

## Kansas Humanities Council Picturing America Speakers Bureau

“Great art speaks powerfully, inspires fresh thinking, and connects us to our past.” Picturing America, <http://picturingamerica.neh.gov/>.

In conjunction with the National Endowment for Humanities initiative, Picturing America, the Kansas Humanities Council offers a Speakers Bureau exploring the art and artists that shaped, and were shaped by, Kansas. From the famous, to the “outsiders,” these presentations explore our rich artistic heritage and timeless Kansas themes, such as our relationship with the land and the impact of individuals and groups of people on society.

The Picturing America Speakers Bureau is available free to all Kansas communities. To book your Speakers Bureau, contact the speaker directly to confirm their availability, then fill out the [booking request form](#). (Clicking on “booking request form” will download a pdf file for you to print off-line.)

If you have further questions, please visit the Kansas Humanities Council’s website at [www.kansashumanities.org](http://www.kansashumanities.org) or call Deborah Pomeroy at 785/357-0359.

### Picturing the Dust Bowl

Large and looming black clouds hovering above a Kansas farm produce a classic image of the Dust Bowl. What are others? This presentation uses paintings, photographs, and prints of the Dust Bowl as a way to explore early 20th century American attitudes toward nature and the environment, but also provide clues about the changing expectations for the future. Powerpoint. *Presented by: Kate Meyer, Curatorial Assistant in the Department of Prints and Drawings in the Spencer Museum of Art at the University of Kansas.*

Kate Meyer  
Spencer Museum of Art  
The University of Kansas  
1301 Mississippi  
Lawrence, KS 66045  
785/864-0128 (w); 785/550-2423 (h); [kmm0045@ku.edu](mailto:kmm0045@ku.edu)

### Birger Sandzen and the New Land

When Swedish born Birger Sandzen moved to Lindsborg, Kansas in 1894, his painting style gradually changed from one with a Swedish Romantic influence to one using bold colors and expressive brushwork. This presentation discusses Sandzen’s enormous contributions to arts and culture in Kansas and examines the development of his art, focusing on the influence of the regional landscape, particularly in Central and Western Kansas. Powerpoint. *Presented by: Ron Michael, curator of the Birger Sandzén Memorial Gallery in Lindsborg, Kansas.*

Ron Michael  
Birger Sandzén Memorial Gallery  
401 N. First Street  
PO Box 348  
Lindsborg, KS 67456  
785/227-2220 (w); 785/227-3679 (h); [fineart@sandzen.org](mailto:fineart@sandzen.org)

## **A Look Inside Outsider Art in Kansas**

Who were S.P. Dinsmoor and “Grandma” Layton? This presentation examines the abundance of art created by untrained artist (known as “Outsider Art”) produced in Kansas. Find out how the often-unexpected work of these grassroots artists reflects the creative, cultural, and political landscapes of our state. Slides or Powerpoint. *Presented by: Erika Nelson, independent artist and educator, and director of World’s Largest Things, Inc.*

Erika Nelson  
PO Box 101  
Lucas KS 67648-0101  
785/525-6377 (h); [info@worldslargestthings.com](mailto:info@worldslargestthings.com)

## **The Rise of Aaron Douglas, the Dean of Black American Painters**

Graduating in 1917 from Topeka High, Aaron Douglas quickly became a significant player in the Harlem Renaissance. How did Douglas’s Kansas roots influence his commitment to painting “everyday people” and depicting ideals such as hope and opportunity? This presentation examines Douglas’s Midwest roots, the highlights from his Harlem days, and his lasting contributions as a leader, a teacher, and an artist. Powerpoint. *Presented by: Cheryl Ragar, assistant professor in American Ethnic Studies at Kansas State University.*

Cheryl Ragar  
Kansas State University  
American Ethnic Studies  
3 Leisure Hall  
Manhattan, KS 66506  
785/532-6934 (w); [cragar@ksu.edu](mailto:cragar@ksu.edu)

## **Women’s Clubs and the Fine Arts in Kansas**

Between the 1920s and the 1960s, the Kansas Federation of Women’s Clubs conducted many programs to promote the visual arts as a “civilizing” force in Kansas society. This presentation explains how women’s clubs had a significant impact on art appreciation, art collecting, and amateur artistic activity, helping to create a dynamic artistic culture in Kansas in the twentieth century. Powerpoint. *Presented by: William Tsutsui, professor of history and associate dean for International Studies at the University of Kansas.*

William M. Tsutsui  
Office of the Dean, College of Liberal Arts & Sciences  
The University of Kansas  
200 Strong Hall, 1450 Jayhawk Blvd.  
Lawrence, Kansas 66045-7535  
785/864-3661 (w); [btutsui@ku.edu](mailto:btutsui@ku.edu)

## **Exploring the Rich Heritage of Kansas Art**

Kansas boasts a long, vibrant, and diverse history of art, filled with debates, contestations, and drama. This presentation explores the big names (Sandzen and Curry to name a few) and the lesser-known artists of Kansas' visual art community. Powerpoint. *Presented by: William Tsutsui, professor of history and associate dean for International Studies at the University of Kansas.*

William M. Tsutsui  
Office of the Dean, College of Liberal Arts & Sciences  
The University of Kansas  
200 Strong Hall, 1450 Jayhawk Blvd.  
Lawrence, Kansas 66045-7535  
785/864-3661 (w); [btsutsui@ku.edu](mailto:btsutsui@ku.edu)