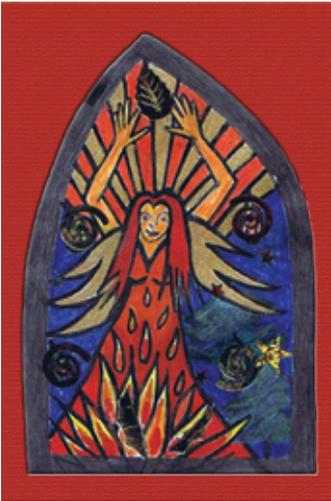


MA Myth, Cosmology and the Sacred

OPEN LECTURES



AUTUMN
2014



www.canterbury.ac.uk/community-arts-education

MA Myth, Cosmology and the Sacred

Open Lectures

AUTUMN 2014

Come along and join the MA students at five Open Lectures this term. Attendance at the Open Lectures will cost £5 per lecture (payable on the door, or by booking online in advance).

The Open Lectures take place at our Canterbury Campus (Laud building, Lg26) on Saturdays from 6.15pm-7.45pm.

You can book your place online at www.canterbury.ac.uk/community-arts-education or call us on 01227 863451

SATURDAY 4 OCTOBER

Plato, Myth and the Great Pathless Sacrifice

TIM ADDEY



In the *Republic*, Plato has Socrates exile Homer, Hesiod and other the poets of myth from his envisaged republic as being likely to mislead the young and uneducated: this stand against poetic myths has all too often been taken well beyond the point Plato was trying to make. Indeed in this very passage he says that if myths are to be told, they should be guarded with secrecy and heard only by those who have made “a great and pathless sacrifice” – indicating, perhaps, that far from despising such stories, Plato held them in the highest regard. This lecture revisits one of Plato’s greatest dialogues, the *Phaedo*, in which his ideal philosopher, Socrates, converses with his closest associates before

drinking the hemlock. Infusing the work are two traditional myths, Theseus and the Minotaur and Dionysus and the Titans. The *Phaedo* addresses the fundamental question of the nature of the self and offers a series of interlocking proofs of our immortality as well as making the startling assertion that “the whole of philosophy is a meditation upon death.” What light do the two myths shed upon our strange path through life and death? What is the great and pathless sacrifice? These and other questions may prompt us to re-examine the Platonic tradition – the great tap-root of Western civilisation – and ask what we have missed if we have emphasized its rational at the expense of its mythopoetic side.

Tim Addey is a devotee of philosophy in its original sense – the love of wisdom. He helped found the Prometheus Trust with which he is a tutor and the general editor of its 33-volume Thomas Taylor Series. He is a regular lecturer and an author of several books on the Platonic tradition.

SATURDAY 18 OCTOBER

The Green Man –Deconstruction of a Modern Myth

DR GEOFF DOEL



It can be argued that our perception of the 'Green Man' is a twentieth century construct of the mythopoeic imagination, but one based on mysterious medieval carvings in stone and wood - of male heads disgorging vegetation - found in churches and cathedrals. Did these carvings, which are unnamed in church documents, derive stylistically from leaf mask carving of the god Bacchus of antiquity, or do they symbolise the life force? Are there affinities, providing narrative (mythos) with folk tale 'greenwood' figures such as Robin Goodfellow and Robin Hood, with seasonal folk customs such as the Jack in the Green and with the remarkable, sinister figure of the Green Knight in the fourteenth century

poem *Sir Gawain & the Green Knight*? Or is there a Christian interpretation of this symbol in which the vegetation represents the cross of salvation? Has the Green Man, like Frankenstein, become a modern myth and if so why and how?

Dr Geoff Doel lectures on Literature and on Folklore and Mythology for the Universities of Canterbury Christ Church and Kent, and on Summer Schools for the University of Durham. His PhD is on Thomas Hardy and Folklore and he is the joint author with his wife Fran of 14 books on folklore topics, including *The Green Man in Britain* & *Worlds of Arthur* (History Press). He formerly lectured extensively on British Folklore and Mythology for Goldsmiths and Birkbeck Colleges and the City Lit in London.

SATURDAY 1 NOVEMBER

Imaginal Studies: The Empress and her Images

DR MARIE ANGELO



Serene in her beautiful garden sits a figure of grace and abundance. She is the Empress of the tarot - a figure from the often misunderstood emblem tradition of learning and study through image, myth and hermetic manoeuvres. This illustrated talk invites us to enter her garden for ourselves, stepping through the door between the conventional and the sacred to see through her eyes. If we think to take off our dusty old shoes before entering, we might find ourselves truly back in the ancient and revered 'garden of cosmos', one of the many presentations of that middle-ground of soul between the alchemical Above and Below, the 'imaginal' realm (so well explored for our time by post-Jungian

James Hillman and scholar of mysticism, Henry Corbin). With the Empress as guide we can rediscover those languages and disciplines of the imaginal sadly absent from modern education, for in her garden the seven liberal arts of old find their esoteric correspondences, in flower once more for us to enjoy.

Marie Angelo is a chartered psychologist whose doctorate on 'imaginal education' was based on many years' practice of the Western mystery tradition. She founded and ran the MA in Transpersonal Arts and Practice at the University of Chichester, and now runs courses on Imaginal Studies. She has published a number of chapters and papers on the methods of the mysteries, and is currently part-way through her long-term writing project that takes an alchemical pilgrimage through the beautiful illuminations of the Renaissance masterpiece *Splendor solis*. She is happy to be contacted via her website:

www.imaginalstudies.org

SATURDAY 15 NOVEMBER

Building Visions: The Facteur Cheval and the Palace of the Imagination

DR SIMON WILSON



Out of the blue, in 1879, an obscure French postman (*Facteur*) was inspired to start work on the unprecedented and enchanting *Palais Idéal*. Something had transformed Joseph-Ferdinand Cheval's vision, and it sustained him for the rest of his life: the result was a building of boundless creativity and invention. We will look at the *Facteur's* extraordinary story, and explore, as well as we can, his *Palais*. Above all we will try to understand the nature of the vision that his work embodies. The Palace is a powerfully numinous testament to an order of reality which is ever-present but generally unperceived. It challenges us to open our imagination and our eyes to that realm.

Dr Simon Wilson has a long-standing interest in the spiritual traditions of the West. An independent scholar, he has published on a wide variety of topics, including the *Palais Idéal*, the Grail, colour symbolism, the sublime, John Michell, and John Dee in the Czech Lands. He is currently supervising PhDs on Jakob Boehme and on Freemasonry for Canterbury Christ Church University.

SATURDAY 29 NOVEMBER

Improvising Music

DR SAM BAILEY



The notion of an improvising musician creating fresh ideas in the heat of the moment is commonplace, but what is actually taking place in the improvised present? The act of improvising brings into play a host of opposing factors: new/old (creating something fresh using the ingrained physical habits that constitute instrumental ability), subject/object (are we listening to the musician or the music in improvisation?), freedom/discipline (the freedom of improvisation is frequently emphasized yet in practice improvising musicians often work within very specific parameters). These opposing factors are bound together in the present moment through what are arguably the most significant aspects of improvisation: risk

and vulnerability. This lecture will include live musical performance from two experienced improvising musicians.

Sam Bailey is an improvising pianist, composer, teacher and serial collaborator. In the past two years he has worked with composers, improvising musicians, an 80s rock star, dancers, poets, filmmakers, a 3D light sculptor, photographers, mathematicians and chefs. Sam has recently finished a practice-based PhD at Canterbury Christ Church University in improvising music and he runs the Free Range series of music, film and poetry events in Canterbury, Kent. Sam's current projects include the site specific Piano in the Woods and the synaesthesia-inducing Eating Sound.