2010 Crossing Borders Faculty Biographies

Tyagan Scott Attaway
Yoga Workshop

Tyagan Scott Attaway is a Certified Anusara Yoga teacher with well over a thousand hours of teacher training, and teaches at Willow Street Yoga Center in Takoma Park, MD. Anusara Yoga is rooted in a tantric philosophy of looking for the good and seeking to enhance it, and a worldview that sees all creation as manifestations of the supreme or divine light that inspires and lives in the hearts of all beings. Tyagan, his spiritual name, means unconditional love and is a helpful reminder that the key to happiness is to serve and love all life. He believes that a good yoga class leaves students feeling better about themselves. Tyagan is also a practicing attorney, which gives him numerous opportunities to assimilate the yogic teachings, to access inner peace and happiness in all situations, and to act powerfully and effectively with wisdom and compassion.

Benjamin Bogin
Keynote: Encountering Tibetan Buddhist Art

Benjamin Bogin is an Assistant Professor of Buddhist Studies in the Theology Department at Georgetown University. He received his M.A. and Ph.D. (Buddhist Studies) from the University of Michigan and spent six years living in Kathmandu, Nepal where he directed study-abroad programs in the Himalayas for students from American high-schools and colleges. His primary research interests are Tibetan Buddhist autobiography and the intersections of visual art, narrative, and sacred geography in Buddhist cultures.

Wen-shing Chou
Lecture: Art of Palaces from Lhasa to Beijing

Wen-shing Chou is a Ph.D. candidate in the History of Art Department at the University of California, Berkeley. She is currently an Ittleson Fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, National Gallery of Art, Washington DC, where she is completing her dissertation on Tibetan Buddhist pilgrimage culture at the sacred mountain range of Wutai shan in northern China.

John Flower
Lecture: Changing Musical Voices of Tibet

John Flower is currently a Visiting Fellow at the University of Virginia Tibet Center and Director of the Chinese Studies Program at Sidwell Friends School in Washington, DC. His research focuses on local history and anthropology in the Han –Tibetan border region of western Sichuan Province, and his publications cover a range of multidisciplinary topics, from
“ecological engineering” and dam construction, to village-level revolution, to folk music. In 2000-2001 he directed the Preserving Living Traditions project on Tibetan folk music, including field recordings and cultural exchange between scholars and musicians in the Himalayan and Appalachian mountains. His most recent work, with Pamela Leonard, is the digital monograph Moral Landscape in a Sichuan Mountain Village.

Tara S. Holl
*Hands-on Mural Workshop: Outside to Inside*

Tara S. Holl, a teaching artist for the Maryland State Arts Council and other state organizations, is known primarily as a mixed media artist. However she has spent many years as a muralist and is an avid student of the ancient world and has always been captivated by all world cultures and their origins. Her own spiritual quests have led her to touch on Buddhism in her artistic explorations as well as in life. It is with great interest and pleasure that she will share her approach to Arts Integration via the Tibetan exhibitions at the Sackler and Freer Museums. Her work with students can be found in several Maryland schools. Her murals, glass work, and other mixed media projects can be found sprinkled across the United States with some works abroad.

Shelley Johnson
*Facilitator*

For the past seven years, Shelley Johnson has been an arts integration lead teacher in two arts integration model schools for Montgomery County Public Schools, MD. She facilitated co-planning with classroom teachers and arts specialists, conducted professional development sessions, and coordinated artist in residence programs. Under her leadership, Dr. Charles R. Drew Elementary and Potomac Elementary received the Maryland State Creative Ticket Schools of Excellence Award, from the Kennedy Center Alliance of Arts Education Network in 2007. Drew Elementary received national recognition in 2008 and was selected as one of five schools for their outstanding arts education program.

After 36 years in arts education, Shelley is currently an arts integration consultant working with the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County, MD as well as for the Maryland State Department of Education, Fine Arts Department. She is an adjunct professor for the Arts Integration Institute, Towson University.

Karen Lang
*Lecture: Buddhism and Gender*

Karen Lang is Professor of Buddhist Studies and Indian Religions at the University of Virginia. As a member of UVA’s Religious Studies Department since 1982, she has taught graduate and undergraduate courses on Buddhist history and philosophy, including seminars on Buddhist Ethics, Mahayana Buddhism, and Buddhism and Gender, as well as reading courses in classical Sanskrit and Tibetan. Her publications include *Four Illusions: Candrakirti’s Advice on the*
Bodhisattva Path, Aryadeva on the Bodhisattva’s Cultivation of Merit and Knowledge and numerous articles on Buddhist philosophy and literature. Professor Lang was a member of the translation team that produced the first English translation of Tsongkhapa’s The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment. Her primary research and translation interests focus on the work of the seventh-century Buddhist philosopher, Candrakirti.

Valeska Maria Populoh
For the Road: An Arts Workshop Exploring the Portable Shrine

Valeska Maria Populoh is performing artist and teacher living in Baltimore, Maryland. She is on the faculty at the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA), where she teaches in the Fiber and Foundation departments. Valeska works with community-based organizations to produce arts workshops and collaborates with other artists on public performance projects. Her troupe The Cause Company uses masks, puppetry, costumes and stiltwalking to create visual spectacles and picture stories; they have appeared at the Toy Theater Festival in New York City, Artscape and the Transmodern Festival in Baltimore.

Tashi Yangzom
Dance Performance/Workshop

Tashi Yangzom is a dance instructor and performer in the Tibetan tradition. She has led performances of classical and folk Tibetan dance all over the Washington, DC area, including the Smithsonian Institution in March 2010.