

2008 Lyceum II Lecture

The College of Humanities will open the yearlong centennial celebrations planned in honor of Wallace Stegner's birth, with its 2008 Lyceum II lecture, "From the Arctic to the Everglades: An Evening with Peter Matthiessen and Subhankar Banerjee" scheduled for November 13, 2008, at 7:00pm in the City Library Auditorium

Named in 1974 to the American Academy of Arts and Letters, Peter Matthiessen is a naturalist, novelist, Zen priest, and living legend. It is Matthiessen's travel writing that established him as a consummate advocate for the natural world. In *The Snow Leopard* (1978), winner of the National Book Award, he writes lyrically of seeking both endangered creatures and spiritual fulfillment in the Himalayas. He recounts in crystalline prose his treks through Africa and Antarctica in *African Silences* (1991) and *End of the Earth* (2003), while *The Birds of Heaven* (2001) promotes the protection of majestic cranes and the planet's ecosystem. He is the author of nearly two hundred articles and essays, two dozen short stories and eight novels, the last three of which—*Killing Mister Watson* (1990), *Lost Man's River* (1997) and *Bone by Bone* (1999)—imaginatively reconstruct the life and times of the nineteenth-century pioneer farmer and desperado Edgar J. Watson, born in 1855 in Edgefield County, South Carolina. In his newest novel *Shadow Country* (2008) the author has reworked his epic trilogy about this legendary pioneer.

Indian born artist-educator-activist Subhankar Banerjee uses photography to raise awareness about threats to the health and well-being of our planet. Since late 2000, he has focused all his efforts on indigenous human rights and land conservation issues in the Arctic. His photographic work has been instrumental in the ongoing conservation efforts for ecologically and culturally significant areas of the American Arctic, including the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Teshekpuk Lake wetlands, Utukok River uplands, Beaufort and Chukchi seas. He works closely with the Gwich'in and Inupiat indigenous communities of Alaska and the Canadian Yukon, and most recently with the Yukaghir and the Even indigenous communities of Siberia. His Arctic photographs have been exhibited in nearly forty one-person and group exhibitions in the United States and Europe and published in over one hundred magazines and newspapers internationally. He has lectured extensively to educate the public about land conservation, resource wars and cultural diversity issues. He has received many awards for his Arctic work including an inaugural Greenleaf Artist Award from the United Nations Environment Programme and an inaugural Cultural Freedom Fellowship from Lannan Foundation. Subhankar will be Artist-in-Residence at Dartmouth College during the 2009 winter term, and then the Sea Change Artist-Activist Resident of the Gaea Foundation. Since 2006, he has been a visiting scholar in the College of Environmental Humanities at the University of Utah. He serves on the advisory board of Blue Earth Alliance.