On behalf of the Vagantes Board of Directors, we are delighted to welcome you to Rice University and to the 15th annual Vagantes Conference on Medieval Studies. We are excited to feature 27 student presenters from 19 institutions from across the U.S. and Canada. It is our great pleasure to have as our keynote speakers Dr. Amy Mulligan from the University of Notre Dame and Dr. Diane Wolfthal from Rice University. Thanks to generous support from the Menil Collection, we are honored to have Dr. Annemarie Weyl Carr join us to give a talk and tour of the remarkable Byzantine icons on display in the collection. To help us capture the Vagantes spirit at Rice, we invite you to post on our Facebook wall and use our Twitter hashtag (#Vagantes2016) throughout the conference. We wish to thank each of you for attending our conference and for bringing your expertise to our gathering. It is our hope that you will find the conference and your stay in Houston inspiring and enjoyable.

Kyle G. Sweeney and Carolyn Van Wingerden
Vagantes 2016 Co-directors
About the Vagantes Conference
Established in 2002, Vagantes is North America’s largest and most successful medieval studies conference for graduate students. The vagantes were those medieval clergy, students, and minstrels who adopted the nomadic life. Their wandering spirit is the inspiration for our conference, which moves to a different North American university or college each year, highlighting the unique resources of the host institution through keynote lectures, exhibitions, and special events. Since its founding, Vagantes has nurtured a lively community of junior scholars from across the disciplines. Every conference features roughly thirty papers on any aspect of medieval studies, allowing for exciting interdisciplinary conversation and the creation of new professional relationships between future colleagues. Out of consideration for graduate students’ limited budgets, Vagantes never charges a registration fee.

About Rice University
Located on a 300-acre tree-lined campus in Houston, Rice University is consistently ranked among the nation’s top 20 universities by U.S. News & World Report. With a graduate population of approximately 2,700, Rice’s graduate programs are large enough to offer research topics in several important areas of study, but small enough to offer close personal contact between faculty and students. Our graduate students come to Rice from a wide variety of academic disciplines, cultural and ethnic backgrounds, and from 50 states and more than 82 countries.

The Menil Collection with Annemarie Weyl Carr
A legacy of the late philanthropists John and Dominique de Menil, the Menil Collection opened to the public in 1987. Housed in the first United States building designed by the Italian architect Renzo Piano, the main museum anchors a thirty-acre “neighborhood of art,” as the late architectural historian Reyner Banham described the Menil campus. Byzantine art and artifacts make up the most significant pre-20th-century holdings within the Menil Collection. In 1964, the Menil Foundation acquired a carefully assembled collection of more than 800 small objects of the sort commonly found in the everyday commerce and piety of medieval Byzantium—stamps, seals, rings, keys, and buckles—from a noted dealer of antiquities and African and Asian art, J. J. Klejman. Today, the Byzantine collection includes over 1,000 of these everyday items, in addition to its collection of icons, which is widely regarded by scholars in the field as one of the most important in the United States. The Menil’s icon holdings span 1,200 years, from the 6th to the 18th centuries, and encompass a number of distinct cultures, including Greek, Balkan, and Russian, representing the history and reach of the Orthodox Church. The breadth and quality of the collection embody the ambitions and the values, both aesthetic and spiritual, that guided John and Dominique de Menil throughout their lives as collectors.
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18

11:00  Registration opens  Lovett Lounge, Fondren Library, 3rd floor
Participants may pick up their registration materials at any time during the conference.

1:00 – 1:15  Welcome and introductory remarks
Kyle Morrow Room, Fondren Library, 3rd floor

1:15 – 2:45  Panel 1: Kinetic Experience and Liminal Spaces
Kyle Morrow Room, Fondren Library, 3rd floor
Chair: Kyle G. Sweeney, Rice University
• “Structuring Experience: The Architecture and Murals of the Moldavian Katholika in Dialogue”
  Alice Isabella Sullivan, History of Art, University of Michigan
• “Serpents and Dragons as Portal Keepers: Viking Era Picture Stones as Doors to Other Worlds”
  Chelsea Dacus, Art History, Rice University
• “A Corporibus Obessis: Possession and the Body in Gregory of Tours’ Vita patrum”
  Kristen Herdman, World Literature, Case Western Reserve University

2:45 – 3:00  Coffee Break  Lovett Lounge, Fondren Library, 3rd floor

3:00 – 4:30  Panel 2: Questioning Political and Social Experiences
Kyle Morrow Room, Fondren Library, 3rd floor
Chair: José Candelaria, Rice University
• “Understanding the Byzantine οἶχος: A Model of Popular Action in Eleventh-Century Constantinople”
  Felege-Salem Yirga, History, The Ohio State University
• “Turbans, Foreigners, and Others: How the Sculptures at Medieval Town Halls in Flanders Reveal More than One Might Expect”
  Carolyn Van Wingerden, Art History, Rice University
• “Laughing at the Park of Hesdin”
  Scott Miller, Art History, Northwestern University

4:30 – 5:00  Coffee Break  Lovett Lounge, Fondren Library, 3rd floor

5:00 – 6:00  Visiting Keynote Speaker
Kyle Morrow Room, Fondren Library, 3rd floor
Dr. Amy Mulligan, Keough-Naughton Institute for Irish Studies, University of Notre Dame
“Walking and Talking Place with St. Patrick: Ireland’s National, Natural Pilgrimage”

6:00 – 8:00  Exhibition Opening and Reception
Lovett Lounge, Fondren Library, 3rd floor
José Candelaria and Ingrid Seyb

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 19

8:45 – 9:15  Breakfast & Registration  Lovett Lounge, Fondren Library, 3rd floor

Kyle Morrow Room, Fondren Library, 3rd floor
Chair: Natasha Mao, Rice University
• “Ic ne mæg me Þe geswutelian’: Show and Tell in the Old English Life of Mary of Egypt”
  Meg Gregory, English, Illinois State University
• “His wife has prepared herself: The Vita Angelica, Virginity, and Embodiment in ‘Holy Maidhood”
  Nathan John Haydon, English, University of Arkansas
• “Evoking Emotions: Sorrow, Compassion, and the Suffering Body of Elisabeth of Spalbeek”
  Mary Anne Gonzales, History, University of Guelph

10:45 – 11:00  Coffee Break  Lovett Lounge, Fondren Library, 3rd floor

11:00 – 12:30  Panel 4: Gender, Power, and Authority
Kyle Morrow Room, Fondren Library, 3rd floor
Chair: John W. Ellis-Etchison, Rice University
• “The Power to Lead and the Power to Damn: Cynewulf’s Elene as Anglo-Saxon Abbess”
  Erin Zoutendam, Theological Studies, Calvin Theological Seminary
• “Agents of Justice: Female Plaintiffs in the King’s Court in Thirteenth- and Fourteenth-Century England”
  J. Savannah Shipman, History, Western Michigan University
• “Weapons of Wine: Eleventh-Century Norman Women and the Use of Food-Based Poison”
  Crescida Elizabeth Jacobs, History, University of Houston

12:30 – 1:30  Lunch break in Ley Student Center and Vagantes Board of Directors Meeting

1:30 – 3:00  Panel 5: Environment, Landscape, and Nature
Kyle Morrow Room, Fondren Library, 3rd floor
Chair: Lindsay E. Sherrier, Rice University
• “The Topography of Conversion: Holy Heights in the Anglo-Saxon Imagination”
  Maj-Britt Frenze, Medieval Institute, University of Notre Dame
• “Verdiers d’amor: Nature and Culture in the Troubadour Albas”
  Anne V. A. Malcolm, English, The Ohio State University
• “Mapping Change: Contextualizing the Vercelli Mappa Mundi”
  Helen Davies, English, University of Mississippi
3:00 – 3:15 Coffee Break Lovett Lounge, Fondren Library, 3rd floor
3:15 – 3:30 Rice shuttle from campus to the Menil Collection
1533 Sul Ross St, Houston, TX 77006
3:30 – 5:45 Byzantine Icons in the Menil Collection with Dr. Annemarie Weyl Carr Menil Collection
Dr. Annemarie Weyl Carr, Department of Art History, Southern Methodist University
“Pursuing the Life of Icons”
5:45 – 6:00 Rice shuttle from the Menil Collection to Simone on Sunset and the Rice campus
6:00 – 9:00 Happy Hour and Small Bites for student presenters and Vagantes organizers
Simone on Sunset, 2418 Sunset Blvd, Houston, TX 77005

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20
8:45 – 9:15 Breakfast & Registration
Lovett Lounge, Fondren Library, 3rd floor

9:15 – 10:45 Panel 6: Convergence, Causality, and Condemnation
Kyle Morrow Room, Fondren Library, 3rd floor
Chair: Helen Davies, University of Mississippi
• “From Isidore to Erkenwald: The Life of a Literary Trope”
  Brian Cook, English, University of Mississippi
• “Avicennian Existential Causality”
  Catherine Peters, Philosophy, Center for Thomistic Studies, University of St. Thomas
• “The Condemned Prince in the Last Judgment Scene of the Bamberg Apocalypse”
  Roland Black, Medieval Institute, Western Michigan University

11:00 – 12:30 Panel 7: Challenging the Discourse
Kyle Morrow Room, Fondren Library, 3rd floor
Chair: Chelsea Dacus, Rice University
• “Constructing the Middle Ages: Medievalism and the Votivkirche in Vienna”
  Teresa A. Klimer, Art History, Oklahoma State University
• “Self-fashioning and Legacy in Petrarch’s Political Letters”
  Vanessa DiMaggio, Italian Studies, University of Pennsylvania
• “Gundulf the Builder: Prolific Administrator or Educated Architect?”
  Thomas Barrows, History, University of Houston

12:30 – 1:30 Lunch/Round Table at the Rice Center for Teaching Excellence
Herring Hall 129

Dr. Joshua R. Eyler, Director, Rice Center for Teaching Excellence
“Teaching the Middle Ages”
What does it mean to teach the languages, texts, and cultures of the Middle Ages, and how do we know that our students are learning what we hope to teach them? This interactive workshop will begin by addressing participants’ own goals for teaching in their respective disciplines. From there, we will survey some of the most recent scholarship on teaching and learning and discuss the ways in which this research is important to the work we do in our classrooms.

1:30 – 3:00 Panel 8: Conversations on Chaucer
Kyle Morrow Room, Fondren Library, 3rd floor
Chair: Meg Gregory, Illinois State University
• “Penance, Confession, and Feminized Loss: Chaucer & Gower’s translation amoris and Ovidian Exile”
  Caitlin Rose Brenner, English, Texas A&M University
• “Fraternal disOrder: Transgressing Ritual Narrative in Chaucer’s Troilus and Criseyde”
  Kaithn Lorraine Browne, Literature, Eastern Michigan University
• “‘Dreaming While Awake: The Reading Experience in Chaucer’s Prologue to The Legend of the Good Woman’”
  Suzanne Tanner, English, University of Houston

3:00 – 3:15 Coffee Break Lovett Lounge, Fondren Library, 3rd floor

Kyle Morrow Room, Fondren Library, 3rd floor
Chair: Carolyn Van Wingerden, Rice University
• “Syncretic Serpents: Snakes as Syncretic Images in Old Norse Literary and Material Culture”
  Sharon Wofford, English, University of Mississippi
• “And the Sun Stood Still, and the Moon Stayed: Parallel Causation in the Song of Roland and the Book of Joshua”
  Annie Doucet, French Studies, Tulane University
• “Beastly Women: Monstrous Females in Medieval Storytelling”
  Michaela Baca, English, Texas A&M University

4:45 – 5:00 Coffee Break

5:00 – 6:00 Rice Keynote Speaker
Humanities Building 117
Dr. Diane Wolfthal, Department of Art History, Rice University
“Images of Servants: The Late Medieval Aristocratic Ideal and its Alternatives”

6:00 — 9:15 Final Banquet Celebration catered by Goode Company Barbeque
Lee & Joe Jamail Courtyard and Humanities Building
Keynote Speakers

Dr. Amy Mulligan
Assistant Professor of Irish Language and Literature, Fellow of the Medieval Institute, and Fellow of the Keough-Naughton Institute for Irish Studies at University of Notre Dame

“Walking and Talking Place with St. Patrick; Ireland’s National, Natural Pilgrimage”

The early 13th c. Acallam na Senórach (‘Conversation of the Elders’), medieval Ireland’s longest text, fuses the literature of place and pilgrimage to technologies of national imagining. Set in the 5th century, St. Patrick meets a pagan warrior from long ago, Caille, and the two unlikely companions journey together through Ireland, Caille regaling Patrick with stories prompted by the sites they visit and his emotional reactions to the heroic events enacted there. Patrick, at the behest of two angels, has his scribe record these accounts; the resulting text is a reimagined Irish topography merging sacred and secular. In the Acallam’s construction of Irish space, an Ireland composed of green, wild, watery, outdoor spaces is privileged, with a geospacial poetics also deployed to ‘naturalize’ Patrick. His actions show an increasingly harmonious relationship with Ireland’s natural environment, and the British-born foreigner is by the end of the text embraced as Ireland’s patron saint. Patrick’s deeds culminate in his composition of Irish-language topographical poems: he becomes a saintly practitioner of the Irish poetics of place and potentially models how Norman colonizers ought to behave in Ireland. The Acallam offers a uniquely Irish version of sacred-secular pilgrimage, one in which contemplative travel through Ireland’s storied landscape is a sanctifying process.

Amy Mulligan is Assistant Professor of Irish Language and Literature, Fellow of the Medieval Institute and Fellow of the Keough-Naughton Institute for Irish Studies at University of Notre Dame, where she teaches the literatures, languages and cultures of medieval Ireland, Britain, and Scandinavia, at undergraduate and postgraduate level. Her doctoral degree (D.Phil) from the University of Oxford was conferred in 2004. An overarching goal of her research program has been to put medieval Irish literature into transnational contexts and to demonstrate how Irish texts inform and are informed by other North Sea literary traditions. She has also written about poets and political literary myths, gender, sovereignty and depictions of the body politic, bodily non-normativity, and the role of geography in Irish and Icelandic narratives. Her work has been published in Speculum, Journal of English and Germanic Philology, Studies in Philology (forthcoming), Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies, Eolas and Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium, and she has published essays in Norman Tradition and Transcultural Heritage and Constructing Gender in Medieval Ireland. She is also co-editing (with Else Mundal) a collection titled Moving Words: Literacies, Texts and Verbal Communities of the Nordic Middle Ages (under review with Brepols). Her current project, A Landscape of Words: Ireland, Britain and the Poetics of Irish Space from 700-1300, has just been awarded a NEH fellowship for 2016-2017.

Dr. Annemarie Weyl Carr
University Distinguished Professor of Art History Emerita at Southern Methodist University

“Pursuing the Life of Icons”

In 1985, Dominique de Menil acquired, and so preserved as a whole, a remarkable collection of icons, the holy images of Orthodox Christianity. It was distinguished by its very high quality and by the fact that it included not only Russian and Balkan works but icons from Byzantium itself, the late Antique empire that originated the Orthodox religious tradition and with it the practice of icons. Byzantine icons are extremely rare today; the Menil houses one of the finest collections outside of the Orthodox world. Religious instruments governed by tradition rather than individual expression, icons have not traditionally been regarded as museum objects. Already in the early 20th century, however, modernist painters’ fascination with the abstraction of Russian icons drew art-lovers’ attention to icons. The mid-century interest in spirituality and art in which Dominique de Menil played such a strong role reinforced this attention. The recent post-modern interest in the power of images has precipitated a yet far broader and more probing analysis of icons and the ways in which their painters manipulated image types, materials, surrounding spaces, and light to command attention, imprint the memory, and burrow into patterns of thought. Drawing on the Menil Collection’s exceptional opportunity to observe the genesis and maturation of the icon as well as its long later evolution in Russia, the presentation will ask both how icons have looked and how they have been seen by artists of our day.

Annemarie Weyl Carr, University Distinguished Professor of Art History Emerita at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas, has worked on the history of Middle Byzantine art, especially manuscripts; on art and issues of cultural interchange in the eastern Mediterranean Levant in the era of the Crusades, above all on the island of Cyprus; and on women artists in the Middle Ages. She is currently studying the life of icons after Byzantium. She has written Byzantine Illumination, 1150-1250: The Study of a Provincial Tradition (1987), A Masterpiece of Byzantine Art Recov...
Marginalizes ordinary servants, who are generally shown as submissive and subservient boys. Then it will explore two alternatives ideals. The first, holy servitude, depicts Christ as a household servant, which sanctifies that role. The second expresses a mercantile ideal. As capitalism develops and merchants begin commissioning images, a new model emerges of the servant as a dignified adult who stands at center stage, without his master, and whose labor is valued. Medieval servants belong to a shifting, unstable category, and the rich contradictions in images of them can be explained both by the disparate viewpoints of patrons and by the fundamental economic changes that were slowly transforming the conception of the domestic worker from a childlike subordinate into an independent adult.

Diane Wolfthal is David and Caroline Minter Chair in the Humanities and Professor of Art History at Rice University. Her interests include feminist and gender studies, Jewish Studies, the history of sexuality, technical art history, and the study of the intersection of money, values, and culture. She has authored books on rape, the intersection of space and sexuality, Yiddish book illustration, and beginnings of Flemish canvas painting. Her article “Complicating Medieval Anti-Semitism: The Role of Class in Two Tales of Christian Attacks on Innocent Jews,” will appear in the Spring 2016 issue of Gesta. Her major current project is a book titled Household Help: Servants and Slaves in Europe and its Colonies, for which she was awarded grants from the Yale Center for British Art and the Getty Research Institute.
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Thank you to our abstract readers and evaluators:
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At the University of Notre Dame: Mimi Ensley, Marjorie Housely, and Andrew Klein

Special Thanks
Vagantes 2016 is made possible by the tireless efforts of many volunteers, too many to include in this program. The organizers would like to give our hearty thanks to all who have helped out, whether by staffing tables, acting as guides, hosting out-of-town guests, helping with set-up and clean-up, etc. Your help has made all the difference! We are particularly indebted to the following folks for their extraordinary assistance:

Thien D. Le, Center and Events Coordinator, Center for Critical and Cultural Theory, Rice University
Kristina McDonald, Graduate Program Administrator, School of Humanities, Rice University
Saint Arnold Brewing Company

Food & Drinks Directory in West University

Sweet Paris Creperie & Cafe
2420 Rice Boulevard

Mi Luna
2441 University Boulevard

Goode Company Barbeque
5109 Kirby Drive

Shiva Indian
2514 Times Boulevard

Benjy’s
2424 Dunstan Road

Hungry’s
2356 Rice Boulevard

Black Walnut Cafe
5510 Morningside Drive

The Ginger Man
5607 Morningside Drive

The Raven Grill
1916 Bissonnet Street

Local Foods
2424 Dunstan Road
The Vagantes Conference on Medieval Studies at the University of Notre Dame
In 2017 the sixteenth annual meeting of the Vagantes Conference on Medieval Studies will be held at the University of Notre Dame on March 9-12. We hope to see you there!

Host the Vagantes Conference on Medieval Studies at your school in 2018
The Vagantes Conference on Medieval Studies is now accepting applications for our 2018 host institution. Vagantes is a unique opportunity to showcase the Medieval Studies community at your institution, as well as to gain valuable professional development experience in planning and organizing the event, and to meet and interact with top medievalist graduate students.

Applications will be accepted until Wednesday, May 4, 2016 and will be reviewed by the Vagantes Board of Directors, comprised of eight medievalist graduate students.

Applications will be discussed at the Annual International Congress on Medieval Studies in Kalamazoo, MI, where the Board may have additional questions for the applicants before reaching a decision. E-mail submissions are required. See any current member of the Board for more information.