The trouble with most images of Africa is that they are no longer believable, writes art critic Okwui Enwezor (San Francisco Art Institute) in the catalogue for the exhibit Snap Judgments: New Positions in Contemporary African Photography he curated at New York’s International Center of Photography in 2006. For decades the “photographic imaginary” of the African continent has been dominated by extremes: natural and human catastrophes on one page, unspoiled and unpopulated landscapes on the next. What we need now is counter-reporting, Enwezor argues. We need images that break from the standard tropes and make it possible to envision different futures in Africa.

2006-2007 Society of Scholars Fellow Danny Hoffman (Anthropology) is working on such a counter-reporting project on Africa, one that draws on his previous experience as a photojournalist based in Johannesburg. Entitled The Mano River Sketches, it includes Hoffman’s photographs taken in the region along with his reflections on the work of African image producers. Located between Sierra Leone and Liberia, the Mano River region has experienced horrific violence in recent decades. In The Mano River Sketches Huffman is creating a new aesthetic to document wartime and post-war experiences of the members of militias with whom he has worked since 2000. Hoffman is also writing a book entitled Building the Barracks that deals with the militarization of youth in the region.

“Far ‘long stretch through the rainforest,” Huffman explains, “the Mano River is the functional and political border between the two states. The combatants I followed from one country to the next are only one segment of a long history of trade, migration, and kinship lines spanning the region. The wars in these two countries are not often labeled separately. I chose to write them under the title of the Mano River to emphasize both the union and division of these nations and their histories. Ultimately my subject is the people who define that border by having repeatedly transgressed it.”

The Mano River Sketches
Danny Hoffman

The following excerpts are from “Life in Motion,” the opening essay of The Mano River Sketches. The title of the essay is adapted. It begins with a question: What might we see if we view a troubled region of West Africa through a visual frame other than that of conventional documentary realism?

SIOARA EINO mE AFRICA

The Walter Chapin Simpson Center for the Humanities promotes innovative interdisciplinary research, teaching and learning in the humanities and fosters exchange and debate on cultural and intellectual issues among University of Washington scholars and the Seattle community. The role of the Simpson Center is to support initiatives in the humanities at the leading edge of change, to encourage interdisciplinary research and learning among UW faculty and students, to establish public programs in the humanities that engage the public, and to support innovative interdisciplinary courses for undergraduates and graduates.
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Saber – The Spanish word for taste or flavor commonly used to describe good music.

This October an innovative interactive exhibit—American Sabor: A Multi-Faceted Cultural Event that will include programs and publications intended for many audiences. Other programs include a book launch for the humanities, a multi-layered and multi-year project of collaborative research to be undertaken with Ramon Berroin (Ethnomusicology) and Michael Roth (History), the exhibition explores how food and drink is used as a means of communication, showcasing the rich legacy of Hispanic culture in the United States.

The exhibit opens at the American Sabor: A Multi-Faceted Cultural Event that will include programs and publications intended for many audiences. Other programs include a book launch for the humanities, a multi-layered and multi-year project of collaborative research to be undertaken with Ramon Berroin (Ethnomusicology) and Michael Roth (History), the exhibition explores how food and drink is used as a means of communication, showcasing the rich legacy of Hispanic culture in the United States.

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This October an innovative interactive exhibit – American Sabor – launched in U.S. Popular Music – will open at Southern Exposure Space for Contemporary Art (SE Space) in San Francisco. The multi-sensory, multi-media exhibit will explore the rich culture of Latin America through Latin music, food and dance. A collaborative effort among more than 70 artists, its opening is also the launch of a project to bring the exhibit to 35 cities on three continents.

A Graduate Seminar on Visual Documentation Praxis

A Conference on Roman Imperial Art & Ritual

On April 6-8, 2008 a conference on Roman Imperial Art and Ritual will bring together leading scholars around a topic that has both come to Roman culture and is an emerging field in the field of the ancient world. The conference, titled "Imagining the Roman Lares in the spring on Roman Art from the Lares," the exhibition runs from February 12 to May 11, 2008.

Ritual performed every aspect of Roman life from the officiants to religious individuals and household practices. More importantly, Roman religion was based on actions rather than theological dogma. Rituals were there to be observed, they occurred in a specific place, and they relied on objects for their successful completion. Roman art depicts these rituals and played a part in them.

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Public Scholarship Seattle Reads The Nameake

Each year the Washington Center for the Book in the Seattle Public Library hosts a major author for a series of free programs called Seattle Reads. Seattle Reads author events are designed to foster a public conversation around the themes and contours of migration, immigration, and identity.

"As a story of a South Asian family in Seattle, the Nameake not only lets you look at it as the immigrant experience, but also the possibility of being a family in life and in our collective modern experience, with all its diverse experiences, histories, and political futures," says Madhu Sharma, an anthropologist at the University of Washington.

"Forced to leave their homes in South Asia and separated from their natal homes and communities, the Namaste family is stuck in the middle of two worlds. How do they make sense of the rules set for them? How do they find their way around the contours of immigration, obligations, and identity?"

"Families tell their stories of how they evolved, the lessons they learned, and the possibilities that lie ahead. This new way of storytelling is not merely a summary or a short-cut. Why are we interested in using this form as an instrument? Because the type of assignment—an assignment with a meaningful/publication that circulates beyond the walls of the classroom—is the type of activity that gives students the ability to learn more and produce more."

Visit the website at www.knowingsouthasians.org.

TNF Test Enrolling Workshop for Faculty and Graduate Students

The University of Washington’s Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race and the Center for Digital Research and Scholarship is offering a five-week intensive workshop on Test Enrolling at UW. The workshop will be instructed by director of the Textual Eninar, Paul Meier and a team of instructors. The workshop will take place on campus from June 6 to June 30, 2006.

The workshop is designed to help students develop a test enrolling proficiency that is both conceptually rich and practice-oriented. The workshop is designed for students, participants in the Seattle Public Library’s Forums for Urban Studies in South Asia, students interested in digital humanities, and graduate students (in this third year).

Research Clusters

Research clusters provide graduate students with opportunities to include their work in larger, cross-disciplinary, and collaborative projects with students, faculty, and leading scholars. In 2005-06, five interdisciplinary clusters will be supported by the Simpson Center: Cultural Studies Forum, Future of the Humanities Center, Students in the Public Library, Arts and Culture, and Political Economy.

For more information about the clusters and the opportunities they provide for graduate students, visit the website at www.simpsoncenter.org/cluster.

FrancesMcCueLooksBack

When Katherine McCue graduated she submitted a proposal to the Simpson Professorship in the Humanities Center, in thirty years of planning for a PhD in English. She was inspired to bring her scholarship into a wider public.

McCue is a graphic designer who photographs contemporary architecture, investigates and interrogates her field of expertise and presents her findings in a way that often makes her own work more accessible and meaningful. She has used her graphic design skills to create a website that aims to do just that.

The Simpson Professorship, established by the Simpson family, is a prestigious job at the University of Washington. It is a position that allows a faculty member to bring their research to a larger audience. The professorship is named for the late Walter Chapin Simpson, who was a long-time supporter of the arts and humanities.

For McCue, the position was a perfect fit. In her previous role as a professor at the University of Washington, McCue had been working on a project called “Constructing Childhood.” Her research focused on how childhood is constructed in contemporary society, and she wanted to bring that research to a wider audience. The Simpson Professorship gave her the opportunity to do just that.

Over the past ten years the Simpson Center has received a number of awards and accolades. The center has been praised for its innovative programs and for its ability to bring together scholars and artists from a variety of disciplines.

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Public Scholarship Seattle Reads The Namesake
Each year the Washington Book for the Seattle Public Library Books on tap major author for a series of free programs called Seattle Reads. Seattle Reads was founded in 2005 by Marcia Banaszak, in collaboration with the University of Washington Libraries and the Seattle Public Library.

In 2007, I sat down with Jhumpa Lahiri (author of The Namesake) and asked her about the themes and influences that inspired her writing, and how she approaches the craft of storytelling.

The emphasis, Cherniavsky suggests, will be on meetings in June 2008, and reconvene them at workshop rubric is still under discussion, they Studies, will lead the pilot workshop. While the suite of offices in the centrally located Communications Building. (and partners) in the community.

In 1997 the University of Washington Humanities Center received graduate students develop research projects...tions, roundtables, kids’ forums, lectures, and an incredible room-

Frances McCabe Looks Back on the Reclaming Childhood Project
When Katherine McCarron (DePaul) submitted a proposal to the Simpson Professorship in the Public Humanities, it is a three-year scheme of beginning historical research. We were inspired to bring her scholarship into a wider public.

The project was a great opportunity for students to learn about digital humanities and to engage with the public. The project was also a chance for the Simpson Center to support research in this emerging field.

Frances McCabe is a widely published poet, scholar, and essayist. She is a Professor of English at Washington University. She has been an enormous
discussions, roundtables, kids’ forums, lectures, and an incredible room-

THE SIMPSON CENTER CELEBRATES ITS TEN-YEAR ANNIVERSARY
In 1997, the University of Washington Humanities Center received a grant and the opportunity to bring together scholars from the University of Washington Humanities Center and the Seattle Public Library. The Center for the Humanities was founded in 1997 by Marcia Banaszak, in collaboration with the University of Washington Libraries and the Seattle Public Library.

"I cannot overstate how important the Walter Chopin Professorship in the Public Humanities is to me," says Katherine M. McCarron, a Professor of English at Washington University. "It has been a tremendous influence on my research career."

The Simpson Center was founded in 1997, and is a partnership between the University of Washington and the Seattle Public Library. The Center's mission is to bring together scholars from different disciplines to engage in public dialogue on important issues. The Center's work has focused on topics such as race, gender, and politics.

We are excited to announce that the Simpson Center will be hosting a symposium on "Public Scholarship in the Digital Age" on March 23, 2009. The symposium will bring together scholars, artists, and community members to discuss the role of public scholarship in the digital age.

For more information, please visit our website at www.thesimpsoncenter.org.
The Simpson Center is a member of the Consortium of Humanities Centers and Institutes (CHCI), an organization of over 150 humanistic centers across the nation and around the world located at top research universities, including Duke University, Stanford University, Stanford, University of Wisconsin, Berkeley, and others.

The annual meeting of Modern Austrian Literature and Culture Association (MALCA) is April 24-27, 2008 organized by George Steiner (History), Franz Kafkas (Germanics), and Heidi Tigges (Germanics) and Salome Wilke (Germanics). For the second year in a row, the Simpson Center awarded summer dissertation fellowships to six doctoral students in 2007 with funds from the Robert Bolles and Yasuko Endo Endowed Fund, the College of Arts & Sciences Bridge match program, and the Simpson Center.

The Simpson Center awarded nine fellowships to six doctoral students in 2007 with funds from the Robert Bolles and Yasuko Endo Endowed Fund, the College of Arts & Sciences Bridge match program, and the Simpson Center. For the second year in a row, the Simpson Center awarded summer dissertation fellowships to six doctoral students in 2007 with funds from the Robert Bolles and Yasuko Endo Endowed Fund, the College of Arts & Sciences Bridge match program, and the Simpson Center.

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