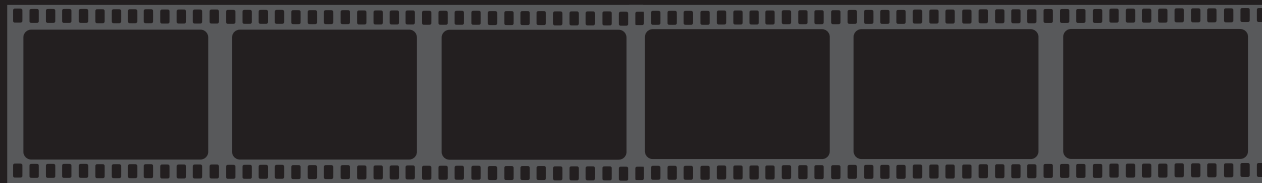


RELIGION & FILM



2014 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RELIGION & FILM





Welcome to our campus!



Dear 2014 Conference Participants,

On behalf of the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO), it is my pleasure to welcome all of you to the 2014 International Conference on Religion & Film.

UNO is a metropolitan university of distinction, transcending beyond our location. The UNO metropolitan advantage is about seizing opportunities to develop knowledge and unique partnerships. It's about collaborating with the community and lending special expertise to the social, economic, government, business, and educational issues that matter most. We see UNO's metropolitan community as a living, learning, breathing, and teaching research laboratory. UNO's Journal of Religion and Film and Religious Studies Program is an outstanding example of what brings this exciting environment to life.

This conference is an example of our drive to be a partner in leading-edge research and practice, providing opportunities for Omaha's community to engage with you in discussing the complexities of religion and the cinema.

I hope your experience in Omaha is stimulating and fruitful. I know the entire conference team has worked hard to provide you a great event in our city and on our campus. Welcome!

Cordially yours,

John E. Christensen
Chancellor, University of Nebraska at Omaha

Welcome to Omaha!



Dear Friends,

Welcome to Omaha for the International Conference on Religion And Film. Omaha is a caring and compassionate community, continually ranked among America's best cities to live, work, and play. Omaha has been named the Best City to Raise a Family, one of the Ten Coolest Cities in the Midwest, and one of the 10 Best Cities to Live In.

While you are here, I hope you will visit some of our popular attractions including the world famous Henry Doorly Zoo, the Joslyn and Durham Western Heritage Museum, the Old Market, and the Bob Kerrey Pedestrian Bridge along the riverfront. Omaha is also the home of the Film Streams Ruth Sokolof Theater which offers first-run independent films and documentaries, educational programs, and community events.

I am proud of what our city offers and hope you enjoy the conference.

Best wishes,

Jean Stothert, Mayor
City of Omaha



2014 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RELIGION & FILM

Conference Schedule

Thursday, April 10

Courtyard by Marriott at Aksarben Village

3:00 p.m.	Conference check-in
6:30 p.m.	Conference dinner
7:00 p.m.	Keynote Address <i>Religion & Film: The State of the Union</i> Dr. John C. Lyden, Editor of the <i>Journal of Religion & Film</i> Professor of Liberal Arts, Grandview University, Des Moines, Iowa



John Lyden

John Lyden became Editor of the *Journal of Religion and Film* in 2011. He is currently the Director of the Liberal Arts Core at Grand View University. Previously, he was professor and chair of the Religion Department at Dana College from 1991-2010. He is the author of *Film as Religion: Myths, Morals, and Rituals* (New York: NYU Press, 2003), is the editor of *Enduring Issues in Religion* (San Diego:

Greenhaven Press, 1995) and is also the editor of *The Routledge Companion to Religion and Film* (Routledge, 2009). He is currently editing (along with Eric Mazur) *The Routledge Companion to Religion and Popular Culture*.

He has published numerous articles on interreligious dialogue, religion and culture, and religion and film, which have appeared in edited volumes as well as journals such as the *Journal of Religion and Film*, *Dialogue and Alliance*, *Religion and Public Education*, and *The Journal of Ecumenical Studies*. In 2007, he was interviewed for and appeared in the History Channel documentary, *Star Wars: The Legacy Revealed*. Dr. Lyden has been co-chair of the Religion, Film, and Visual Culture Group of the American Academy of Religion since 2005.

He was the 2008 recipient of the Spiritus Award for Outstanding Contributions to the study of Religion and Film.

Friday, April 11

Peter Kiewit Institute (PKI), UNO Campus

8:00–9:00 a.m.	Registration at the PKI atrium
9:00–10:30 a.m.	Session I
10:30–11:00 a.m.	Break at the PKI atrium <i>Refreshments are provided</i>
11:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.	Session II
12:00 p.m.–2:00 p.m.	Lunch on your own
2:00–3:30 p.m.	Session III
3:30–7:00 p.m.	Dinner on your own
7:00– 9:00 p.m.	“An Evening of Religion in Short Films” Featuring filmmaker Tamara Feldman and <i>Resurrection Slope</i> PKI Room 180

Session I	Room 155 Chair: Paul Williams, University of Nebraska at Omaha	Room 164 Chair: Rory Conces, University of Nebraska at Omaha
9:00–9:30 a.m.	<i>Violence, Grace, and the Essential Self in American Cinema: Boogie Nights, Pulp Fiction, and Flannery O’Conner</i> Micajah Henley, University of Mississippi	<i>Understanding the Role Media Plays in the Study of Religion: How Islam is Portrayed in Film</i> Rubina Ramji, Cape Breton University (Nova Scotia)
9:30–10:00 a.m.	<i>The Existential Anguish of Judaism in Kieslowski’s Decalogue</i> Pam Fox, San Diego State University	<i>Imagining the Real Image of Islam; Nacer Khemir’s Desert Trilogy</i> Kristian Petersen, University of Nebraska at Omaha
10:00–10:30 a.m.	<i>Cinema of Light: Creative Prayer in The Passion of Joan of Arc, Heart of Glass, and The Sacrifice</i> Zacharia Buck, University of California, Santa Cruz	<i>Islam in Majid Majidi Movies</i> Bilal Yorulmaz, Marmara University (Istanbul)

Session II	Room 155 Chair: Gary Eller, University of Nebraska at Omaha	Room 164 Chair: Todd Richardson, University of Nebraska at Omaha
11:00–11:30 a.m.	<i>Parable and Reciprocity: Reflections on the Films of Frederick Wiseman</i> Alyda Faber, Atlantic School of Theology	<i>Mask as Material Transcendence in Sembene’s La Noire de...</i> Gail Hamner, Syracuse University
11:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m.	<i>All About Love: 40 years of Almodóvar’s Cinema, A Religious-Theological Appraisal</i> Stefanie Knauss, Villanova University	<i>A Certain Tendency in Religion and Film: Gnosticism</i> Crystal Downing, Messiah College

Session III	Room 155 Chair: Julien Fielding, University of Nebraska at Omaha	Room 164 Chair: John O'Keefe, Creighton University
2:00–2:30 p.m.	<i>Bollywood and the Sacred: Questions and Approaches</i> Kathleen Erndl, Florida State University	<i>Crying Out for Justice</i> Irena Makarushka, Towson University
2:30–3:00 p.m.	<i>The Importance of Ethics in Post Khatami Iranian Cinema</i> Banafsheh Madaninejad, Southwestern University	<i>Can Christian Film Festivals Survive Into the 21st Century?</i> Andrew Quicke, Regent University Rick Negron, Palm Beach Atlantic University
3:00–3:30 p.m.	<i>Black Bus: Documenting Loneliness, Love and Longing</i> Anat Gilboa, Shusterman Visiting Israel Professor	<i>Contemporary Film Adaptations of the Oxherding Pictures and the Globalization of Buddhist Culture</i> Marwood Larson-Harris, Roanoke College

“An Evening of Religion in Short Films”

PKI Room 180 at 7 p.m.

Featuring actress and filmmaker Tamara Feldman and *Resurrection Slope*

Tamara Feldman was born and raised in Haysville, Kansas. At the age of 17 she got a modeling contract in Asia and left to travel the world. After a year of travel, she settled in San Francisco where she started to work on acting. After being cast off the street for a commercial and with the encouragement from her acting teacher, she made the move to Los Angeles. Starting off with guest starring roles on shows such as *Smallville*, *Monk*, *CSI*, and many others it was only a matter of time before landing bigger roles on *Gossip Girl* and *Dirty Sexy Money*. In between roles on television she was lucky enough to land movies such as *Perfect Stranger* where she acted along side Bruce Willis and Halle Berry and *Echelon Conspiracy* with Shane West, Ed Burns, Martin Sheen, and Ving Rhames. She also won a best actress award from the Red Nations Film Awards for her role in the Native American movie *Rez Bomb*. While on set, Tamara learned how crews worked and became interested in directing. After writing a script that she believed in and with a lot of help from her friends, she was able to produce, direct, and act in her own short film entitled *Resurrection Slope*. She was lucky enough to get an amazing child actor named Elliott Moore and Oscar winner John Hawkes. She hopes this is the first of many endeavors in film making while she hones her craft and gets more comfortable on the other side of the camera.



Tamara Feldman, movie clip from *Resurrection Slope*

Saturday, April 12

Peter Kiewit Institute (PKI), UNO Campus

8:00–11:00 a.m.	Registration at the PKI atrium
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9:00–10:30 a.m.	Session IV
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10:30–11:00 a.m.	Break <i>Refreshments will be provided</i>
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11:00–noon	Session V
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The 2014 International Conference on Religion & Film concludes at noon on Saturday, April 12, 2014.

Session IV	Room 155 Chair: Gary Groff, University of Nebraska at Omaha	Room 164 Chair: Gloria Epps, University of Nebraska at Omaha
9:00–9:30 a.m.	<i>When the Truth is Found to be Lies: Revelation, Concealment, and Interpretation In Film and Film Criticism</i> Dereck Dachke, Truman State University	<i>Eucharistic Imagery in Film: Two Patterns of Usage</i> Caesar Montevecchio, Mercyhurst University
9:30–10:00 a.m.	<i>Buddhism as Film Theory, Film as Buddhist Philosophy: Engaging the Works of Francisca Cho and Kim Ki Duk</i> Zoe Kelly-Nacht, Boston University	9:30–10:30 a.m. <i>Cinematic Liturgy: Functional Uses of Prayers and Hymns in a Century of Hollywood Films</i> Terry Lindvall, Virginia Wesleyan College Benson Fraser, Regent University
10:00–10:30 a.m.	<i>Screening Belief: The Life of Pi, Computer Generated Imagery and Visual Imagination</i> Rachel Wagner, Ithaca College	
Session V	Room 155 Chair: Nicolae Roddy, Creighton University	
11:00–11:30 a.m.	<i>Using The Tibetan Book of the Dead to Interpret Jacob's Ladder</i> Brady DeSanti, University of Nebraska at Omaha	
11:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m.	Screening <i>The Tibetan Book of the Dead: Liberation Through Seeing</i> Paul Donnelly, Northern Arizona University	



Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium

The Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium features the largest Cat Complex in North America, the world's largest nocturnal exhibit and indoor swamp, one of the world's largest indoor rain forests, and world's largest indoor desert housed in the world's largest glazed geodesic dome.

For more information: omahazoo.com

A photograph of a horse-drawn carriage in the Old Market District of Omaha. A brown horse is harnessed to a white carriage with large spoked wheels. A driver in a black vest and hat sits at the front, while a passenger in a striped shirt sits behind. The carriage is on a cobblestone street in front of a two-story brick building with arched windows and a flower box. Other people and cars are visible in the background.

Old Market District

Located in downtown Omaha, the Old Market District features many restaurants, art galleries, and boutique shops. The area retains brick-paved streets, horse-drawn carriages, and covered sidewalks. Visitors will often enjoy appearances by street performers, artists, and vendors.

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA

Religious Studies Faculty



Paul Allen Williams

Associate Professor

Religious Studies Chair

Ph.D. University of Chicago, History of Religions

M. A. Episcopal Theological Seminary
of the Southwest

B.A. University of Texas at Austin

Teaching:

Dr. Williams offers courses in African Religions, History of Christianity, Islam, New Testament, Religion and Popular Culture, Religion in America, Religious Ethics, Senior Seminar in Religion (a writing course), and World Religions.



Rami Arav

Associate Professor

Director Bethsaida Project

Ph.D. New York University

M.A. Tel Aviv University

B.A. Tel Aviv University

Teaching:

Dr. Arav teaches Biblical Archaeology, Jesus and Archaeology, Egypt and Babylonian Texts, and Archaeology. Each summer, he also leads a group of students to his excavation site at Bethsaida, Israel for which students may get college credit.



William L. Blizek

Professor

Founding Editor Journal of Religion & Film

Ph.D. University of Missouri-Columbia,
Philosophy

M.A. Southern Illinois University

B.A. Southern Illinois University

Teaching:

Dr. Blizek regularly teaches courses on ethics (including Introduction to Ethics, Contemporary Ethical Philosophy, Ethics and Education, and Ethics and Film), Religion and Film, and others. He also has taught courses on the Philosophy of Art, Philosophy of Justice, Understanding Self-Deception, Feminine Ethics, Existentialism, Social Philosophy, the Philosophy of Religion, and Human Values in Medicine.



Rory J. Conces

Associate Professor

Editor ID: International Dialogue

Ph.D. University of Missouri-Columbia,
Philosophy

B.A. Creighton University

M.A. DePaul University

Teaching:

Dr. Conces has taught courses on Ethics, Environmental Ethics, Ethical Theory, Contemporary Moral Issues, Social Philosophy, Political Philosophy, Critical Reasoning, History of Twentieth Century American Philosophy, Philosophy of History, Logic, and Religion and Conflict.



Brady DeSanti

Assistant Professor

Ph.D. University of Kansas

B.A. University of Nebraska at Omaha

M.A. University of Kansas

Teaching:

Dr. DeSanti teaches Native American Religions, Introduction to World Religions, and Shamanism.



Michele Marie Desmarais

Associate Professor

Ph.D. University of British Columbia

B.A. Simon Fraser University

M.A. University of British Columbia

Teaching:

Dr. Desmarais teaches courses on Hinduism, Buddhism, Eastern Religions, First Nations Studies, Mysticism, Sanskrit, and Introduction to World Religions.



Julien Fielding

Instructor

M.A. University of Kansas at Lawrence

B.A. University of Nebraska at Omaha

Teaching:

Julien Fielding teaches Introduction to World Religions, and Religion and Film.



Curtis Hutt

Assistant Professor

Ph.D. Brown University, 2007

M.A. Katholieke Universiteit Leuven

M A. HLS/CSEC Jerusalem

B.A. Manhattanville College

Teaching:

Dr. Hutt teaches courses in Judaic Studies (Hebrew Bible / Jewish Thought and Practice) and the Methods and Phenomena in Religious Studies class. He has also taught classes on Jerusalem, Christians and Israel, Apocalypticism, and Holy Land Pilgrimages.

Gary Eller

Instructor

Ph.D. Vanderbilt University

M.A. Vanderbilt University

M.Div. Princeton Theological Seminary

B.A. University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill

Teaching:

Dr. Eller teaches Religions of the West, History of Christianity, and Religion in America.



Gloria Epps

Instructor

Doctor of Ministry. Apex School of Theology –
Durham, N.C.

Master of Divinity. Apex School of Theology –
Durham, N.C.

M.A. University of Nebraska at Omaha

B.A. University of Nebraska at Omaha (2)

Teaching:

Dr. Epps teaches Introduction to World Religions.



Christian Haunton

Instructor

B.S. University of Nebraska at Omaha

M.A. University of Iowa

Teaching:

Christian Haunton teaches Introduction
to World Religions.



Gary Groff

Instructor

B.S. Westminster College (MO)

M.A. University of Northern Colorado

Teaching:

Gary Groff teaches Introduction
to World Religions.



J. Samuel Subramanian

Instructor

Ph.D. McMaster University

M. Div. Southern Methodist University

M.Th. The United Technological College

CISS. Episcopal Theological Seminary

Teaching:

Dr. Subramanian teaches New Testament,
Letters of Paul, and Life of Jesus.



We hope you enjoy the conference and your stay in Omaha.

The 2014 International Conference on Religion and Film is sponsored
by the Journal of Religion and Film and Religious Studies
at the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

*The University of Nebraska at Omaha does not discriminate based on gender, age, disability, race, color, religion,
marital status, veteran's status, national or ethnic origin, genetic information, political affiliation or sexual orientation.*