THE NOTION OF APOCALYPSE IS CHANGING its meaning, and has gained currency over the last two decades with the approach and passing of the millennium. It is a genre that spans cultures, times, and place, and one that resists easy categorical definition. In Through a Glass Darkly, six speakers will deliver presentations at the Heller Center for Arts & Humanities. Each of these scholars will also join HUM 3990: Visions of Darkness: Apocalypse and Dystopia in Literature, Art & Film, taught by Michaela Steen and Colin McAllister, for an informal roundtable discussion.

Through a Glass Darkly is generously underwritten by the UCCS Humanities Program, the Heller Center for Arts & Humanities, the UCCS Department of Visual and Performing Arts, the UCCS Department of History and the UCCS Center for Religious Diversity and Public Life.

**SCHEDULE**

**Monday, April 4, 2016**

4:30-6:00 pm  Opening Reception - Heller Center

**Tuesday, April 5, 2016**

9:30-10:00 am  Coffee and Pastries, Meet and Greet

10:00-10:45 am  Colin McAllister  Regnum Caerulorum Terrestre: The Apocalyptic Vision of Lactantius

10:45-11:30 am  Dr. David Cook  Paul Alexander and the Syrian Muslim Apocalyptic Tradition: What is history and where are the boundaries?

11:30-12:15 pm  Dr. Brian Duvik  The End of the Western Roman Empire and the Apocalypticism of Quodvultdeus and Salvian of Marseilles

12:15-1:30 pm  Lunch at the Heller Center

1:30-2:00 pm  Omar Rojas Camarena  Apocalyptic in Visual Art

2:00-2:45 pm  Dr. Jeffrey Scholes  Fix a Park Bench or Sit on One?: Apocalypticism and the World

2:45-3:30 pm  Dr. E. Ann Matter  The Song of the Apocalypse

3:45-7:00 pm  HUM 3990 Class Session, roundtable discussion with all five presenters – in University Hall 109

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**OVERVIEW**

The notions of Apocalypse are changing its meaning, and has gained currency over the last two decades with the approach and passing of the millennium. It is a genre that spans cultures, times, and place, and one that resists easy categorical definition. In Through a Glass Darkly, six speakers will deliver presentations at the Heller Center for Arts & Humanities. Each of these scholars will also join HUM 3990: Visions of Darkness: Apocalypse and Dystopia in Literature, Art & Film, taught by Michaela Steen and Colin McAllister, for an informal roundtable discussion.

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**Colin McAllister**

**Regnum Caerulorum Terrestre: The Apocalyptic Vision of Lactantius**

The writings of the early fourth century Christian apologist L. Cæcilius Firmianus Lactantius have been extensively studied by historians, classicists, philosophers and theologians. But his unique apocalyptic eschatology presented in book VII of the Divino Institutiones, his largest work, has been relatively neglected. This lecture will distill Lactantius’s complex narrative and analyze his sources. In particular, his treatment of the intermediate state, as well as his account of the Antichrist, is anachronistic. I argue that his apocalypticism is not an indiscriminate synthesis of various sources - as it often stated - but is essentially based on the Book of Revelation and other Patristic sources.

**Brian Duvik**

**The End of the Western Roman Empire and the Apocalypticism of Quodvultdeus and Salvian of Marseilles**

Given the political and military upheaval characteristic of the late 4th and early 5th century in the western Roman empire, it is perhaps not surprising that, after a dormancy dating back to Constantine the Great, apocalyptic literature re-emerges as a significant genre of Patristic literature. And since North Africa had long been embroiled in theological controversy, followed by the Vandals invasions, it is important to read the apocalyptic tradition of Tyconius, Augustine and Quodvultdeus, at least in part, as a commentary on contemporary regional crises. With these considerations in mind, I will try to compare and contrast the North African tradition with apocalyptic thought from other parts of the empire. While Augustine and Quodvultdeus continue to make the case for orthodoxy for the salvation of the empire, Salvian of Marseilles, who is living in a world already dominated by the Visigoths and under threat of Hunnic conquest, sees the barbarians as the last hope of the empire. Between Quodvultdeus and Salvian there lies the more utopian vision of Macrobius, which promotes the reconciliation of Christian and Heretic culture for the ruribus of traditional Roman culture.

**Omar Rojas Camarena**

**Apocalyptic in Visual Art**

This talk will explain the connection between Intervention, my artistic work for the last three years, and the Apocalypse of John. Starting with the vision of the apocalypse. Subjected by a disfigured vision, he was taken – in spirit – to the highest and the lowest levels of the mind and human possibilities; a man, punished by the eschatological visions of the end of days and his own species. My newest work, commissioned for this symposium, is a graphic exegesis of the apocalypse, and connects the prophecy of John with our present: a state of alarming clarmance that was announced 20 centuries ago, and in the eyes of the environmentalists, is actually happening today.

**Jerrold Shapiro**

**Fix a Park Bench or Sit on One?: Apocalypticism and the World**

It’s common sense that the belief that the world is going to end tends to instill a lack of motivation to change the world for the better—a wasted effort if it is all going away soon and in a manner that has little to do with human effort. In a Christian context, talk about the apocalypse is to talk about the second coming of Christ and the millennium found in the Book of Revelation, which in turn can affect whether there are merits to changing this world. In this presentation, I will survey the primary Christian views of the end times. Then using Matthew Sutton’s argument in his American Apocalypse, I will critically examine how apocalyptic thinking has influenced more recent Christian apocalyptic approaches to the world.

**Jeffery Scholes**

**The Song of the Apocalypse**

The final book of the Christian Bible, the Apocalypse or Revelation to John, is a famous source for Christian eschatology, teachings about what will happen at the end of time. But in Christian exegesis until the central Middle Ages, the book was read more often as a historical text, that is, looking backwards rather than ahead. One of the most interesting consequences of this reading is the stress on Revelation as a romance about the Church on earth, the Mystical Bride of Christ. Equally interesting from a twenty-first century perspective is the fact that early Christian commentators often read this book in tandem with the Song of Songs, a book of the Hebrew Bible, which is not seen in any sense apocalyptic. This paper will try to explain the connection between the Apocalypse and the Song of Songs, and suggest reasons for the perceived connections between these two biblical books in the early medieval imagination. I will end with some suggestions about the ongoing theological (social, even political) consequences of this non-apocalyptic reading of Revelation.

**E. Ann Matter**

**The Song of the Apocalypse**

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About the Course

HUM 3990: Visions of Darkness: Apocalypse and Dystopia in Literature, Art & Film is a course in the UCCS Humanities program. Taught by Colin McAllister & Michaela Steen, the course addresses a wide range of topics under the general rubric of Apocalypse and Dystopia as manifested in various ways and through a variety of media, including written texts in various genres (prophecy, poems, short-stories, novels), visual art (painting, woodcuts, tapestry, digital imagery), music and film. The chronological and cultural scope is vast: from the cultures of ancient Mesopotamia, Greece, Israel and Egypt, through Islamic/Jewish and Christian perspectives in the Medieval and Renaissance to the modern day. Throughout the course, students are asked to relate notions of apocalypse and dystopia that have arisen throughout history to current events and perspectives.

For more information:
https://www.facebook.com/events/1571499186425848

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San Juan by Omar Rojas Camarena, 2016