



September 28, 2015

To: The Faculty and Staff
From: Barry Pearson, Provost

Dear Colleagues:

I've been thinking a lot lately about the interconnection between creativity and uncertainty. Creativity is a word we throw around a lot—and like so many words, its meaning and any real consequence can be lost. This can result in thinking of creativity simply as “you know it when you see it.” In these notes, I'll be sharing my thoughts on this with you across the semester.

PART I of IV: Are we uncertain enough?

Here's a paradox: while we crave creativity we also abhor uncertainty. By nature, we tend to eliminate it as much as possible. So, if creativity has its roots in an unpredictable process by which we arrive at what Kenneth Robinson defines as “ideas that have value,” what are we to do about our aversion to uncertainty?

For a moment, consider creativity and its dependence on uncertainty. A creative idea simultaneously sparks in us a deep appreciation for the idea and its unexpectedness. And this is where uncertainty steps in. Because the idea is unexpected and difficult to track how you arrived at it, there's an uncertainty about which specific element in a chain reaction incited the idea.

This question is important to us as educators, where—especially in higher education—we build in ways to test for right answers while craving original ideas from our students. We say it all the time: “Our students need to be more creative ... I wish they'd apply a little creativity to the project.” But do we know what we're asking for? Are we designing educational opportunities that “teach” creativity? Do we, instead, build in so much orderliness that any chance of a creative idea of uncertain origins arising is killed? In practice, we may actually saw off the very branch upon which we say we sit.

Upcoming Natural and Social Sciences Lecture: John Howard

In Search of Justice: Understanding the Black Lives Matter Movement

The 10th Annual John Howard Lecture on Law and Justice

Tuesday, October 6, 7 p.m.

John Howard, PhD, JD, Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus of Sociology, Purchase College
Natural Sciences Building, Lecture Hall (1001)

Durst Distinguished Lecture Series: An Evening with Zadie Smith on October 7

On **Wednesday, October 7**, the School of Humanities will welcome acclaimed novelist and essayist [Zadie Smith](#) to campus. She will give a talk and a reading in the **Performing Art Center's Recital Hall** from **4:30 to 6 p.m.**, followed by a book signing. This event is free and open to the public.

Zadie Smith is one of the most accomplished writers working today. The recipient of numerous prizes and

awards, she was named one of the “20 Best Young British Novelists” by *Granta* magazine in 2003 and again in 2013. Her body of work includes four acclaimed novels: *White Teeth*; *The Autograph Man*; *On Beauty*, which was shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize and won the 2006 Orange Prize for fiction; and *NW*, selected by the *New York Times* as one of the “10 Best Books of 2012.” Also a prolific and distinguished essayist, Smith writes regularly for *The New Yorker* and the *New York Review of Books*. She has published one collection of essays, *Changing My Mind: Occasional Essays*, and is working on a book of essays titled *Feel Free*. Smith is currently a professor of creative writing at New York University.

The Durst Distinguished Lecture Series is made possible by the Roy and Shirley Durst Distinguished Chair in Literature Endowment.

Join Acclaimed Artist Liza Lou in Creating a Work of Art at the Neuberger

[Liza Lou](#) and the Neuberger Museum invite all Purchase College faculty, staff, and students, and members of the local community (age 16 and above) to participate as volunteers in assembling the artist’s monumental sculpture [Color Field](#) before it opens to the public on November 7. This is a rare opportunity to experience the installation process and to work with a leading contemporary artist.

The volunteer work requires physical dexterity and patience, and, as the artist notes, it can be a very meditative experience. Volunteer work sessions are scheduled to take place from **October 19 through October 28**. Liza Lou will be working with volunteers Monday, October 19–Friday, October 23 (she will not be on site Monday, October 26–Wednesday, October 28). You can [sign up](#) for a morning or afternoon session.

Liza Lou has engaged with diverse communities from around the world to create her art. At the Neuberger, she is interested in local participation in the installation process so that the work itself becomes a communal experience. At approximately 1,800 square feet, Color Field will cover nearly the entire floor of the museum’s largest gallery. Because it is composed of thousands of beaded wires, it will take many hands to assemble it. This beaded sculpture was meticulously prepared by a team of artisans in Durban, South Africa, and will be carefully sited at the Neuberger with your help and a group of museum volunteers trained by and working directly with the artist.

Reminder! Upcoming Award and Leave Application Deadlines

- [Junior Faculty Development Leaves](#): **October 1*** (to your chair or director)
- [Sabbatical Leaves](#): **October 1** (to your chair or director)
- [Faculty Support Awards](#): **November 1***
- **New!** [Part-Time Teaching Support Awards](#): **November 15**
- [Chancellor’s Awards for Excellence](#): The respective peer-review committees on campus will issue calls for nominations this fall. **December 1** is the deadline for peer review of nominations for all categories except [Adjunct Teaching](#). (Nominations for the Adjunct Teaching award must be peer-reviewed earlier because these are due to SUNY on November 9, an earlier deadline than the other categories.)

**Revised dates*

For more information, including the leave application form and application deadlines in spring 2016, please visit the [Faculty Awards](#) section on the Office of the Provost website. Information on awards and leaves offered through the New York State/United University Professions Joint Labor-Management Committees (JLMC) is available at nysuup.lmc.ny.gov; **October 7** is the application deadline for the JLMC’s Spring 2016 [Nuala McGann Drescher Leave Program](#).

Upcoming Events: September–October

For the most current information on upcoming public events, please refer to the [campus calendar](#), [Neuberger Museum calendar](#), or [Performing Arts Center calendar](#). (Events and details may be added, changed, or deleted)

after an issue of *Notes* is prepared.)

Exhibitions on view:

Neuberger Museum of Art:

- [GOLD](#) (through October 11)
- [Teresa Margolies: We Have a Common Thread](#) (through October 11)

Passage Gallery:

- [Life After Life in Prison: A Photo Essay by Sara Bennett](#) (through November 2)

Richard and Dolly Maass Gallery:

- [Interwoven: Prints and Process](#) (October 5–November 13)

Opening reception: Wed., Oct. 7, 5:30 p.m.

Tonight! [Panel Discussion: The Role of the Critic Today](#)

Manohla Dargis with Wesley Morris, Emily Nussbaum, and Amy Taubin

Mon., Sept. 28, 7 p.m.

Performing Arts Center

[Artista Latina: Teresa Margolies in the Landscape of Latin American Art](#)

Wed., Sept. 30, 12:30 p.m.

Neuberger Museum Study

[Visiting Artist Lecture Series: Angel Nevarez and Valerie Tevere](#)

Wed., Sept. 30, 4:30 p.m.

Visual Arts Building, Room 1016

[Film Screening: Vision of Light](#)

Wed., Sept. 30, 6 p.m.

Music Building, Choral Hall (1002)

[The 5 Browns](#)

Sat., Oct. 3, 8 p.m.

Performing Arts Center

[Ukulele Orchestra of Great Britain](#)

Sun., Oct. 4, 3 p.m.

Performing Arts Center

[Purchase Print Week 2015](#)

Mon.–Fri., Oct. 6–9

[Durst Lecture Series: An Evening with Zadie Smith](#)

Wed., Oct. 7, 4:30 p.m.

Performing Arts Center

[New Media Lecture Series: Damon Rich](#)

Wed., Oct. 7, 6:30 p.m.

Neuberger Museum Study

[Art and Craft in the Post-War Era: Elissa Auther](#)

Undergraduate Speaker Series

Thurs., Oct. 8, 4:30 p.m.
Humanities Building, Room 2053

[Purchase Symphony Orchestra](#)

Conducted by Ransom Wilson

Fri., Oct. 9, 5 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.
Performing Arts Center

[Purchase Repertory Theatre: In the Red and Brown Water](#)

Written by Tarell Alvin McCraney / Directed by Dennis Hilton Reid

Fri., Oct. 9, 7:30 p.m.

Sat., Oct. 10, 1:30 p.m.

Thurs., Oct. 15, 7:30 p.m.

Sat., Oct. 17, 7:30 p.m.

Performing Arts Center

[Family Day](#)

Sat., Oct. 10 (check in: 9–11:30 a.m.)

[Purchase Repertory Theatre: The Women of Lockerbie](#)

Written by Deborah Brevoort / Directed by Zenon Kruszelnicki

Sat., Oct. 10, 7:30 p.m.

Wed., Oct. 14, 7:30 p.m.

Fri., Oct. 16, 7:30 p.m.

Sat., Oct. 17, 1:30 p.m.

Performing Arts Center

[Vertigo Dance Company](#)

Sat., Oct. 10, 8 p.m.

Performing Arts Center

[Orpheus Chamber Orchestra](#)

Sun., Oct. 11, 3 p.m.

Performing Arts Center

[Fall Open House](#)

Mon., Oct. 12, 9 a.m.–4 p.m.

[Visiting Artist Lecture Series: Nicholas Muellner](#)

Wed., Oct. 14, 4:30 p.m.

Visual Arts Building, Room 1016

[Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center](#)

Sat., Oct. 17, 5 p.m.

Performing Arts Center

[National Theatre Live: The Beaux' Stratagem](#)

Sun., Oct. 18, 2 p.m.

Performing Arts Center

[Lecture and Q&A with Music Producer Barb Morrison](#)

Mon., Oct. 19, 4:30 p.m.

Music Building, Room 0001

[Visiting Artist Lecture Series: Alan Resnick](#)

Wed., Oct. 21, 4:30 p.m.

Visual Arts Building, Room 1016

[Purchase Opera: Hansel and Gretel](#)

Directed by Jacque Trussel / Conducted by Hugh Murphy

Fri., Oct. 23, 7 p.m.

Sat., Oct. 24, 1 p.m.

Performing Arts Center

[Ana Gasteyer: I'm Hip!](#)

Sat., Oct. 24, 8 p.m.

Performing Arts Center

[Visiting Artist Lecture Series: Josephine Halvorson](#)

Wed., Oct. 28, 4:30 p.m.

Visual Arts Building, Room 1016

[Purchase Repertory Theatre: Blues for Mr. Charlie](#)

Written by James Baldwin / Directed by A. Dean Irby

Fri., Oct. 30, 7:30 p.m.

Sat., Oct. 31, 1:30 & 7:30 p.m.

Additional dates in November

Performing Arts Center