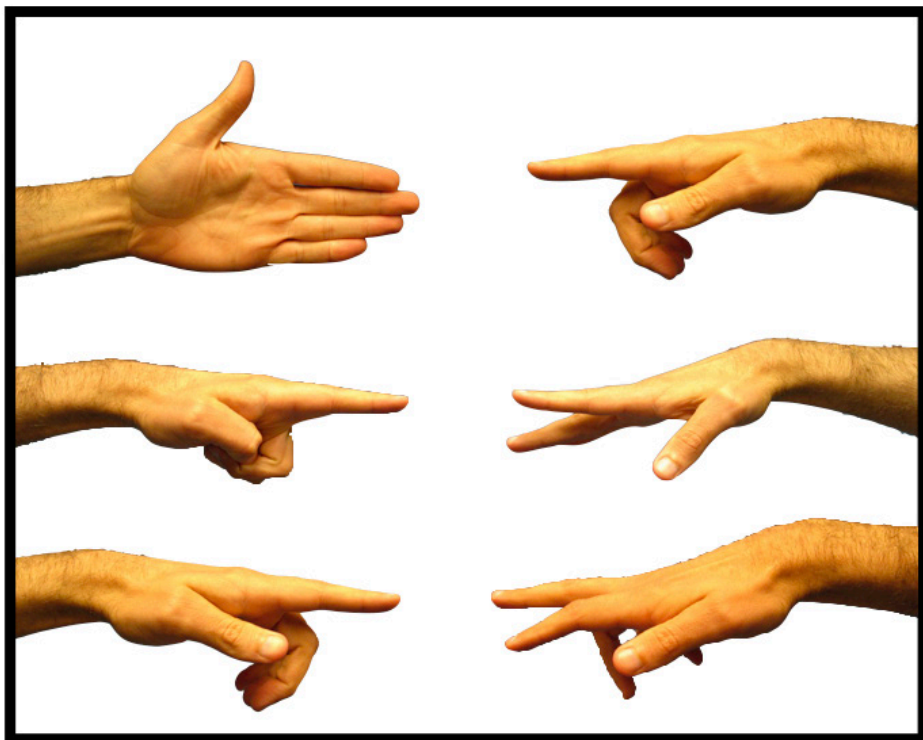




NEUBAUER  
COLLEGIUM  
FOR CULTURE AND SOCIETY

# THE BODY'S ROLE IN THINKING, PERFORMING, AND REFERENCING CONFERENCE



October 19 - 20, 2017  
The University of Chicago



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
CHICAGO



## **Thursday, October 19**

### **International House**

**6:00 – 8:00 p.m.**

#### **Gesture and Sign in Relation to Storytelling**

This session will include three sign-language and three spoken-language artists, who will perform seven-minute works, followed by a panel discussion with the artists and the directors of the Center for Gesture, Sign, and Language on how gesture is a part of the piece from conception to performance. The discussion will be led by Peter Cook, Chair of American Sign Language Department at Columbia College Chicago. Cook has recently been awarded the 2017 Storytelling Hall of Fame Award from the Department of Communication and Performance at East Tennessee State University. As a research associate on the Neubauer Collegium project “The Body’s Role in Thinking, Performing, and Referencing,” Cook co-organized a panel discussion called “Roots, Diversity, Imagery: The Driving Force Behind Sign Language Identity” in February 2016. He has contributed numerous scholarly contributions in the literary analysis of ASL stories and poems, which have become important in comparing gesture as it is used in hearing and Deaf storytellers.

Performances by:

**Manny Hernandez**  
Catholic University of  
America

**Missy Keast**  
ASL Inside

**Leeny Del Seamonds**  
Story Performer

**Robbie Telfer**  
Project VOICE

**Dack Virnig**  
DackCube Entertainment

**Donna Washington**  
Storyteller and Recording  
Artist

*October 19 event co-sponsored by the International House Global Voices Performing Arts & Lecture Series. October 20 event co-sponsored by the Center for Gesture, Sign, and Language at the University of Chicago.*

*ASL-English interpreting will be provided at both events. Persons with disabilities who need an accommodation in order to participate should contact Laura Tharsen at [ltharsen@uchicago.edu](mailto:ltharsen@uchicago.edu).*



## **Friday, October 20**

### **Logan Center, Second-floor Screening Room**

**9:00 – 10:30 a.m.**

#### **Points in Gesture and Sign**

Points allow us to refer to entities present and not present, focused and incidental. The project examines similarities and differences between the points that Deaf signers use as pronouns in sign language, and the points that hearing gesturers use as indicators in co-speech gesture.

*Presenter: Kensy Cooperrider, University of Chicago*

*Discussants: Eve Clark, Stanford University; Diane Brentari, University of Chicago*

**11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.**

#### **Embodied Cognition: Gesture and Sign in Relation to Action**

This session will address how we use our hands in action vs. gesture vs. language. The project focuses on nuanced differences, measured with motion capture data equipment, that have the potential to give us insight into the ways that Deaf signers and hearing gesturers use their hands to act on objects, to gesture about the objects, or to sign about the objects.

*Presenter: Amanda Brown, University of Chicago*

*Discussants: Herbert H. Clark, Stanford University; Daniel Casasanto, Cornell University*

**12:30 – 2:00 p.m.**

**Lunch**

**2:00 – 3:30 p.m.**

#### **The Face of Linguistic Structure**

Both signers and gesturers use their faces in conjunction with linguistic structure in important ways. The project examines how the face is used when conveying meanings associated with different types of speech acts, and whether the face can tell us about the semantic and pragmatic intensions of signers and speakers.

*Presenter: Josh Falk, University of Chicago*

*Discussants: Itamar Francez, University of Chicago; Anastasia Giannakidou, University of Chicago*

## Friday, October 20

### Logan Center Penthouse

4:00 – 5:30 p.m.

**Keynote Address: Herbert H. Clark**

#### **“Combining Descriptions and Depictions in Everyday Talk”**

When people are face to face, they communicate not only by describing and indicating things, but by depicting things with their hands, arms, head, face, eyes, voice, and body, with and without props. For many in cognitive science, the fundamental—or only—way to depict things is with iconic gestures, but depicting is more general than that. It is also used in quotations (e.g., “The car makes a sound that’s kind of ‘[groaning sound]’”), facial gestures (e.g., wrinkling the nose over “disgusting” in “I think liver is disgusting”), full-scale demonstrations (e.g., how to hold a tennis racket), and even children’s make-believe play. Depictions can be used on their own, as in the tennis example, but they are typically combined with descriptions, as in the car and liver examples. Clark will take up the main ways in which people combine descriptions and depictions in everyday talk.

#### **About the Speaker**



**Herbert H. Clark**, professor emeritus in the Department of Psychology at Stanford University, is a psycholinguist whose focuses include cognitive and social processes in language use; interactive processes in conversation, from low-level disfluencies through acts of speaking and understanding to the emergence of discourse; and word

meaning and word use. Clark’s theory of “common ground” posits that individuals engaged in conversation must share knowledge in order to be understood and have a meaningful conversation. Together with Deanna Wilkes-Gibbs, he also developed the collaborative model, a theory for explaining how people in conversation coordinate to determine definite references.

## About the Performers



**Manny Hernandez** is a professional ASL storyteller and an expert in translating text into the ASL register children and adults can understand, especially when he demonstrates links between ASL, pictures, and English print. He also teaches children and adults how to create stories in ASL, combining both motion and emotion. Manny received

his BA in Deaf Studies and MA in Sign Language Education at Gallaudet University. Currently, he teaches ASL at the Catholic University of America and provides advanced workshops in ASL storytelling for children and adults. His motto is “Storytelling ignites the power of knowledge.”



**Missy Keast**, born Deaf, has spent most of her life telling stories. She has published “One Day: Our View”, a photo documentary of global Deaf culture during the 24 hours of May 1, 1997, and is the founder of ASL Inside, a company that provides online curriculum to bring the best of ASL to children, families, students and teachers. She also produces the weekly VLOG “Missy’s

Post,” has a one woman show and teaches workshops on “The Art of Teaching.”



With a face and voice that launched a thousand characters, **Leeny Del Seamonds** is an internationally acclaimed performer, coach, author, multi award-winning recording artist and professional Voice Actor. Winner of the National Storytelling Network ORACLE Circle of Excellence Award, Leeny's animated and uplifting tales and tunes reflect her

love of people and desire to embrace life to its fullest. From a prized television show, to a village in Gengcun, China; from the Comix Club in NYC, to the National Storytelling Festival, Leeny encourages listeners to rejoice in human and cultural diversity, inviting them to share in her Cuban-American sense of humor and joy of performing. With Latino passion, fire and wit, Leeny's dynamic one-woman shows and renowned workshops headline festivals, concerts and events worldwide.



**Robbie Q. Telfer** has performed and taught in hundreds of venues and institutions around the world. A co-founder of the Encyclopedia Show, he's been an individual finalist at the National Poetry Slam and is published by Write Bloody Publishing. A member of the internationally renowned teaching artist collective Project VOICE, he is currently an environmental community organizer at the Field Museum in Chicago.





**Dack Virnig** is a fourth-generation Deaf family member, born and raised in Minnesota. He credits his Mom for his storytelling passion with her numerous of fairy tales and her beautiful signs. This passion led to his first ASL contest, where he placed first and his involvement with High School drama, five performances for Rochester Institute of Technology and eventually a

Deaf movie. DackCube Entertainment was an outgrowth of his YouTube fan base who encouraged him to inspire the world with how awesome and beautiful ASL can be. Since then Dack has performed at universities, Deaf schools and numerous Deaf events where he shares his rich experience in ASL.



Master Storyteller **Donna Washington** is a multiple award-winning performer who has been practicing her craft for thirty years. Trained by Rives Collins at Northwestern University, she is known for her highly animated style and elastic face. She has authored numerous published articles about using storytelling in education as well as four Children's books. She is a past

president of the North Carolina Storytelling Guild, and sat on the editorial board for the National Association of Black Storytellers. Donna also writes a highly respected blog about the art and craft of storytelling called Language, Literacy and Storytelling.

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