Whether we are handy or not, we are all builders of homes — making places of comfort, belonging, and privacy. More than any specific space, home is an idea and experience. And yet “home” remains rooted in networks of local meaning, shaped by economic opportunity, and bounded by national and international histories and politics. This semester, we will explore the universal aspects of home, even as we interrogate the specific contexts and circumstances that impart its public and private meanings.
Home may refer to a space, a community, a city, or a nation. It can be a respite from the demands of school and work or a site of tremendous responsibility. For some of us, the experience of home is elusive or even aspirational. For others, it is a feeling that we carry with us wherever we go. Where do you feel “at home” and what does that truly mean? This question will encourage us to reflect on the many meanings of home during a dialogue facilitated by Amy Richter, Director of the Higgins School.

Thursday, September 15 @ 7pm
Higgins Lounge at Dana Commons

Sponsored by the Higgins School of Humanities and Difficult Dialogues
Think Small

Is the American dream house shrinking?

If so, designer and builder Derek “Deek” Diedricksen is helping to lead the way. His artistic and functional micro-shelters — with names like “Hicksaw,” “Boxy Lady,” and “Gypsy Junker”— challenge conventional assumptions about the American home and consumerism with humor, thrift, and imagination.

In this presentation, Diedricksen will share examples of his work and discuss how living small and “building outside the box” save money and time, especially by using salvaged and recycled materials to reimagine the meaning and dimensions of home. We are excited to bring one of Diedricksen’s micro-shelters to the Alden Quad at Clark University for the 2016–17 academic year. Contact the Higgins School of Humanities to set up a showing.

Thursday, September 22 @ 7pm
Higgins Lounge at Dana Commons

Co-sponsored by the Higgins School of Humanities, the Graduate School of Geography, Sustainable Clark, and the Urban Development and Social Change Program
Dialogues with Mother Earth

THE MURALS

Can we envision the potentially apocalyptic results of human activity, consumption, growth, and conflict?

In her monumental mural cycle titled *Dialogues with Mother Earth*, artist Erica Daborn depicts our interconnectedness and mutual fate as citizens of a shared planet—a finite, fragile, and ever-changing “home” whose sanctity has never felt more threatened.

On display in the Schiltkamp Gallery and the Higgins Lounge at Dana Commons through November 17.

Opening Reception and Gallery Dialogue

**Wednesday, September 28 @ 4pm**
Schiltkamp Gallery, Traina Center

Artist Presentation

**Thursday, September 29 @ 12pm**
Higgins Lounge at Dana Commons

Co-sponsored by the Higgins School of Humanities, the Schiltkamp Gallery, and the Department of Visual and Performing Arts

Image: *Seeking Higher Ground*, Erica Daborn
In Lose Your Mother (2008), Columbia University professor Saidiya Hartman traces the history of the Atlantic slave trade and recounts her own journey along a slave route in Ghana.

Tuesday, October 4 @ 7pm
Higgins Lounge at Dana Commons
Co-sponsored by the Higgins School of Humanities, the Office of the Provost, the Bland-Lee Fund of the Department of History, and the Africana Studies Program

Following the trail of captives from the hinterland to the Atlantic coast, Hartman reckons with the blank slate of her own genealogy and vividly dramatizes the effects of slavery on three centuries of African and African American history. The slave, she observes, is a stranger — torn from family, home, and country. To lose your mother is to be severed from your kin, to forget your past, and to inhabit the world as an outsider. Combining scholarship and memoir, Hartman asks, “What place in the world could sate four hundred years of yearning for a home?”
In this talk, research partners Anita Fábos (IDCE) and Cathrine Brun (Oxford Brookes University) will unsettle mainstream understandings of both refugees and home by rethinking common notions of home and home-making, mobility, displacement and belonging.

Drawing upon feminist theory, refugee studies, and the mobilities turn, Fábos and Brun will discuss the concept of “home” for people “out of place” as involving constellations of sites, relations of power, and discourses, connected through the small-scale daily practices of refugees themselves. By proposing that refugees are themselves unrecognized makers of history through strategies of mobility and home-making, they challenge the notion that exile and home-making are mutually exclusive and that refugee exile constitutes a “limbo” resolved only by going home.
Architecture of Fear

READINGS IN THE HIGGINS LOUNGE

The sound of unfamiliar footsteps, the chill of an inexplicably cold room, the sense that something or someone is lurking just out of sight. What could be scarier than a home that turns on its inhabitants—a failed sanctuary that knows how to fight back?

In celebration of Halloween, Professors Gino Dilorio (Theater), Jay Elliott (English), and Jennifer Plante (The Writing Center) will come together to read stories of haunted houses and domestic horror. Combining the beauty of language, the art of storytelling, and the desire for community, Readings in the Higgins Lounge continues to showcase the power and pleasure of the humanities.

Wednesday, October 26 @ 7pm
Higgins Lounge at Dana Commons

Sponsored by the Higgins School of Humanities
How are American imperial subjects constituted by the production of “home” and “away,” “immigrant” and “native”?

Home in the “Exceptional” American Security State

What is the work of American “exceptionalism” in maintaining US power?

This familiar question gains fresh urgency as neoliberal capitalism is increasingly naturalized across the world and Wars on Terror generate global reverberations and instabilities. In this talk, Yale University professor Inderpal Grewal will examine “advanced neoliberalism” in its American specificities. How are American imperial subjects constituted by the production of “home” and “away,” “immigrant” and “native”? What is the relationship between these constructs and the making and marketing of digital technologies of surveillance and insecurity? Using a postcolonial and feminist approach, Grewal will call out the interplay between militarized surveillance and humanitarian projects in the new century.
Demand for fresh, locally-grown food close to urban centers is increasing. And although farming in or near cities can be challenging, it is worth the effort. Training limited-resource individuals in small-scale commercial agriculture preserves farmland and expands consumer access to locally-grown foods. Jennifer Hashley, Director of the New Entry Sustainable Farming Project at Tufts University’s Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy, will present her strategies for raising the next generation of environmentally responsible farmers with the knowledge, skills, and capacity to produce food so many of us desire.

Wednesday, November 9 @ 7pm
Higgins Lounge at Dana Commons

Co-sponsored by the Higgins School of Humanities, the Department of Economics, and the George Perkins Marsh Institute
Sociologist Matthew Desmond’s groundbreaking book *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City* (2016) follows tenants and landlords swept up in the process of eviction. Affirming the centrality of home, his work offers new insights into the fundamental role housing plays in deepening inequality in America. Desmond, Associate Professor of the Social Sciences at Harvard University, will draw on urban reportage and original statistical data to show that eviction is a cause, not just a condition, of poverty and that the faces of America’s eviction epidemic belong to mothers and children.
NO PLACE LIKE IT?

THINK SMALL

DIALOGUES WITH MOTHER EARTH

LOSE YOUR MOTHER

MOBILIZING HOME TO RETHINK REFUGEE EXILE

ARCHITECTURE OF FEAR

September

October

November

symposium at a glance

HOME IN THE “EXCEPTIONAL” AMERICAN SECURITY STATE

HOME GROWN

EVICTED
ROOTS OF EVERYTHING SERIES

Is Theater Good for the Soul?

Ongoing rancorous fights about public funding of the arts hinge on the question of their value to the individual and society at large.

Thursday, November 17 @ 4:30pm
Higgins Lounge at Dana Commons

Co-sponsored by the Higgins School of Humanities, Early Modernists Unite, the Bland-Lee Fund of the Department of History, and the Chester Bland Fund of the Department of Political Science

The debate is not new. In this talk, Vickie Sullivan, Professor of Political Science at Tufts University, will draw on the writings of eighteenth-century thinkers Rousseau and Montesquieu to examine their views on the dangers and benefits of the theater, particularly with regard to the role of women in society. Clark University professor Kristina Wilson (Art History) will offer commentary.

The Roots of Everything is a lecture series sponsored by Early Modernists Unite (EMU) — a faculty collaborative bringing together scholars of medieval and early modern Europe and America — in conjunction with the Higgins School of Humanities. The series highlights various aspects of modern existence originating in the early modern world and teases out connections between past and present.
The Higgins School of Humanities affirms the centrality of the arts and humanities to our lives and the values of a liberal arts education. It supports teaching and research through its grant programs and sponsors public events and campus initiatives, enhancing the intellectual and cultural life of the Clark community.

All events are free and open to the public. All information subject to change.

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR YOUR SUPPORT Visit clarkconnect.clarku.edu/make-a-gift. Please select designation “Other” and direct your contributions to the Higgins School of Humanities.