

# The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park

## 2011 Yale University Forum on Art, War and Science in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

*Co-chaired by sculptor Jeffrey Rubinoff and Dr. Jay Winter*

—  
*Hosted by The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park*

—  
May 19-23rd 2011 on Hornby Island, British Columbia

## FORUM DESCRIPTION

---

Constructive dialogue across disciplines is a challenging undertaking. The study and practice of art, cultural history, and science have different methods, fields of focus, and conventions of knowledge. The seriousness of intent in meeting this challenge is illustrated by the collaboration between Yale University and The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park to conduct this Forum. Representatives of both institutions have agreed to undertake this dialogue by co-chairing an examination of scholarly and artistic perceptions within a context of mutual interest: art, war and science in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and beyond. The initial focus is the time of 1900-14, a period of great creativity and discovery in art and science. It is the eve of a global war that both chairs agree mark a significant historical turning point. The Forum will debate the views of some of the foremost scholars of cultural history on this subject in the context of the sculpture work and insights of artist Jeffrey Rubinoff.

For those who believe the quality of ideas matters to the quality of human affairs, the stakes involved are high. Rubinoff perceives the two world wars to be the final act of what he terms the End of the Age of Agriculture, which ended the domination of Europe and its empires by its agricultural warrior class. Jay Winter sees a transformation in warfare as having started with the massacre of the Great War and the suicide of the landed military caste which led it. The ramifications and cultural impact of these events are still evident a century later in the art, ideas and identities of the combatant countries. After a second world war of even greater destructive power, these changes were amplified in other ways. One development which concerns Winter has been the emergence of ‘...post-modern ways of thinking [which] raised issues related to the supposed end of the Enlightenment project, contaminated, as some would say, by imperialism and the Holocaust.’

Rubinoff and Winter both perceive the great danger that post-modernism can delegitimize the knowledge and insights central to the future of human affairs. Both chairs see the urgency that a troubling historical trajectory of anti-humanist ideology coupled with highly destructive and widely-distributed weapons will continue to gravely threaten civilization itself. As such the Forum is a statement of the need for artists, historians and scientists to identify and address the challenge of their individual moral obligation as witnesses to our shared history.

Respecting the essential integrity of both scholarly and artistic disciplines, the Forum strives to realize the additional value of a dialogue among recognized scholars and artists. It is hoped that the challenge of this unique encounter will encourage Forum participants, especially the invited group of students, to think more broadly about their individual moral obligation to address these questions and consider their consequences.

## ABOUT THE CHAIRS

---

### Jeffrey Rubinoff

Rubinoff received his B.A. and M.F.A. in the nineteen sixties. In 1969 he returned to Canada. His one man shows included The Helen Mazelow Gallery, The Ontario Science Center, The Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park, Queen's Park Toronto, York University, and Two Sculptors New York.

In the past two decades he concentrated on group historical exhibitions including works by sculptors David Smith, Alexander Calder, Anthony Caro, Mark di Suvero, Nancy Graves, George Rickey, Beverly Pepper, Tony Smith, and Robert Murray.

In 1973, Rubinoff purchased an 80 hectare farm on Hornby Island, off the west coast of British Columbia, Canada, for the eventual establishment of a sculpture park. Living and working on site he has created almost a hundred sculptures, constructing each piece alone in his studio from CORTEN or stainless steel. Located in the former barn, the studio is uniquely equipped with a one man steel foundry, making it possible to cast the complex steel shapes seen in his later series. In addition to creating the pieces themselves, Rubinoff carried out significant landscaping projects in the park to reshape the land to site the sculptures.

“For my generation of artists, culture was defined by marketing. The art market defined originality as novelty. I realized that to make original art with artistic depth I would have to return to the lineage of the ancestors—the history of art by artists. So began a dialogue with the ancestors, artist to artist via the work itself.”

In May of 2008 The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park (JRSP) was formally opened to the public with an Inaugural Forum, beginning a multiyear series of dialogues entitled *The Company of Ideas*. The Forums were an extension of the purpose of Rubinoff's work, which as he states is to:

“...extend the ancient narrative of art and consequently rekindle the historical spirit of modernism. In addition to viewing the work, which includes the Sculpture Park itself, the goal is to revive the interdisciplinary creative impetus of early modernism and to attain the understanding of art as a serious and credible source of special insight for the evolution of ideas.”

This is the origin of the annual dialogues at the Park, that from 2008-10 explored Rubinoff's insight that we have reached ‘the End of the Age of Agriculture.’

The Park welcomes the Yale University Forum to continue the intent of the Company of Ideas.

[www.rubinoffsculpturepark.org](http://www.rubinoffsculpturepark.org)

## Professor Jay Winter

Jay M. Winter, the Charles J. Stille Professor of History, is a specialist on World War I and its impact on the 20th century.

His interests include remembrance of war in the 20th century, such as memorial and mourning sites, European population decline, the causes and institutions of war, British popular culture in the era of the Great War and the Armenian genocide of 1915.

Winter is the author or co-author of a dozen books, including *Socialism and the Challenge of War, Ideas and Politics in Britain, 1912-18*, *The Great War and the British People*, *The Fear of Population Decline*, *The Experience of World War I*, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History, 1914-1918*, *The Great War and the Shaping of the 20th Century*, *Remembering War: The Great War between History and Memory in the 20th Century*, and *Dreams of Peace and Freedom: Utopian Moments in the 20th Century*.

He has edited or co-edited 13 books and contributed more than 40 book chapters to edited volumes. He is co-director of the project on *Capital Cities at War: Paris, London, Berlin 1914-1919*, which has produced two volumes, the first on social and economic history, published by Cambridge University in 1997, and the second published by Cambridge in 2007. *A Cultural History* (with Jean-Louis Robert). Work in preparation includes 'The Degeneration of War,' 'The Social Construction of Silence,' and 'Anxious futures: population politics in the 21st century.'

Jay Winter was co-producer, co-writer and chief historian for the PBS series "The Great War and the Shaping of the 20th Century," which won an Emmy Award, a Peabody Award and a Producers Guild of America Award for best television documentary in 1997.

Winter earned his BA from Columbia University and his PhD and DLitt degrees from Cambridge University. He taught at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, the University of Warwick and the University of Cambridge before joining the faculty of Columbia University in 2000 and then the Yale faculty one year later. At Yale, his courses include lectures on Europe in the age of total war, and on modern British history, as well as seminars on history and memory and European identities.

## GUEST SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

---

### **Professor Annette Becker**

Annette Becker is professor of history at the University Paris Ouest Nanterre La defense, and senior member of the Institut Universitaire de France. She specializes in the study of the First World War and its cultural representations. She is co-author, with Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau, of *Understanding the Great the War*, in which they advance an interpretation of war culture as a dialectic between suffering and consent, through which the First World War, with its acculturation to violence, became the paradigmatic event of the twentieth century.

Annette Becker has continued her research focusing on contemporary intellectuals in the Great War, like Maurice Halbwachs, Marc Bloch, and Guillaume Apollinaire. In all three cases, her approach has been to examine an extraordinary figure in the Great War and illustrate how ordinary human beings in the throes of conflict, whether combatant or civilian, are witnesses to the intellectual, cultural, and artistic traumas that beset societies at war.

Her recent book, *Apollinaire: A War Biography*, emphasizes particularly the impact of the First World War on the arts and highlights the place and meaning of the trauma experienced during and after the war. For this book, Annette Becker received the 2010 l'Académie Française award for biography. Since the 1990s, Annette Becker has broadened her research, particularly developing the study of trauma, genocide and extreme violence against civilians, and the challenges of memorializing war.

### **Professor Martin Jay**

Martin Jay is the Sidney Hellman Ehrman Professor of History at the University of California, Berkeley. He is a renowned intellectual historian and his research interests have been groundbreaking in connecting history with other academic and intellectual activities, such as the Critical Theory of the Frankfurt School, other figures and methods in continental Social Theory, Cultural Criticism, and Historiography among many others.

He received his B.A from Union College in 1965. In 1971, he completed his Ph.D. in History at Harvard under the tutelage of H. Stuart Hughes. His dissertation was later revised into the book *The Dialectical Imagination*, which covers the history of the Frankfurt School from 1923-1950. While he was conducting research for his dissertation, he established a correspondence and friendship with many of the members of the Frankfurt School. He was closest to Leo Löwenthal who had provided him access to personal letters and documents that were crucial to Jay's research (Löwenthal would later chair the Sociology department at Berkeley). His book on the Frankfurt School of Social Research is a classic in the field of intellectual history. His work since then continued to explore the many nuances of Marxism/Socialism, as well as exploring new territory in historiography and cultural criticism, visual culture, and the place of Post-Structuralism/Post-Modernism in European intellectual history. His current research is on Lying in Politics. He is a recipient of the 2010/2011 Berlin Prize Fellowship from the American Academy in Berlin.