



## The Transatlantic Walt Whitman Association's Second Annual International Whitman Seminar and Symposium

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### INTERNATIONAL WHITMAN WEEK 2009 SEMINAR AND SYMPOSIUM

Université François-Rabelais, Tours, France, June 8-14, 2009

The *Transatlantic Walt Whitman Association (TWWA)*, founded in Paris in 2007, invites students, researchers and Whitman enthusiasts to participate in its second Whitman Week, consisting of a seminar for advanced students interested in Whitman and Whitman's poetry, and a symposium bringing together international scholars and graduate students. The seminar and the symposium are co-sponsored by the *TWWA*, the *Université François-Rabelais*, the *Région Centre*, the *Conseil Général d'Indre-et-Loire*, and the *Mairie de Tours*.

#### **International Whitman Seminar: Walt Whitman's Poetry in the Twenty-first Century**

*Université François-Rabelais, June 8-12, 2009*

Walt Whitman's poetry, written in the nineteenth century, continues to have a strong impact on literatures and cultures worldwide. Every year new editions of Whitman's work are published in a variety of languages; ever new poets "reply" to him in their poetry; his poems are set to music and quoted in films; he is invoked in discussions of political and cultural issues as well as gender and sexuality; and he continues to be a huge presence in college and university curricula around the world.

In order to respond adequately to this international phenomenon *The Transatlantic Walt Whitman Association* sponsors a series of International Whitman Seminars, where students from different countries come together for intensive, credit-bearing classes taught by Whitman specialists from different countries. The first seminar was held in Dortmund, Germany, in June 2008.

The second seminar will take place in Tours during the week of June 8-14, 2009. In class, students will focus on some of Whitman's major poems and will have an opportunity to share their readings of these poems and discuss

their international significance in the twenty-first century. In addition, there will be special presentations on the reception of Whitman in various countries and languages. This year's instructors will be Marina Camboni, Università di Macerata, author of *Utopia in the Present Tense: Walt Whitman and the Language of the New World*; Ed Folsom, University of Iowa, editor of the *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* and co-founder and editor of the *Walt Whitman Archive*; Jay Grossman, Northwestern University, author of *Reconstituting the American Renaissance: Emerson, Whitman, and the Politics of Representation*; and M. Wynn Thomas, University of Wales Swansea, author of *The Lunar Light of Whitman's Poetry*. Students will also participate in the symposium held at the end of the week.

Credits will be issued by the Université François-Rabelais. International visiting students will live with their French counterparts, thus keeping expenses as low as possible and creating opportunities for a meaningful intercultural dialogue. In addition to the seminar and symposium, students will be shown around the Loire Valley, which boasts the world's largest concentration of Renaissance chateaux.

*Application:* Fifteen non-French international students will be accepted to the seminar. Applications should include a curriculum-vitae, a one-page statement of interest in the Week, and a short letter of support by an instructor who knows the applicant. Applications should be sent to [eric.athenot@orange.fr](mailto:eric.athenot@orange.fr) by April 3 at the latest.

## **International Whitman Symposium: "Endlessly Rocking"**

*Université François-Rabelais, June 12-14, 2009*

This year's symposium will be devoted to "Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking," written by Whitman exactly 150 years ago and first published under the title "A Child's Reminiscence" in the *New-York Saturday Press* on December 24, 1859. In the 1881 edition of *Leaves of Grass*, it came to occupy its present position as the first poem of the "Sea-Drifts" cluster. This poem evokes a remarkable merging of life and death, loss and poetic inspiration, universal laws and human categories.

Papers are invited to cover a wide range of approaches to the poem, including the position this poem occupies in Whitman's printed work and poetics, how it documents the poet's practice of endlessly rewriting, and its debt to and departure from British Romanticism. Papers focusing on international responses to this poem, including translations into other languages, are also strongly encouraged.

*Abstracts* should be sent to Betsy Erkkila, Northwestern University (erkkila@northwestern.edu), and Marta Skwara, Uniwersytet Szczecinski (martaskw@univ.szczecin.pl) by March 15, 2009.