

## Humanities – what’s next? | New York City | June 8–9, 2017

organized by Freie Universität Berlin  
under the auspices of the sponsorship program “Research Alumni Meetings Abroad”  
administered by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation  
and funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research

### Program

#### Thursday, June 8, 2017

- 5.00 pm Registration
- 5.30 pm *Welcome & Introduction by the Hosting Institutions*  
Claudia Olk, Dean of the Department of Philosophy and Humanities, Freie Universität and  
Cathleen Fisher, American Friends of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation
- 5.45 pm *„Academic Speed Dating“*  
Talk about your research in 3 minutes and learn more about the interests of other participants
- 6.30 pm Dinner and *Keynote*  
*Do the Humanities Matter? The Importance of Humanities to Our Society*  
Homi K. Bhabha, Harvard University

#### Friday, June 9, 2017

- 9.00 am *Research in Germany – Characteristics, Funding Opportunities, and International Cooperation*  
Presentation by Cathleen Fisher, American Friends of the Alexander von Humboldt  
Foundation, Katharina Niesert, German Research Foundation (DFG) and  
Gerrit Rößler, German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD),  
moderated by Katja Simons, Freie Universität Liaison Office New York
- 10.00 am *Humanities – What’s Next? Current Research Trends and Issues*  
Round table discussion with opening statements by  
1) Irene Kacandes, Dartmouth College  
2) Beatrice Gründler, Freie Universität Berlin  
Chair: Eric Banks, New York Institute for the Humanities at NYU
- 11.15 am Coffee Break
- 11.45 am *Humanities – Under Threat? German and U.S. Perspectives*  
Round table discussion with opening statements by  
1) Noah Isenberg, The New School  
2) Claudia Olk, Freie Universität Berlin  
Chair: Herbert Grieshop, Freie Universität Berlin
- 1.00 pm Wrap-Up Session
- 1.15 pm Lunch and Farewell

The meeting is a constituent part of the collaborative project “International Research Marketing” which is a joint initiative by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, the German Academic Exchange Service, the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft and the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft. All the activities within the project are part of the “Promote Innovation and Research in Germany” initiative under its brand “Research in Germany”. The initiative is funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research.

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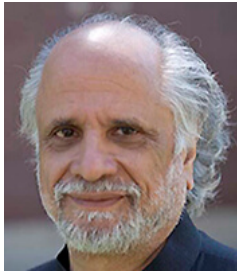


Federal Ministry  
of Education  
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## About the conference

Guest researchers and their counterparts from Freie Universität as well as junior researchers from their teams and Freie Universität alumni working in research and teaching, are invited to join this event to discuss current issues in the humanities in North America and Germany. The conference aims at facilitating exchange between researchers across the humanities and seeks to promote transatlantic research networks.

## Speaker Profiles



**Homi K. Bhabha**

(D.Phil. English Literature, Christ Church, Oxford, 1990) is the Anne F. Rothenberg Professor of English and American Literature and Language and the Director of the Mahindra Humanities Center at Harvard University. He also serves as the Senior Advisor on the Humanities to the President and Provost at Harvard. Bhabha is the author of numerous works exploring postcolonial theory, cultural change and power, and cosmopolitanism, among other themes. Some of his works include *Nation and Narration* and *The Location of Culture*, which was reprinted as a Routledge Classic in 2004. His forthcoming works are *On Art, A Global Measure*, and *The Right to Narrate*. In 2012 he was conferred the Government of India's Padma Bhushan Presidential Award in the field of literature and education, and received the Humboldt Research Prize in 2016.



**Irene Kacandes**

(Ph.D. Comparative Literature, Harvard University, 1991) is The Dartmouth Professor of German and Comparative Literature and former Chair of the Department of German Studies at Dartmouth College as well as former President of the German Studies Association. Specializing in narrative theory, cultural studies, and life writing, she has written articles concerning orality and literacy, feminist linguistics, trauma and memory studies, the Holocaust and Holocaust memoir, and experimental memoirs. Among other projects, Kacandes runs a book series on "Interdisciplinary German Cultural Studies" published by de Gruyter Verlag in Berlin. Her current research concerns narrative medicine and medical humanities.



**Beatrice Gründler**

(Ph.D. Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Harvard University, 1995) is Professor and Chair for Arabic language and literature at Freie Universität Berlin. She has previously held positions at Dartmouth College as well as Yale University and has been a fellow of the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin and the Whitney Humanities Center, Yale University. Since 2016, she has served as the President of the American Oriental Society (AOS). Her research interests include the development of the Arabic script, classical Arabic poetry and its social context, the integration of modern literary theory into the study of Near Eastern literatures, and early Islamic book-culture viewed from the perspective of media history. In 2017, Gründler received a Leibniz Prize for her studies on the diversity of voices in Arabic poetry and culture.



**Noah Isenberg**

(Ph.D. German Studies, University of California at Berkeley, 1995) is Professor of Culture and Media at the New School's Eugene Lang College of Liberal Arts, in New York City, where he also directs the Screen Studies program. He has been awarded grants and fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), the Austrian Fulbright Commission, the International Research Center for Cultural Studies (IFK) in Vienna, and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, among others. Isenberg is a fellow at the New York Institute for the Humanities and, most recently, received a 2015-2016 NEH Public Scholar award. His most recent book published in February 2017, is *We'll Always Have Casablanca: The Life, Legend, and Afterlife of Hollywood's Most Beloved Movie*.



**Claudia Olk**

(Dr. phil. Literature, University of Münster, 1999) is Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Peter Szondi Institute at Freie Universität Berlin and Dean of the Department of Philosophy and Humanities of Freie Universität. She has served as president of the German Shakespeare Association since 2014. In the past, Olk has received an honorary fellowship from University College London as well as Fulbright Fellowships for Amherst College and Harvard University. She has also worked as a guest lecturer at Università Ca' Foscari in Venice. Her research interests are the aesthetics and poetics from antiquity to modern times, comparative studies of the arts as well as of English literature and culture from the Middle Ages to the early modern period.