

## **2011/2012 Warren Center Fellows Program**

### **"Sacred Ecology: Landscape Transformations for Ritual Practice"**

Application deadline: Monday, November 29, 2010

**The Topic.** The 2011/2012 Fellows Program at the Warren Center, "Sacred Ecology: Landscape Transformations for Ritual Practice," will be co-directed by John Janusek (anthropology), Tracy Miller (history of art), and Betsey Robinson (history of art). Participants will explore the manifold experiences of complex ritual sites around the world and across all periods of history. Sacred ecology refers to the human experience of divinity in relation to the natural environment, real or represented. Landscape is construed not simply as scenery, but as a cultural complex in which the natural world and human practice, conceptual and material, are dynamically linked and constantly interacting. An investigation of landscape may focus on pastoral or picturesque scenes, earthly elements and celestial movements, or constructed places and objects, such as a temple, altar, or stage. The co-directors are also interested in exploring the temporal rhythms of human-landscape relations, whether regular or periodic, as well as the way in which transformations of space through activities enacted at sacred sites are received and replicated to encode other sacred spaces.

The seminar's investigations of setting, nature, and monuments will offer a chance to revisit sacred places and to see them in a new light. The intentionally broad definition leaves room for participants to introduce new topics to the table, such as (but not limited to): the practicalities of survey and excavation and the mapping of ritual; the natural landscape and its representation in words and images; geomorphology and its influence on planning and architectural design; the modification and improvement of natural features to accommodate human ritual; poetry and performance, whether on-site or remote venues; or the visualization of landscape as a means of facilitating ecstatic experience.

**The Program.** Each year, the Warren Center sponsors a Fellows Program with a particular thematic focus involving VU faculty members and one year-long Visiting Fellow. Fellows meet weekly and may have offices in the Center. Individual research funds in the amount of \$4,000 are available to the selected participants. In addition, program funds provided by the Center can be used by the group for visiting speakers, conferences, or other appropriate program-related expenses. The seminar provides an unusual opportunity for faculty members with a variety of specializations to work cooperatively on a common issue in a sustained manner.

**The Participants.** The Warren Center operates under the aegis of the College of Arts and Science, and the majority of the participants in the 2011/2012 program will come from the College of Arts and Science. However, we also encourage participation from faculty members from the other divisions of the University and encourage applications from our colleagues in the other schools. We look forward to welcoming individuals from those units as Warren Center Fellows.

**Application Process.** Applicants should email to Kate Rattner ([kate.rattner@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:kate.rattner@vanderbilt.edu)) at the Warren Center a copy of their curriculum vitae (**NO MORE THAN FIVE PAGES, PLEASE**) and a statement of one or two pages in which they describe the relation of the topic to their own scholarly project. Applicants should also notify their department chairs. ***Applications are due by Monday, November 29, 2010.***

**Questions?** If you have questions about the program or the application process, feel free to contact the Warren Center (343-6060) or the program co-directors, John Janusek ([john.w.janusek@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:john.w.janusek@vanderbilt.edu)), Tracy Miller ([tracy.g.miller@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:tracy.g.miller@vanderbilt.edu)), or Betsey Robinson ([betsey.a.robinson@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:betsey.a.robinson@vanderbilt.edu)). You may also speak with the Center's director, Edward Friedman ([edward.h.friedman@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:edward.h.friedman@vanderbilt.edu)) or the executive director, Mona Frederick ([mona.frederick@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:mona.frederick@vanderbilt.edu)).