numerous awards include a fellowship from the Guggenheim Foundation, a National Book Critics Circle award and a Hodder Fellowship from Princeton University. She is on the permanent faculty at Washington University where she is an associate professor of English and a former director of the Creative Writing Program.

Midwest Poets Series is sponsored by the Center for Arts and Letters at Rockhurst University, with financial support from the Missouri Arts Council, a state agency; the Stanley H. Durwood Foundation; the N.W. Dible Foundation; the Robert R. Lakas, S.J., Memorial Fund; The Helen G. Bonfils Endowment for the Fine and Performing Arts; the Courtney S. Turner Charitable Trust and others.

Parking on the Rockhurst campus is free. Admission is \$3; no one will be turned away for lack of funds. Call (816) 501-4607 for more information.



Greenlease Gallery

Thurs-Sat, 12-5 p.m. • By appointment: 816-501-4407

Center for Arts and Letters Selects Scotland as 2010 Destination

Scotland! The mere mention of her name inspires images of castles, misty islands, megalithic stone ruins, Bronze-Age villages, iconic bagpipes and tartans, Mary Queen of Scots, Robert Burns, malt whiskey, haggis, the elusive Nessie, and the list goes on and on. Explore the mysteries of Scotland when The Center for Arts and Letters takes its April 21-30 Scotland Tour.

Edinburgh, Inverness and Glasgow will be home bases for included day trips in the Highlands and Lowlands.

Edinburgh, one of the most beautiful and well preserved historic cities in Europe, is dominated by its 800-year-old castle anchored above the city and overlooking the shops and gardens of the equally famous Princess Street. Walk the Royal Mile from the castle to the Palace of Holyrood House, the residence of the Royal Stuarts.

A visit to St. Andrews, home to Scotland's oldest existing university (1411), provides an opportunity to wander the medieval cobbled streets and narrow alleys and to visit the Royal and Ancient Golf Club, the oldest golf club in the world.

Inverness, situated on the River Ness, will be our base to explore the Highlands and the Islands—where legends thrive and heather-clad hillsides, snow-capped mountains and sparkling lochs abound. We'll travel by ferry to the Isle of Skye—a fey, mysterious and mountainous island where brilliant sunsets linger till late at night.

The tour ends in Glasgow, a city filled with breathtaking Victorian architecture, a pre-Reformation Gothic cathedral, an imposing university and elegant Georgian squares built by wealthy tobacco barons.

For a complete itinerary and brochure, call The Center for Arts and Letters (816) 501-4607 or e-mail cynthia.cartwright@rockhurst.edu.

Musica Sacra Christmas Concert Includes Works from 18th-Century Italy, Traditional Carols

Celebrate Christmas in classic fashion when Musica Sacra Chorus and Orchestra performs music from 18th-century Italy. The concert, featuring music by Francesco Durante, Arcangelo Corelli and Luigi Boccherini, will take place at 7 p.m. Friday, Dec. 4, at St. Francis Xavier Church, 52nd and Troost Avenue.

Long recognized for its melodic richness, Italian music from the Baroque and Classical eras embodies lyrical beauty and structural concision. Durante's *Magnificat* consists of six brief movements, alternating choral textures with sumptuous duets. The opening and closing movements directly quote the *Magnificat* plainchant, establishing a link with musical tradition and serving as a tribute to the composer's impressive compositional technique.

Corelli, regarded as the founder of modern string technique, is noted for his most famous work, his "*Christmas*" *Concerto*. Published early in the 18th century, it consists of alternating fast and slow movements. The work culminates in the gentle "*Pastorale*," a *siciliano* dance that evoked images of shepherds in the 18th-century language of musical rhetoric and symbolism.

Musica Sacra also will perform the *Gloria* by Luigi Boccherini. Known as an outstanding composer of orchestral and instrumental chamber music, Boccherini's vocal music is virtually unknown and rarely performed.

The ensemble also will sing traditional Christmas favorites in time-tested arrangements.

Live Program Notes begin at 6:15 p.m. Tickets for Musica Sacra Chorus and Orchestra may be purchased from The Central Ticket Office at (816) 235-6222, on the web at www.rockhurst.edu/musicasacratickets or at the church.

Student Choruses Perform Christmas Concert Tradition Dec. 5

Ceremony of Lessons and Carols, an enduring and endearing Rockhurst University tradition, will be performed by 45 student voices at 7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 5.

The concert will be presented in St. Francis Xavier Church, 52nd and Troost Avenue, west of the Rockhurst University campus. An instrumental ensemble of strings, winds and piano will accompany the Rockhurst University Chorus, Chamber Singers and Women's Chorale.

Thousands of audience members have experienced the joy of this holiday event for the past 18 years. Beloved traditions punctuate the concert—traditional and non-traditional seasonal music; scriptural readings representing the Christmas story; carols sung by the choruses and audience, which includes the popular candlelit rendition of "Silent Night;" and the program's signature finale—the hauntingly beautiful "O Holy Night."

Admission to the concert is free but a donation of either a nonperishable food, a child's toy, or a grooming product is requested. A candlelight procession will lead audience members to a post-concert complimentary reception in Massman Hall on the Rockhurst University campus.

Please let us know if you plan to attend by calling (816) 501-4828.



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Rockhurst Theatre Production Emphasizes *The Importance of Being Earnest*

Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest* has withstood the test of time since its London debut in 1895. Now, more than 100 years later, Rockhurst students will perform *Earnest* on the Mabee Theater stage.

Long considered his most successful—and his last—play, Wilde's farce is saturated with witty dialogue that mocks the idiosyncrasies and pretensions of late Victorian society. The play follows the exploits of Jack, a country bachelor who assumes the name Ernest when he goes to the city, and his friend Algernon, who assumes the name Ernest when he visits the country.

All goes swimmingly until Jack falls in love with Gwendolen and Algernon falls in love with Cecily, and they all coincidentally end up together in the country. Mayhem ensues when it becomes evident that there are far too many Ernests – neither of whom is behaving earnestly.

Richard Alan Nichols will guest direct; performances are at 8 p.m. Thursday and Friday, Nov. 12-13, and 2 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 14-15. All tickets are \$8 at the Box Office.

Return to Classics Continues 'Bible as Literature' Discussion

Return to Classics, a great books discussion group led by Tom Ventresca, '70, will continue to analyze literature from the Bible at 7 p.m. Monday, Nov. 9, in Massman Hall.

The books covered in this session are Psalms, Song of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, the Gospels, Acts, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians and Revelation.

This session is the second of a two-part discussion of the Bible and its influence on many of the literary works of Western civilization.

To reserve a space in the November book discussion, contact the Alumni and Constituent Relations Office at (816) 501-4025. The cost, \$25 a person, includes a copy of the Bible and refreshments. Cost without the book is \$10.