



VOLTAIRE *and the French Enlightenment*

OCTOBER 5 AND 6, 2007 HERBST THEATRE



Émilie du Châtelet

Voltaire and the Enlightenment

It would be nice to think that François-Marie Arouet's chosen pen name, Voltaire, had something to do with the high-voltage intellectual electricity running through his veins, but even though no one appears to know exactly why he chose "Voltaire" (which may be a partial anagram of his real name or perhaps a private joke), and even though Voltaire was a leading light of the Enlightenment, electricity had nothing to do with it.

Voltaire's pervasive influence on the eighteenth century's intellectual culture was instead due to his combination of clear thinking, humorous writing, and financially astute business and social skills. Quite often he was on excellent terms with the same aristocratic and

religious establishment figures whose privileges he criticized so effectively. Even those he deeply offended sometimes made sure that the times he spent in prison or exile were leniently administered.

In *Candide*, his famous assault on Gottfried Leibniz's "this is the best of all possible worlds" idea, Voltaire used memorable images to attack the self-satisfied conclusion that nothing had ever been better than the culture then being created in Europe. Although never a persuasive observation to those caught up in such heady emotions, Voltaire's firm insistence on thinking clearly, on not getting swept up in such feelings of superiority, still made him an Enlightenment icon. So much so that Rousseau's followers found it

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KEYNOTE ADDRESS

FRIDAY, 8:00 PM

Voltaire's Wager, by **KEITH BAKER**

As poet, playwright, philosopher, and pamphleteer, Voltaire defined and epitomized the new spirit of secular engagement with the world we know as the Enlightenment. Professor Baker will suggest the terms of his wager on humanity, the challenges it faced, and its long-term implications.

Humanities West welcomes Keynote Speaker **Keith Baker**, J.E. Wallace Sterling Professor in Humanities, and the Jean-Paul Gimon Director of the France-Stanford Center of Stanford University.

FEATURED SPEAKER

SATURDAY, 10:00 AM • **DAVID BODANIS**

Best-selling author and lecturer at Oxford University **David Bodanis** will start off Saturday morning's session by describing the great love affair of the Enlightenment, vividly described in his book *Passionate Minds*. Voltaire and his married mistress, Émilie du Châtelet, carried individual and intellectual freedom to their eighteenth-century heights. Mr. Bodanis's account of their passionately romantic, and passionately scientific, relationship over two decades brings to life, through many memorable vignettes, an exciting world of intellectual adventure set amidst the stagnation of the *ancien regime*.

For full program schedule, please turn to page 4.



DAVID BODANIS

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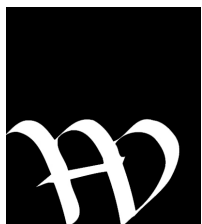
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Pierrette 925/687-8482**

WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Scott Huseby and George Hammond

Special thanks to **Roger Hahn** who has been a speaker and moderator for several Humanities West programs and will be back doing both this weekend. He has also been the academic advisor for *VOLTAIRE*.



HUMANITIES WEST

P.O. Box 546

San Francisco, Ca 94104

415/391-9700

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www.humanitieswest.org

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CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

WELCOME EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
PATRICIA LUNDBERG

Dear Friends of Humanities West:

Welcome to the new Humanities West 2007–08 Season. In my past year as your acting Executive Director, it has been my pleasure to work with the Board of Directors and many advisors to plan three programs that I trust you will find most satisfying.

You may have noticed a new name in our 07–08 Season letter to donors. Dr. Patricia Lundberg is an *emerita* professor of English from Indiana University Northwest, a former dean, and the former director of two Centers at the University. As of June 1, 2007, she is the Executive Director of Humanities West. I began working with Patti even before her start date and she has been working hard ever since.

The Board of Directors believes that Patti is the best person to lead us into our 25th year. We hope that you all will take the opportunity to meet her at one of the events related to our *VOLTAIRE and the French Enlightenment* program in October.

Best regards,

Judith B. Workman

Judith Workman

Chairman of the Board

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VOLTAIRE and the French Enlightenment
October 5–6, 2007

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February 22–23, 2008

ATHENS in the Time of Pericles
May 2–3, 2008

See order form on page 9

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends of Humanities West:

Perhaps more than once in a lifetime, if the stars align optimally, you find yourself in exactly the right place to serve your community and fulfill your own life's purpose. Like many Humanities West subscribers, I am a student and lifelong learner. I have been a medical publisher, a teacher and writer and administrator; a wife, mom and daughter; and now, advocate and facilitator for Humanities West as it moves into its second twenty-five years. None of my previous overlapping roles has enabled me to concentrate fully on arts and culture, to promote interdisciplinary arts and humanities, to grow creatively and intellectually while serving my community. I am grateful for and inspired by the extraordinary dedication of Judith Workman and the Humanities West Board of Directors.

This year's Season brings us three stellar programs:


VOLTAIRE and the French Enlightenment,
October 5–6, 2007

The Legacy of GENGHIS KHAN
February 22–23, 2008

ATHENS in its Golden Age, the Time of Pericles
May 2–3, 2008

Join us on October 5th and 6th for a journey to France in the eighteenth century to explore Voltaire and the French Enlightenment, its ideas, its writers, its art, and its music. Parisian François-Marie Arouet de Voltaire (1694–1778)—poet, playwright, novelist, essayist, wit, satirist, polemicist, and philosopher—was a deep thinker whose ideas still have currency in 2007. With French elections this summer, core ideas of the Enlightenment have come under renewed debate in French cafes, in Western salons, in American news analyses: is it better today in France to think or to do? Join us for a fascinating discussion.

Sincerely,


Patricia Lundberg, PhD
Executive Director

Humanities West Thanks New and Renewing Donors

From February 2007 through August 10, 2007

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HUMANITIES WEST PRESENTS

VOLTAIRE

and the French Enlightenment

Herbst Theatre, 401 Van Ness Avenue [At Mc Allister] Moderator: Roger Hahn, Professor Emeritus of History, University of California Berkeley

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2007

THE FRENCH ENLIGHTENMENT

8:00 pm *Keynote Address* **VOLTAIRE'S WAGER.** As poet, playwright, philosopher, and pamphleteer, Voltaire defined and epitomized the new spirit of secular engagement with the world we know as the Enlightenment. **KEITH M. BAKER** (Stanford University) suggests the terms of his wager on humanity, the challenges it faced, and its long-term implications.

9:00 pm *Lecture* **JACQUES-LOUIS DAVID AND THE ICONOGRAPHY OF THE REVOLUTION** **MARIA CHEREMETEFF** (City College of San Francisco) illustrates how paintings by David in the Neoclassical style become a symbol of the new rational order of the French Republic. The Republic required a new set of images and allegories to propagate the enlightened notion of representational rule. These ideas found voice in paintings by Jacques-Louis David. Appropriation of Greek and Roman subject matter and the new classical style he developed were ideally suited to promote the values of liberty, equality, civic duty and sacrifice.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2007

VOLTAIRE AND OTHER THINKERS

10:00 am *Lecture* **ÉMILIE DU CHÂTELET** Émilie du Châtelet was a fencer, gambler, brilliant mathematician and passionate lover. **DAVID BODANIS** (Oxford University, author of *Passionate Minds*) discusses how she and her close friend Voltaire helped create the French Enlightenment.

11:00 am *Lecture* **VOLTAIRE'S VIEWS ON RELIGION** Voltaire was a major intellectual influence of the eighteenth century. **ROGER HAHN** (University of California, Berkeley) discusses how one squares Voltaire's taunts against Judaism with his campaign for tolerance.

12:00 noon – 1:30 pm Break for Lunch (To reserve your place at Friends Luncheon, see page 9)

1:30 pm *Performance* **KATHERINE HEATER** (harpsichord), **DAVID MORRIS** (viola de gamba), and **DAVID WILSON** (violin), play *Pièce de clavecin en concert #1 in C minor* by Jean Philippe Rameau.

2:00 pm *Lecture and Demonstration* **OPERA AND THE ENLIGHTENMENT: TRUSTING THE HAPPY ENDING** Voltaire had a profound influence on opera in the Enlightenment era and beyond, significantly impacting the intellectual and political ideals of composers and librettists. Foremost was Voltaire's concept of just government embodied in the "Enlightened Despot"—Closely allied with this theory was the principle of a happy dramatic outcome in opera through the triumph of human reason. San Francisco Opera's Musical Administrator **CLIFFORD (KIP) CRANNA** uses video examples to illustrate how Voltairian thought influenced opera composers like Rameau, Handel, Mozart, and Rossini, and discusses the ways in which contemporary opera directors deal with Enlightenment ideals.

3:00 pm *Panel* Moderator **ROGER HAHN** will lead a panel discussion with questions from the audience.

Humanities West Resource Materials: Voltaire and the French Enlightenment, October 5–6, 2007

You can find information about purchasing books at Amazon.com. A percentage of each purchase helps fund Humanities West programs. Many of these books are also available at local bookstores including Cody's Books and Keplers, or at your local library.

Selected Readings

Voltaire was a popular and prolific writer whose output would fill 100 volumes, but for the modern reader his short satirical novella, *Candide*, is by far the most widely read of his works. It is available in many different editions, but we would recommend a version that supplements the bare text with additional material providing some of the historical and cultural context for his biting humor. Two good choices are *Candide* (Enriched Classics Series) (Mass Market Paperback) by Voltaire (Author) or *Candide* (A Norton Critical Edition) (Paperback) by Voltaire (Author), Robert M. Adams (Editor, Translator). For those who prefer listening to their literature, *Candide* is also available as an audio book: *Candide* (Unabridged Classics) [AUDIOBOOK] [CD] (Audio CD) by Voltaire (Author), Tom Whitworth (Narrator). If you would like a broader sampling of Voltaire's work, try *The Portable Voltaire* (The Viking Portable Library) (Paperback).

The Extended Bibliography below lists many excellent books on the broader topic of the French and European Enlightenment, but it is not easy to find a short, readable overview aimed at the general reader. A good starting point is

The Enlightenment (Studies in European History) (Paperback) by Roy Porter, a 70-page summary that provides historical context as well as a review of how attitudes and perspectives about the Enlightenment have changed over the years. The book also includes an extensive annotated bibliography. A short overview, *Age of Enlightenment* (Great Ages of Man, Time-Life Books, 1966) by leading Enlightenment scholar, Peter Gay, was part of a popular Time-Life series, and may still be found.

Three of our speakers in the upcoming program have published books that might interest attendees. David Bodanis has written *Passionate Minds: The Great Love Affair of the Enlightenment, Featuring the Scientist Émilie du Châtelet, the Poet Voltaire, Sword Fights, Book Burnings, Assorted Kings* (Hardcover), the fascinating story of Voltaire and his mistress, the brilliant Émilie du Châtelet, and their joint intellectual projects. (Note that the paperback edition, with a more subdued subtitle, is scheduled for release on October 2, 2007, may be pre-ordered on Amazon, and will be offered for sale during the program break.) Roger Hahn has published *Pierre Simon Laplace, 1749–1827: A Determined Scientist* (Hardcover), a biography of a prominent Enlightenment scientist. Keith Baker's *Inventing the French Revolution: Essays on French Political Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (Ideas in Context) (Paperback) is a collection of essays exploring the ideological origins of the French Revolution.

—Chuck Sieloff

EXTENDED BIBLIOGRAPHY

The extended bibliography is also available on the Humanities West website, www.humanitieswest.org

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—compiled by Judith Workman

Cooperating Institution Events and Information

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Founded in 1976 by Alfred and Hanna Fromm, the **Fromm Institute for Lifelong Learning** is an educational program for retired persons. The Fromm Institute is located at its own building at the University of San Francisco. The program offers daytime, noncredit, college level-courses, in a wide range of academic subjects. www.usfca.edu/fromm.

The Leonardo da Vinci Society meets monthly from 7:30 pm to 9:30 pm at UCSF, California and Walnut Streets, entrance at Walnut. There is parking directly outside the building. Guests are always welcome as are new members. There is a reception with the speakers after the program. Contact Gerry Wright, president: 415/388-8683.

Thursday, September 13, 2007: *Garden in the Machine: The Building of Renzo Piano's Academy of Sciences Building*.

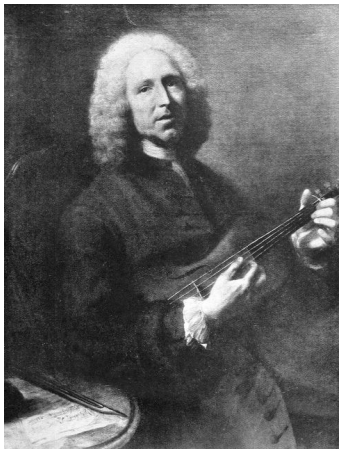
Wednesday, October 24, 2007: *Claudius et al: A Brief Survey of the First Roman Dynasty*.

The **Mechanics' Institute** is a library and chess room located at 57 Post Street in San Francisco's business district. Established in 1855 at the conclusion of the California Gold Rush, it contributed to the establishment of the University of California, Berkeley. Besides a library and chess room they have many events with authors and a film series. Visit www.milibrart.org for a current calendar.

Paris Through Expatriate Eyes Literary Salons: The Confluence of Las Vegas and the Sorbonne. In a small hotel our guest authors mingle with the crowd in the lobby bar. We take our seats and listen to our relaxed author talk about his book or interview with Director Terrance Gelter. A vigorous Q & A with the audience ensues. Goodies are raffled; the author is escorted to the lobby and libation in hand awaits his fans. Our local onsite Bookseller Partner provides books throughout the evening. www.paris-expat.com.

In an era of declining major-media coverage of the arts, the mission of **San Francisco Classical Voice (SFCV)** is to enrich and support the diverse classical-music community in the Bay Area. Our online magazine offers reviews and previews of the Bay Area's wide range of classical music performances; insightful features from leading writers; news about the music scene; and the most complete calendar of events. www.sfsv.org.

MUSIC PERFORMANCE AT VOLTAIRE PROGRAM



Saturday's musicians will play a trio piece by **JEAN-PHILIPPE RAMEAU**. Rameau synthesized the vocabulary and grammar of musical practice into a concise scientific system, earning himself the popular title of "Newton of the Arts." He was one of the truly multifaceted musicians of his day. Acclaimed for his innovative and popular operas, Rameau was also known as one of the greatest organists in France, and his theoretical writings continue to influence musical thinkers over two centuries later.

DAVID MORRIS plays the viola di gamba and is a member of Musica Pacifica, The King's Noyse and the Sex Chordae Consort of Viols, and has performed with Tafelmusik, Musica Angelica, Mark Morris Dance Company, American Bach Soloists, and the Philharmonia, Los Angeles, Portland and Seattle Baroque Orchestras.

DAVID WILSON, a violinist, has performed extensively with period instrument ensembles in the United States and Europe. An avid chamber musician, he has played with the Baroque Northwest and Magnificat, and he is a founding member of

Florilegia, the Galax Quartet, Ensemble Seicento, and the Wisconsin Baroque Quartet.

Since 1996, harpsichordist, organist and fortepianist **KATHERINE HEATER** has made her home in the San Francisco Bay Area where she is a frequent performer with early music groups such as Magnificat and the California Bach Society. Last October she played in our *REMBRANDT* program.

Cooperating Institution Events and Information

Alliance Française de Berkeley is a non-profit organization for the promotion of French culture and language, and understanding and friendship between people in the East Bay who share these interests. French language classes are also offered. One block from the Ashby BART station at 2004 Woolsey Street, Berkeley CA 94703. www.afberkeley.org or phone 510/548-7481.

The Alliance Française de San Francisco is a non-profit French cultural and educational center whose mission is to promote and enhance the knowledge and appreciation of French language and of French and Francophone culture, and to encourage interaction among French, Francophone and American people through its programs. Alliance Française believes immersion is the best means of learning French. 1345 Bush Street. Phone 415/775-7755. www.afsf.com

Thursday, September 6, 7:00 pm

Lecture with Milton Viorst, Middle East Institute:
"Storm from the East: The Struggle between the Arab World and the Christian West." In English. \$15 members/\$20 non-members

Tuesday, September 18 and

Thursday, September 20, at 7:00 pm

Amour D'Enfrance. The Universciné Series brings you the best of contemporary French cinema. In French, subtitled in English. \$3 members/\$6 non-members

Wednesday September 26, at 7 pm

"An Evening with Alice B. Toklas." Hans Gallas, a collector of Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas materials, and Anthony Bliss, a curator at UC Berkeley's Bancroft Library. In English. \$6 members/\$8 non-members

Thursday October 11, at 7 pm

"Q & A with Don George," the renowned travel expert, author, and regular contributor to the *Chronicle*, CNN and NPR. In English. \$10 members/ \$15 nonmembers

The American Decorative Arts Forum is an educational support group of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco. The Forum presents monthly slide lectures in the Koret Auditorium of the de Young Museum, preceded by a mini-exhibition of related items. Programs are Tuesdays at 8 pm. Doors open at 7:15 p.m.; admission is \$15 for non-forum members. For additional information, visit www.adafca.org or telephone 415-249-9234.

October 9, 2007: "New Perspectives on Old Rooms: Re-installation of the 18th Century Period Rooms at the Metropolitan"

November 13, 2007: "A Grand and Elegant House and Furniture: Furnishing the Cadwalader's Philadelphia House, 1770-1775."

December 11, 2007: "Silversmiths to the Nation: Thomas Fletcher and Sidney Gardiner."

January 8, 2008: "Samuel McIntire: Carving an American Style,"

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quite necessary to loudly ignore him.

Voltaire would therefore have certainly found it ironic that the legions upholding the rise of reason known as the Enlightenment also got emotionally swept up in the certitude that a superior culture was in the making. In the wake of Descartes, Galileo and Newton, it must have been difficult to think otherwise. In the millennial-long debate over which method of acquiring information was superior, intuition or reasoning, reason's sudden rebound after centuries of near-neglect was intoxicating. The intuition of those legions told them that something new was happening, that a more enlightened version of human culture was rising.

This Enlightenment belief may seem naïve to us now, but there are many semi-certitudes of twentieth-century science that are based on assumptions no less indefensible. And we could do worse than reach back to Voltaire for inspiration about maintaining an open-minded (if sarcastic) scientific approach to all things, about holding one's beliefs and assumptions lightly, investigating them all, and dismissing those found wanting. That is why he is famous both for writing: "I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it." And for: "I have never made but one prayer to God, a very short one: 'O, Lord, make my enemies ridiculous.' And God granted it."

The Enlightenment would probably have been even more enlightening and influential if those light-hearted Voltairian attitudes had remained at its forefront.

—George Hammond

Enjoy Fine Dining at the Presenters Dinner

We invite Patrons and Fellows to join the distinguished program presenters and fellow patrons Friday evening, October 5 at the private dining room at **Ovation**. This intimate restaurant is right behind Herbst Theatre at 333 Fulton Street. We will convene at the restaurant at 5:30 pm.

Meet Presenters and Friends At the Friends Luncheon

All Friends of Humanities West are invited to join us Saturday, October 6, between morning and afternoon sessions of the program, at **Indigo Restaurant**. Indigo is at 687 McAllister Street, a short walk from the theatre. Guests will have a chance to break bread with speakers and fellow HW supporters. Reserve early, as space is limited!

Join the HW Email Club

Receive Humanities West news updates, supplementary program resources and links, special offers and invitations. Sign up at www.humanitieswest.org.

Purchase Tickets as a Group

Enjoy Humanities West programs with your alumni association, club, class or cooperating institution group and receive other benefits if the group includes a Friend of Humanities West. Phone 415/391-9700 or email info@humanitieswest.org.

Students and Teachers always receive a discount for balcony seats: use the order form on page 7.

At Humanities West, we are especially interested in fostering love of the arts and humanities among educators and young scholars. Outreach is key to encouraging new audiences. The **Institute for European Studies at UC Berkeley** has been a longtime cooperating institution with Humanities West, purchasing blocks of tickets, which are then distributed to teachers and others in their programs. **Office of Resources for International Area Studies (ORIAS) at UC Berkeley** connected 40 teachers and students to Humanities West for **CRUSADES** last February.

Humanities West seeks more partnerships with Bay Area educators, including teacher education programs and public school districts. If you are involved with—or know of—an educational program that might benefit from Humanities West programs, please contact us at info@humanitieswest.org or 415/391-9700.

SAVE THE DATES!

HUMANITIES WEST 2008-2009 SEASON

'exploring history to celebrate the mind and the arts'

October 17-18, 2008

February 27-28, 2009

April 17-18, 2009

www.humanitieswest.org

Presenters Dinner and Friends Luncheon Reservation Form

- Yes, I am a Patron or Fellow of Humanities West and would like to attend the Presenters Dinner. Please reserve ___ place(s) in my name for **Friday, October 5 Presenters Dinner at Ovation** at 333 Fulton Street at 5:30 PM for \$70 per person. Entree choice/s: ___ steak ___ chicken ___ salmon.
- Yes, I am a Friend of Humanites West and would like to attend the Friends Luncheon. Please reserve ___ place(s) in my name for **Saturday, October 6 Friends Luncheon at Indigo**, 687 McAllister Street, for \$45 per person.

Enclosed is my check, payable to Humanites West. Total: \$ _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

TELEPHONE _____

EMAIL _____

Return this form to Humanities West, P.O. Box 546, San Francisco, CA 94104. Make checks payable to Humanities West. You may include this form and your check in the envelope provided (no ticket orders).

Phone 415/391-9700 • info@humanitieswest.org

PRIORITY TICKET ORDER FORMS

Friends/donors to Humanities West orders will receive priority seating.

HUMANITIES WEST FULL SEASON SUBSCRIPTION

VOLTAIRE and the French Enlightenment
October 5–6, 2007

The Enduring Legacy of GENGHIS KHAN
February 22–23, 2008

ATHENS in the Time of Pericles
May 2–3, 2008

		QTY	TOTAL
Full Series Fridays & Saturdays (save \$70)	\$200	x	= \$
Full Series Fridays & Sat. Balcony Only (save \$25)	\$125	x	= \$
Friday Only Series (save \$20)	\$100	x	= \$
Saturday Only Series (save \$20)	\$160	x	= \$
Series handling fee per order	\$8	x	= \$
		TOTAL	\$

INDIVIDUAL TICKETS: VOLTAIRE OCTOBER 5 & 6, 2007

ALL SEATING IS RESERVED	ORCHESTRA/DRESS CIRCLE/GRAND TIER QTY	BALCONY QTY	TOTAL
Friday and Saturday, October 5 & 6	\$90 x	\$50 x	= \$
handling fee per combo ticket	\$5 x	\$5 x	= \$
Friday, October 5 only	\$40 x	\$25 x	= \$
Saturday, October 6 only	\$60 x	\$35 x	= \$
handling fee per ticket	\$2.50 x	\$2.50 x	= \$
Student/Teacher (Balcony only), Friday, October 5		\$20 x	= \$
Student/Teacher (Balcony only), Saturday, October 6		\$20 x	= \$
handling fee per ticket		\$2.50 x	= \$
GRAND TOTAL			\$

Tickets are not refundable. Luncheon is not included.

NAME _____

TELEPHONE _____

STREET _____

CITY _____

STATE _____

ZIP _____

EMAIL (OPTIONAL) _____

Enclosed is my check payable to City Box Office. Charge my credit card: Visa Mastercard

ACCOUNT NUMBER _____

EXPIRES _____

NAME ON CARD (PRINT) _____

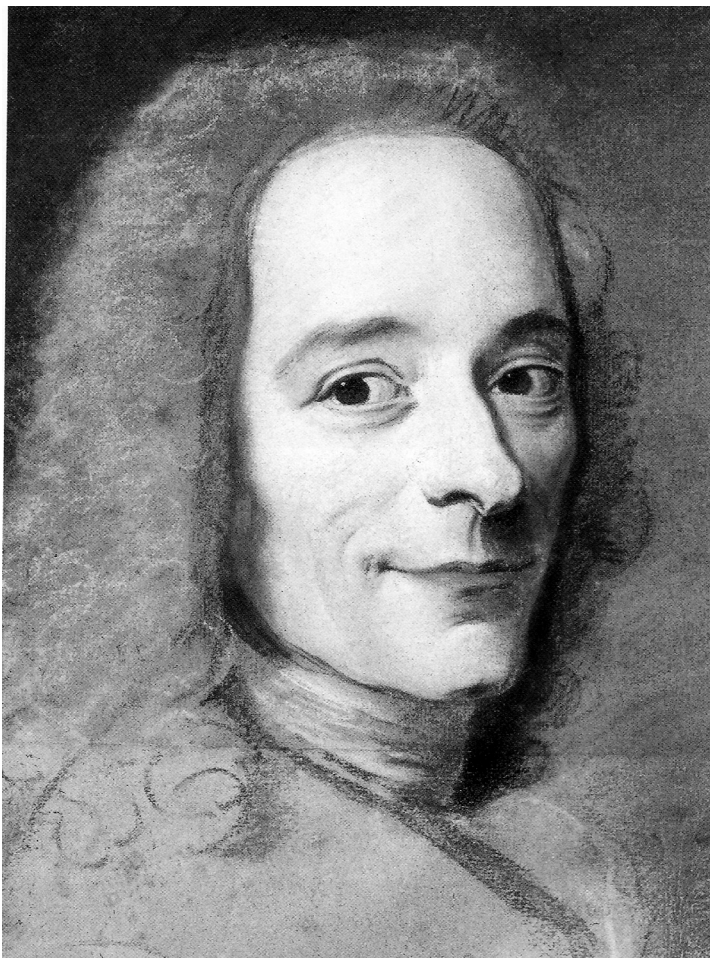
AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE _____

PLACE YOUR ORDER WITH CITY BOX OFFICE

MAIL: (include a self-addressed-stamped envelope) 180 Redwood St., Suite 100, San Francisco, CA 94102 (at Van Ness)

PHONE: 415/392-4400 **FAX:** 415/986-0411 **ONLINE:** cityboxoffice.com

PLEASE NOTE: mail ticket orders to City Box Office in your own envelope. (The envelope in the newsletter goes to the Humanities West Post Office Box and is for donations and meal reservations only).



LISBON EARTHQUAKE

“After the earthquake which destroyed three-quarters, the wise men of that country could discover no more efficacious way of preventing a total ruin than by giving the people a splendid auto-da-fe. It was decided at the University of Coimbra that the sight of several persons being slowly burned in a great ceremony is an infallible secret for preventing earthquakes.”

—Voltaire in *Candide*



HUMANITIES WEST
P.O. Box 546
San Francisco, CA 94104

VOLTAIRE

OCTOBER 5 AND 6, 2007
HERBST THEATRE, SAN FRANCISCO

WWW.HUMANITIESWEST.ORG