

# *Focus on* the Institute for the Public Life of Arts and Ideas



Established in 2009, IPLAI is a unique collaboration among the faculties and schools of Arts, Law, Education, Music, Management, Religious Studies and Architecture. The Institute's mission is to foster innovative, collaborative, humanities-centered teaching and research by engaging scholars from across campus and at other Canadian and foreign universities and to promote dialogue and collaboration between scholars, creative artists and leaders in the cultural and entertainment industries.

The Institute seeks to understand how the arts (literature, painting, film, theatre, music,

industrial and artistic design, architecture) and new ideas come into being in a range of settings (schools, the law courts, markets, the Web, the book trade, state institutions) and in relation to social, cultural, and institutional practices. It also explores how art and ideas are able to transform the private world of the individual, the greater world of public matters, and the interactivity between the two. This expansive approach to humanities scholarship allows the Institute to challenge disciplinary convention and foster dialogue and collaboration across the University.



Owen Egan

## **Paul Yachnin**

Tomlinson Professor of Shakespeare Studies  
Director, IPLAI

## Research

The Institute hosts an interdisciplinary team of faculty who, in addition to pursuing cutting-edge research in the humanities, have collaborated on an innovative new series of team-taught undergraduate and graduate courses. IPLAI also hosts a wide variety of independent reading groups, supports graduate researchers, and funds a summer undergraduate internship program. Regular seminars, major lectures by visiting scholars and an off-campus public lecture series are open to all. The Institute also hosts a major annual conference. In 2013-14, IPLAI will host the Fulbright Visiting Research Chair in Law and Literature.

### ► **Leigh Yetter, Associate Director:**

Leigh Yetter's work focuses on social and

cultural history, and public life in early modern Britain. She taught at Brown, Harvard, and McGill before joining IPLAI in 2009.

### ► **IPLAI Resident Faculty Fellows**

The 2012-14 Fellows are: **Wendy Adams**, Faculty of Law; **Patrick Hansen**, Schulich School of Music; **Michael Jemtrud**, School of Architecture; **Stephen McAdams**, Schulich School of Music; **Stéfan Sinclair**, Digital Humanities, Faculty of Arts; **Alanna Thain**, Department of English, Faculty of Arts. Six more Resident Faculty Fellows will be elected to two-year terms in 2013. During their term, Resident Faculty Fellows pursue collaborative research projects and co-teach IPLAI courses.

A leader of collaborative scholarship, Paul Yachnin founded the Making Publics (MaPs) Project which brought together scholars across the disciplines to rethink how works of art and intellect created "publics," forms of association based on the shared interests, tastes, and desires of individuals in Renaissance Europe. He also promotes collaboration between the creative arts and scholarship and exchanges between people inside and outside the academy. His ideas about the public life of art, and those of his MaPs collaborators, were featured on the CBC IDEAS series, "The Origins of the Modern Public."

▶ **Arts and Ideas in Motion**, a new research endeavour by McGill researchers and representatives of Montreal arts organizations, focuses on developing an innovative account of how artistic and intellectual works move from person to person and place to place, how that movement creates new spaces for collective creation, discussion and action, and how it makes new communities, often crossing barriers of languages, class, race, sex, age, and nationality. The project will host a major conference in April 2013.

▶ **Forms of Conversion: Religion, Culture, and Cognitive Ecologies in Early Modern Europe and its Worlds** is a major new international research collaboration that will develop an historical understanding of conversion and contribute to modern debates about corporeal, sexual, psychological, and spiritual kinds of transformation. The project will study how early modern Europeans changed their confessional, political, and even sexual identities. These changes reflected transformations in their world: Europe's geopolitical reorientation brought about by emerging relations with Islam and the Americas; the rethinking of knowledge related to Antiquity and the Middle Ages; and the re-imagining of God.

## Teaching

▶ **The Archie Malloch Graduate Fellowships in Public Learning** and the **Archie Malloch Undergraduate Internships in Public Learning**, funded by a generous private donation

to the Institute, supports graduate students working in interdisciplinary, humanities-based fields, as well as undergraduate interns working with local arts organizations.

The Institute has introduced new team-taught undergraduate and graduate courses that emphasize interdisciplinary investigation and address directly the notion of a public life of arts and ideas. It is also developing a new **MA in the Public Life of Arts and Ideas**, an innovative new degree program that will match creative research in the humanities with direct experience in arts management and cultural policy.

## Connecting

▶ **Thinking Art** joins members of the Montreal creative community with McGill faculty, students and staff, to participate in workshops on theatre, visual art, music, clowning, poetry, dance, digital media, and architecture and design. Workshop participants will perform or exhibit the work they created in the morning session and will interact with scholars interested in art as critical practice and as research.

▶ **The Great Trials Public Lecture Series** considers a collection of history-making trials across time. The series takes the position that 'law' happens as much outside the courtroom as it does within it, and that each of these pivotal events stands as testament to the ways in which constructions of authority, law, and justice have informed cultural consciousness across centuries. The first two editions at Westmount Public Library and at Atwater Library were very

successful and IPLAI has plans for a new lecture series in winter 2013.

▶ **Sundays @ the Segal, Mondays @ McGill** is a partnership with the Segal Centre that features experts in diverse fields related to the six plays at the Segal during its 2012-13 season. In addition to attending major lectures at the Segal Centre, members of the community can register for more intensive evening workshops that expand on the ideas presented in the lectures.

▶ **The Executive Institute in the Public Life of Arts and Ideas**, to be launched in 2013, will offer a five-day intensive program for professionals in arts management and cultural fields, focusing on trends in humanities scholarship, the public life of art in the 21st century, and questions of cultural policy.

▶ **Research and Programming Partnerships** IPLAI had established research and programming partnerships with: Blue Metropolis Literary Festival; Canadian Centre for Architecture; Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities, University of Cambridge; Curb Center for Art, Enterprise, and Public Policy, Vanderbilt University; Margie Gillis Dance Foundation; McCord Museum; Montreal Baroque Festival; Segal Centre for Performing Arts; Sid Lee; Stratford Shakespeare Festival.

To ensure that this valuable Institute has the resources it needs to grow and fulfill its vitally important mandate, the University is seeking philanthropic support for IPLAI.



*For more information, please contact:*

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