UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS
Peace Symposium
March 25, 2011, 3:00-7:00 P.M., Lyceum

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Mysticism and Peace: Weaving a Common Thread across World Religions

Welcome:
Dr. Jerry Thomas, Dean College of Education
Dr. Qaisar Abbas, Assistant Dean, College of Education

Keynote Speaker
Introduction: Dr. George James
Dr. Ori Soltes, Georgetown University

Panel Discussion
Moderator: Dr. Mitch Land, Interim Dean, Mayborn School of Journalism
Panelists:
Dr. Ori Soltes, Georgetown University
Dr. George James, UNT Department of Philosophy and Religion Studies
Dr. Masood Raja, UNT Department of English
Pravrajika Brahmaprana, Ramakrishna Vedanta Society of North Texas

Break
South Asian Chai and snacks will be served.

Sufi Music Performance
Rehan Group
Musician: S.M. Rehan. Vocalists: Mustafeez Raja, Rumi Latif

The Peace Symposium is Sponsored Through an Internal Grant Funded by
the UNT Center for the Study of Interdisciplinarity (CSID)
&
Partially Funded by
The College of Education
Contemporary Arab & Muslim Cultural Studies Institute (CAMSCI)
Division of Equity and Diversity, Peace Studies Program
& Jewish Studies Program
(the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation,
The Jewish Federation of Fort Worth and Tarrant County, The Jewish Federation on Greater Dallas)
INFORMATION ON SYMPOSIUM SPEAKERS

KEYNOTE SPEAKER
Dr. Ori Soltes, Georgetown University
Dr. Ori Soltes’ teaching, lecturing, curating and writing reflect a broad series of interests and a unique ability to combine them in unusual ways that are thought-provoking and both challenging and intellectually exciting. Dr. Soltes currently teaches theology, philosophy and art history at Georgetown University. He has also taught across diverse disciplines for many years at The Johns Hopkins University, Cleveland State University, Case Western Reserve University, Siegel College in Cleveland, and other colleges and universities. Over 180 publications—books, articles, and catalogue essays—have included, among others: Searching for Oneness: Mysticism in the Jewish, Christian and Muslim Traditions and Why the Middle East is Such a Mess.

PANELISTS
Dr. George A. James, UNT Department of Philosophy and Religion Studies
Dr. George Alfred James received his Ph. D. in History and Philosophy of Religion from Columbia University in 1983 and is author of Interpreting Religion, a study of phenomenological approaches to religion, and editor of Ethical Perspectives on Environmental Issues in India. His principal interest is in the relationship of Indian spirituality to environmental consciousness and activism. His research is published in such journals as International Philosophical Quarterly, Worldviews, and Zygon. He has contributed to the Encyclopedia of Religion, the Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature, and the Encyclopedia of Environmental Ethics and Philosophy.

Dr. Masood Ashraf Raja, UNT Department of English
Author of Constructing Pakistan (Oxford UP), Dr. Masood Ashraf Raja teaches Postcolonial Literat and Theory in the Department of English. He is the editor of Pakistaniaat: A Journal of Pakistan Studies. Dr. Raja specializes in politics of the Islamic world, issues of Islamic radicalism, and US relations with the Muslim world with a specific focus on Pakistan, Afghanistan and the Middle East hopes to foster a better understanding between the people of his primary culture and the rest of world.

Pravrajika Brahmaprana, Ramakrishna Vedanta Society of North Texas
Pravrajika Brahmaprana is Resident Minister of the Ramakrishna Vedanta Society of North Texas Irving. She has been a Vedanta representative for the Hindu-Catholic Dialog, sponsored by the Archdiocese of Los Angeles as well as for several Interfaith Councils and initiatives in Dallas-Fort Worth. A frequent guest lecturer at schools and colleges, Brahmaprana has participated in interfaith and scholastic seminars in America and abroad. Brahmaprana has also compiled and edited several books and articles on the philosophy and practice of Vedanta.

Dr. Mitch Land, UNT Mayborn School of Journalism
Dr. Mitch Land is Associate Professor and Interim Dean of Mayborn School of Journalism at UNT. research interests are journalism, media ethics, development communication, public opinion and propaganda, and international media. Author of several books including “Contemporary Media E A Practical Guide for Students, Scholars and professionals,” he has also directed several films in F including “La Combat,” and “L’Indifferent.”
INFORMATION ON
SYMPOSIUM ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

**Dr. Qaisar Abbas, UNT College of Education**
Dr. Qaisar Abbas is Assistant Dean of Research and Grants in the College of Education. With a doctorate in Mass Communication from University of Wisconsin-Madison, he has a long standing career as a university professor, administrator, researcher and freelance journalist. He has published articles, book chapters and columns on media, literature and South Asian politics. He is also a poet and writer in his native language Urdu with a published anthology of his poetry “Keep Holing the Sun.”

**Dr. Lisa N. Owen, UNT Department of Art Education & Art History**
Dr. Lisa N. Owen has been teaching Art History at UNT since 2006. While her teaching areas include all aspects of Asian art, her research interests include the production of Jain, Hindu, and Buddhist imagery in ancient India, patterns of patronage, articulations of sacred space, and how visual forms express certain religious values and goals. Her work has been published in international peer-reviewed journals such as Artibus Asiae, the International Journal of Jaina Studies, and the Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies.

**Dr. David Mason, UNT Peace Studies Program**
Dr. David Mason is the Johnie Christian Family Peace Professor of Political Science at UNT. He administers the only Peace Studies program of its kind in the southwest United States. He bolsters an already large and accomplished group of faculty in international relations and comparative politics, as well as the department’s "Working Group on Peace, Democracy and Human Rights". Mason's research has focused on the causes of civil wars, land reform, and East Asian politics. He has published numerous books and articles on these subjects.

**Dr. George James, UNT Department of Philosophy and Religion Studies**

**Nadir Durrani, Danish Kadeh International, Dallas**
Nadir Durrani, a resident of Dallas, is a known Urdu poet and writer. He has been organizing national and international literary events in Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex for the last 20 years as President of Danish Kadeh International, a nonprofit literary organization. He runs a real estate business in the area.
UNT RESOURCES FOR RELATED RESEARCH PROJECTS

Colleges & Schools
1. College of Arts & Sciences: http://cas.unt.edu
2. College of Education: http://coe.unt.edu
3. Mayborn School of Journalism: http://journalism.unt.edu/
5. College of Information: http://ci.unt.edu
6. College of Public Affairs & Community Service: http://pacs.unt.edu
7. College of Music: http://music.unt.edu

Departments & Programs
8. History: http://hist.unt.edu
10. Radio, TV & Films: http://rtvf.unt.edu
11. Peace Studies: http://www.peace.edu
12. Jewish Studies: http://www.unt.edu/jewishstudies
13. Women’s Studies: http://wmst.unt.edu
14. Foreign Languages & Literature: http://forl.unt.edu
15. Linguistics & Technical Communication: http://lingtechcomm.unt.edu
16. Dance & Theatre: http://danceandtheatre.unt.edu
17. Communication Studies: http://comm.unt.edu
19. Political Science: http://psci.unt.edu
20. Psychology: http://psychology.unt.edu
22. Sociology: http://pacs.unt.edu/soci/

Centers & Divisions
23. UNT Libraries: http://www.library.unt.edu
24. Center for the Study of Interdisciplinarity (CSID): http://csid.unt.edu
25. Arab & Muslim Cultural Studies Institute (CAMSCI)
   http://art.unt.edu/camcsi.html
26. Immigration Research & Policy Center: http://immigrantresearch.unt.edu
27. Division of Equity & Diversity: http://edo.unt.edu
28. Division of UNT International: http://international.unt.edu
29. Spanish Language Media: http://spanishmedia.unt.edu
30. Environmental Philosophy: http://cep.unt.edu
BIBLIOGRAPHY
SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER GENERAL READING

Dr. Ori Z. Soltes


