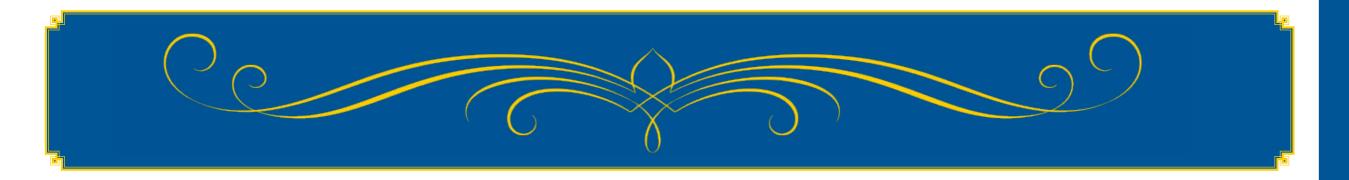


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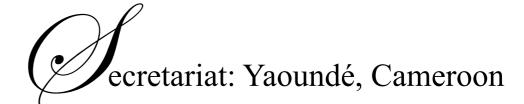
Thank you for your membership in the IBHA. Your membership dues all go towards the adminsitration of the association, but do not by themselves cover



our costs. The only paid position is a part time adminsitrative assistant. Other costs are for our website, for example. Please consider a tax deductible (in the US) gift to our 501(C)3 and please consider remembering the IBHA in your will.

African Big History Association (AFBHA) Formed

By Tan Chee Keong



FOUNDING MEMBERS PROFILE

21 January 2018

Introduction

After completing the Big History Project (BHP) teacher-training course through <www. bighistoryproject.com>, four teachers in the La Gaiete International Primary School in Yaoundé, Cameroon formed the Big History African Study Group on 13 September 2017. They came together with the intention to establish a Cameroonian Big History Teachers Club and an even bigger association for non-teachers. They called it a "big bang approach" – it starts small but grows big!

Two months later, they received some suggestions from members of the big history international community, including the Oberlin Big History Project, based in Japan, which organized a Big History Kamishibai Competition for Cameroonian school children and teachers.

The suggestions indicated that if Cameroonian big history educators wanted a stronger voice in the international arena, they needed to have an association of their own. So



From left: Ajih Joseph Mbah, Cassian Kochi Ngong and Sabastian Ngong Ateh

they decided to establish the African Big History Association (AFBHA) to reach out to more African people with big history.

On 5 January 2018, with the support of Cassian Kochi Ngong from the La Gaiete International Primary School, Nganfon Eric Goubissih from the Amity International College (Primary Section) called for an urgent meeting among school teachers from different schools, who had completed the BHP teacher training course, to decide if the secretariat of the AFBHA should be located in Yaoundé, Cameroon. There was concern that they would not be able to handle an international association at that scale and magnitude.

Counter-arguments were presented, chiefly centered around issues of carrying out the association's activities within their means while leveraging the Cameroonians' strength in managing finances with tight budgets. They also discussed the importance of getting the AFBHA registered with Cameroonian authorities, so as to legitimize its launching and fund-raising in Cameroon, along with the distribution of tasks, such as international coordination and activity programming. After months of discussion with the big history international community, they prepared the first document of the AFBHA - The African Big History Association Founding Members Profile – to help them define the AFBHA goals and give them material to show to others about who they are. For more information, please contact the founding President of African Big History Association, Nganfon Eric Goubissih at <nganfoneric945@gmail.com>.



From left: Ngaingha Eric Ngong, Patrick Penka, Mesei Ndeise Florence, Nganfon Eric Goubissih, Juliana Jala, Sabastian Ngong Ateh, Ajih Joseph Mbah and Cassian Kochi Ngong.

Full Members

Basic Profile

Name: Ajih Joseph Mbah

Organisation: La Gaiete International Primary School

City: Yaoundé Country: Cameroon

Extended Profile

What do you hope for in connection with a big history

perspective:

I hope that big history will come to change the thinking styles of Africans and help to expose us to the world by contributing to basic issues of life like beliefs, cultures etc.

Short description of yourself or your organization:

I am a young Cameroonian of 33 years. I teach in a lay private school called Complex Scolaire La Gaiete, which is found in the capital city of Yaoundé.

Basic Profile

Name: Cassian Kochi Ngong Organisation: COMAFAR

City: Yaoundé Country: Cameroon

Extended Profile

What do you hope for in connection with a big history perspective:

Being a teacher and a farmer, I hold big history in high esteem, because survival on this beautiful earth

h
ry to widen the knowledge of the they are likely going to.

depends on food. As a teacher, I am using big history to widen the knowledge of my kids about where they really come from and where they are likely going to.

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As such, my kids can adapt to and understand their world, such as if they solve the problem of hunger in Africa in general and Cameroon in particular. Hence, my fight for food security.

Short description of yourself or your organization:

I am a founder of COMAFAR - as small farmers' initiative group specializing in cultivation of maize. We intend to help solve food crisis in Cameroon and Africa. In this light, COMAFAR is determined to feed the future by providing maize for home consumption and production of animal feeds to ensure the availability of food on every table.

Basic Profile

Name: Epiebong Francisca Soppe

Organisation: Government Bilingual Public

School Bastos City: Yaoundé Country: Cameroon

Extended Profile

What do you hope for in connection with a big history perspective:

As far as big history is concerned, I am very

thankful for big historians who help in teaching. From my perspective, I think that big history is a course that provides lots of opportunities for students, and even teachers should be introduced worldwide. This will help us to have a clear notion about the Earth. Also, about the climate, civilization, interconnected world zones, the Paleolithic era and increased commerce and use of fossil fuel energy. Also Cameroon should have a better connection with big history. Big history teachers should be sent to teach and also to come up with conferences on big history in Cameroon.

Short description of yourself or your organization:

I am a Cameroonian and live in Yaoundé. I am a teacher in the Government Bilingual Public School Bastos Group 1, which is under the Ministry of Basic Education. Apart from being a teacher, I also have done nursing and work in an orphanage. For my hobbies, I like singing, reading and cooking.



Basic Profile

Name: Fru Perpetua Lum Bih

Organisation: Government Bilingual Public School Bastos

City: Yaoundé Country: Cameroon

Extended Profile

What do you hope for in connection with a big history perspective:

I count it a privilege to have the opportunity to undertake the big history course in Cameroon, I am so grateful to all big history teachers, especially to the big history facilitator here in Cameroon, Tan Chee Keong, for the patience he showed with us. What I hope for is big history educators abroad to help us to form a team here in Cameroon that can share ideas and strategies on how to teach big history in our primary schools. Big history is very important at the primary level because of financial difficulties we all face. So if big history is taught at the primary level, it will help those who are not privileged to continue their education and to at least have the basic knowledge about the formation of the Earth and its

Short description of yourself or your organization:

I am a P.T.A. (Parent Teacher Association) teacher of G.B.P.S. Bastos Group II Yaounde, Cameroon under the Ministry of Basic Education.

Basic Profile

existence.

Name: George Ellis

Organisation: University of Cape Town

City: Cape Town Country: South Africa

Extended Profile

George F.R. Ellis is a cosmologist and relativist who has wandered into Big History issues because of his fascination

as to how human beings could have come into being as a result of the action of physical laws. He wrote The Large Scale Structure of Space Time (1973) with



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Stephen Hawking when lecturing at Cambridge University in the last century; got involved with social issues on his return to his homeland of South Africa in 1973; and is now trying to persuade fellow physicists to be realistic in their views on such issues as complexity, the arrow of time, and the degree to which science can answer fundamental questions. He believes in top-down causation as the key to the emergence of true complexity, and even as being important in physics, and advocates that physicists should realize that non-physical entities such as social agreements have causal powers. This view is reinforced by daily life experiences such as writing letters to the local newspaper and climbing local mountains every Saturday.

Basic Profile

Name: Juliana Jala

Organisation: La Gaiete International Primary

School

City: Yaoundé

Country: Cameroon

Extended Profile

What do you hope for in connection with a big history perspective:

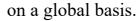
My hope in connection to big history perspective is that:

- Big history should be more practical, i.e. the

knowledge acquired from studying big history should help humanity to make their universe a comfortable place. For example, if one knows the past – the beginning of mankind, and the present, we could already imagine what the future holds. Big history should make scholars know how to look for way to solve some unwelcoming situation globally;

- Big history should create a forum for youths, especially for Africans, to be given opportunities to move to other countries and practice their knowledge; and
- If possible, there should be a big history foundation in Africa.

I also wish that big history teachers should be trained on how to produce and use concrete materials that will interest the kids to learn big history. In this way, at their tender age, they can start getting into loving and caring for their environments



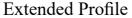
Short description of yourself or your organization: I am aged 43, a teacher and a mother of 4 children.

Basic Profile

Name: Mesei Ndeise Florence

Organisation: Government Bilingual Public

School Bastos City: Yaoundé Country: Cameroon



What do you hope for in connection with a big history perspective:

Big history is a very important organization that has enabled me to learn a lot about the history of creation and evolution. I want to thank the big history teachers for helping me to learn so many things. For my own perspective about big history, it is especially good because it has made teachers all over the world come together in helping us have a good view about the Earth, its climate, civilization and evolution. This view also makes it easier for business people to be associated with one another in commerce. Furthermore, I suggest that big history should help Africa in general and Cameroon in particular by providing them with means of studying big history programs through the organization of seminars and conferences.

Short description of yourself or your organization:

I am a Cameroonian and a native of Oku Village. I am 37 years old. I am a teacher and I teach Class 1 of the Government Bilingual Primary School Group II in Yaoundé. I like watching religious films, reading and cooking. My organization is the Ministry of Basic Education in Cameroon.



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Basic Profile

Name: Ngaingha Eric Ngong

Organisation: Amity International College (Primary

Section)

City: Yaoundé

Country: Cameroon

Extended Profile

What do you hope for in connection with a big history perspective:

Big history has come to me as something new. With the knowledge I have acquired already, I will like to spread

it all over Cameroon and, if possible, to other African countries. I shall be proud to tell the African story as an African. Big history has inspired me so much because it has enriching ideas. I look forward to integrating this project gradually into our system. So far, it has helped me to enlighten my pupils on many aspects of their learning and I hope to do more. In fact, big history from my own perspective, has the chance for a great future in Cameroon and Africa as a whole.

Short description of yourself or your organizationn: I am a class five teacher in Amity International School, Bastos-Yaoundé (Cameroon).

Basic Profile

Name: Nganfon Eric Goubissih

Organisation: Amity International College (Primary

Section)

City: Yaoundé

Country: Cameroon

Extended Profile

What do you hope for in connection with a big history perspective:

Big history is pregnant with several disciplines that are interconnected with various aspect that which





Africans and Cameroonians in particular must not be left out. Big history to me as a teacher in Cameroon should be included as a subject in all the levels of schools in Cameroon and Africa as a whole. Knowing that all the school subjects are connected to big history, it's a clue to better explain the complexities involved in these disciplines. In fact, big history would be a better asset to accurately examine the genesis of the African culture. Becoming a more experienced big history teacher with the help of all who have been in it before me is all am dreaming of. It is obvious that convincing the Ministry of National Education to include big history as a subject would be quite challenging. It would be more practical to split the various aspects of big history and insert them into every school subject. It is another school of thoughts.

Short description of yourself or your organization:

I am a big history teacher in Cameroon, as well as a classroom teacher. I am 28; I am teaching in Amity International college Yaoundé, Cameroon, Africa.

Basic Profile

Name: Noha Tarek Abbas Hassan

Organisation: National Center for Social & Criminological Research, Social Development Institutions and Forces Research Section, Public Communication & Culture Department

City: From Alexandria, residing in Giza

Extended Profile

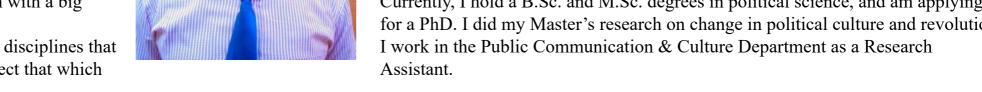
What do you hope for in connection with a big history perspective:

I hope to do research in two paths:

- 1) Evolution of human cultural values.
- 2) Cultural values formation in children.

Short description of yourself or your organization:

Currently, I hold a B.Sc. and M.Sc. degrees in political science, and am applying for a PhD. I did my Master's research on change in political culture and revolution.



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Basic Profile

Name: Patrick Penka

Organisation: Academic School of Excellence

City: Yaoundé

Country: Cameroon

Extended Profile

What do you hope for in connection with a big history perspective:



For me, being connected with big history is a way of constantly informing ourselves about our past in all aspects: sciences, arts, technology etc. It is a way to be linked with what had happened in the past and present as well as perspectives of the future. Also, it's a way to be always aware or at least develop awareness about why some societies are more developed than others. Big history gives us tools that can help us to understand what makes differences between peoples, countries and continents. It chooses to see how differences are placed in a proper context.

Short description of yourself or your organization:

I have been a visual art teacher for the last 7 years. I have a master degree level 1 in and work in a private high school in Italy called BRESCIA and also in Cameroon at the University of Yaoundé 1. For me, art is a way of communicating, exchanging and sharing with others. I have been linked with our social and cultural realities, first, in the local way, and then in the national way, and now in the international way. These linkages are important because when we have some problems, someone also has the same problems and shared realities. That is why I really appreciate to be part of the big history community – it is like an adventure beginning its journey from the dark to the light of the past, present and future. About my organization, we want to introduce the realities of our world to the future generation of leaders and give them the opportunity to better organize the legacy that we, the present generation, have not been able to sufficiently develop.

Basic Profile

Name: Sabastian Ngong Ateh

Organisation: La Gaiete International Primary

School

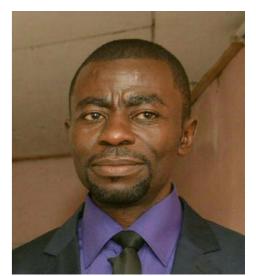
City: Yaoundé

Country: Cameroon

Extended Profile

What do you hope for in connection with a big history perspective:

The knowledge of the existence of big history has added a plus to my life. Studying big history has broadened my perception of the world. It has also



changed my approach to human relationships. This is going to help me in the teaching of my pupils, to make it more exciting and enhance their understanding. I also hope to increase my knowledge of the cultures of the different people in the world, which will help me to understand them more and relate with them as we share our experiences. With the experiences I will get through big history and its sympathizers, I hope to influence my entourage positively as we look to making the world a better place for all.

Short description of yourself or your organization:

I am from Kom, a village in the North West Region of Cameroon. I hold a bachelor's degree in Psychology. A teacher by profession and teach in La Gaiete in Yaounde – Cameroon. I am passionate in making the children to explore their world through reading and this pushed me to come up with a book to help the children to learn how to read, titled, Reading Made Easy With Phonics. I also have reading as a passion. I like reading books of people who have made great impact in the world.

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Basic Profile

Name: Sada Mire

Organisation: Faculty of Archaeology, Leiden University and

Horn Heritage Organization

City: Leiden

Country: The Netherlands / Somaliland

Extended Profile

What do you hope for in connection with a big history

perspective:

As an archaeologist focusing on the African continent, with its human history of millions of years, the organization will be a way for me to contextualize that history with the big history themes temporally and spatially.

Short description of yourself or your organization:

I am happy to be involved with the African Big History Association. My organization Horn Heritage is based in Hargeisa, Somalia/Somaliland and can play a role in linking with local and regional partners.



Basic Profile

Name: Andrey Korotayev

Organisation: Institute for African Studies, Russian

Academy of Sciences

City: Moscow Country: Russia

Extended Profile

What do you hope for in connection with a big history perspective: General theory of social evolution in the context of universal evolution.

Short description of yourself or your organization:



I am a Senior Research Professor at the Center for Big History and System Forecasting of the Institute of Oriental Studies as well as in the Institute for African Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences. In addition, I'm the Head of the Laboratory of Monitoring of the Risks of Sociopolitical Destabilization at the National Research University Higher School of Economics, and a Senior Research Professor of the International Laboratory on Political Demography and Social Macrodynamics (PDSM) of the Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration, as well as a Full Professor of the Faculty of Global Studies of the Moscow State University. I am also a co-editor of the journals Social Evolution & History and the Journal of Globalization Studies, as well as the History & Mathematics yearbook.

Basic Profile

Name: Barry Rodrigue

Organisations: International Big History Association (IBHA); Asian Big History Association (ABHA);

Symbiosis International University.

City: Pune, Maharashtra

Country: India

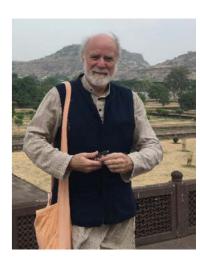
Extended Profile

What do you hope for in connection with a big history perspective:

For us all to create a new identity that unifies us as a global society and a life form in the cosmos.

Short description of yourself or your organization:

I think of my participation to be in an advisory context with the IBHA, as well as in keeping with the history of Asian-African connection through the ABHA.



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Basic Profile

Name: Carl C. Anthony

Organisation: Breakthrough Communities

City: Oakland, California

Country: USA

Extended Profile

What do you hope for in connection with a big history perspective:

Big History presents an opportunity to correct many

misperceptions about African American and African Diaspora experiences. Big History Threshold Seven allows us to explore the dynamics which have resulted in the marginalization of African Americans and African Diaspora populations in the modern world. What is often called the Great Convergence is actually the Great Divergence. During this time, Europeans experienced increasing powers over Africans and Native Americans, who experienced exploitation, slavery, and genocide. Though Big History we can reinterpret this experience in a more proactive way (See: Walter Rodney, How Europe Underdeveloped Africa).

Short description of yourself or your organization:

I am an architect, author, urban/suburban/regional design strategist, and the cofounder of the Breakthrough Communities Project. My new book, The Earth, the City and the Hidden Narrative of Race (New Village Press, 2017), interweaves urban history, racial justice, and cosmology with my experiences as an architect, regional planner, environmentalist, and Black American to heal the wounds of racism and bring people together for the protection of shared environments. I have served as the Acting Director of the Community and Resource Development Unit at the Ford Foundation, where I was responsible for the Foundation's worldwide programs in the fields of Environment and Development and Community Development. I was founder and, for 12 years Executive Director, of the Urban Habitat Program in the San Francisco Bay Area, one of the country's oldest environmental justice organizations. With my colleague Luke Cole at the California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation, I founded and published the Race, Poverty, and Environment Journal, the first environmental justice periodical in the U.S. For more Information visit: <earthcityrace.net & breakthroughcommunities. info>.

Basic Profile

Name: David Blanks

Organisations: International Big History Association; World

History Association; Arkansas Tech University.

City: Russellville, Arkansas.

Country: USA

Extended Profile

What do you hope for in connection with a big history perspective: A deeper understanding of the cosmos, life, and the human condition.

Short description of yourself or your organization:

Interested in Big History since the World History Association meeting in Ifrane, Morocco in 2005; teaching it since 2007; doing research in Big History since 2010. Now in the southern U.S., I worked at the American University in Cairo from 1992-2015.

Basic Profile

Name: Dmitri M. Bondarenko

Organisations: The Institute for African Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences; National Research University Higher School of Economics; Russian State University for Humanities

City: Moscow
Country: Russia

Extended Profile

What do you hope for in connection with a big history perspective: I hope that African history could be fruitfully analyzed from a Big History theoretical perspective, which could become a significant contribution to understanding the historical and socio-cultural processes on and pathways of this culture area.

Short description of yourself or your organization:

Born in Moscow, USSR/Russia. I am an anthropologist, historian, and Africanist. I completed a Ph.D. and Doctor Habilitatus in World History and Anthropology

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from the Russian Academy of Sciences. I am a member of the African Studies Association of Australasia and the Pacific, the African Studies Association and others, and serve as an Africanist Network Executive Committee Member as well as its Chair in 2006–2008 for the European Association of Social Anthropologists. My research interests include social theory, anthropological and historical theory, political anthropology, culture and history of Africa south of the Sahara, sociocultural transformations and intercultural interaction (including ethnic, racial, and religious aspects) with special focus on Africa and people of African descent worldwide. I have conducted fieldwork in a number of African countries (Tanzania, Nigeria, Benin, Rwanda, Zambia, and Uganda), as well as among people of African origin in Russia and the USA. My main publications include A Popular History of Benin: The Rise and Fall of a Mighty Forest Kingdom (2003); The Axial Ages of World History: Lessons for the 21st Century (2014), and African Americans and American Africans: Race, Migration, History and Identity (2018).

Basic Profile

Name: Hirofumi Katayama

Organisation: International Big History Association; J.F. Oberlin University; Oberlin Big History Project; Institute for Global and

a moment but a vast age." (Olaf Stapledon, Last and First Men)

Cosmic Peace.

City: Hachioji, Tokyo

Country: Japan

Extended Profile

What do you hope for in connection with a big history perspective: "In the racial mode a man apprehends all things astronomically. Through all eyes and all observatories, he beholds his voyaging world, and peers outward into space. Thus he merges in one view, as it were, the views of deckhand, captain, stoker, and the man in the crow's-nest ... Further, his perceived 'now' embraces not

Short description of yourself or your organization:

In 2017, J.F. Oberlin University's big history course started an international exchange with teachers and students in Cameroon. I and Nobuo Tsujimura manage this exchange. I expect their own expressions on Big History with Cameroonian or

African viewpoint will show us more of the creative Big History universe.

Basic Profile

Name: Nobuo Tsujimura

Organisation: International Big History Association; Asian Big History Association; Oberlin Big History Project; Institute for Global and Cosmic Peace.

City: Hachioji, Tokyo

Country: Japan

Extended Profile

What do you hope for in connection with a big history perspective:

To activate a great transformation of views on and relationships with everything in a creative way and

toward a better society that emerges as cultural and artistic movements.

Short description of yourself or your organization:

I'm an enthusiast for vitalizing cultural and artistic movements inspired by big history. In 2017, J.F. Oberlin University's big history course started an international exchange with teachers and students in Cameroon. My first aim on Africa is to keep this exchange and collaborate with the people who try to express their big-history and indigenous views by various forms of expression.



Name: Tan Chee Keong

Organisation: a Malaysian civil servant

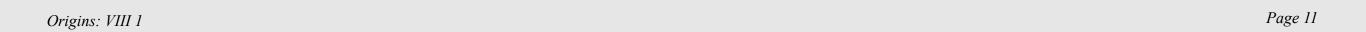
City: Kuala Lumpur Country: Malaysia

Extended Profile

What do you hope for in connection with a big history perspective:

From a big history perspective, Africa is the origin land





where humans laid its very first foundation in shifting the human society from the Paleolithic to the Neolithic. Since 100,000 to 50,000 years ago after humans' first departure from their common homeland, Africa has not been more important than today, in our effort to bring humanity together again to resolve many thorny and urgent issues related to climate change which is affecting humanity and the biosphere. In this connection, Africa is the holy place to embrace the whole humanity of rich, poor, privileged, vulnerable, powerful and powerless because Africa is where we could have a sense of belonging as one species and trace the ancestry of our lineage in the cosmic evolution. After all, all humans are "Africans"!

Short description of yourself or your organization: Growing up as a Malaysian means I need to travel a long journey through different human civilizations. We were colonized by the British, which brought their native Western civilization to this land and facilitated the influx of migrants from the native Chinese and Indian civilizations. Prior to the advent of the British, we had also other Western powers, the Portuguese and the Dutch, making their footprints in our soil. Way before the Western influence, Islamic, Buddhist and Hindu civilizations have their own shares of influence in shaping our worldview alongside with the subtle but profound impact of the native Southeast Asian civilization on me. Living in Africa gave me even a much bigger picture and a lot of precious experience which paved the way for my readiness for the big history narrative.

Note: This first brochure was assembled by Tan Chee Keong and the founding members in Cameroon, with editorial assistance from Barry Rodrigue in India in January 2018.



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Please plan on participating in the 2018 IBHA conference from July 26 - 29 at Villanova University, near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA. Here are directions to Villanova, which is a half hour train ride from Philadelphia on the "Main Line." Take a virtual tour of Villanova here. Panels and plenary sessions will be in the Connelly Center. You may reserve an attractive room on west campus or stay at nearby hotels.

Before or after the conference, you will enjoy the <u>Philadelphia area</u>. <u>Independence Hall</u> is the birthplace of America; it is where the Declaration of Independence and later the US Constitution were signed.

Great museums include the <u>Philadelphia Museum of Art</u>, The <u>Barnes Foundation</u>, <u>Rodin Museum</u>, The <u>Academy of Natural Sciences</u>, and the <u>Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology</u>. The <u>Liberty Bell</u> has inspired many in the struggle for freedom. Among <u>Eastern State Penitentiary's</u> celebrated prisoners were Al Capone. A few ideas for restaurants are <u>here</u>, another one is <u>here</u>, and <u>here</u>.

Villanova University is proud to host the 2018 International Big History Association conference. The integration of the natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities has been central to the university's mission from its beginning.

Our science building in the College of Arts and Sciences, which houses our departments of physics,

astronomy, chemistry, biology, and computing sciences, is named for Gregor Mendel. Mendel was the nineteenth century Augustinian friar who is generally recognized as the founder of the modern science of genetics. He conducted his famous pea plant experiments between 1856 and 1863 in which he established many of the rules of heredity, now referred to as the laws of Mendelian inheritance. Each year, the university gives the Mendel Medal to an outstanding scientist.

Villanova's Mendel Medal was given to the Belgian Catholic priest Abbé Georges Lemaître, Ph.D., D.Sc. in 1934 for his ground-breaking article on the primeval atom – what later became better known as the big bang. He was the first to derive what is now known as Hubble's law and made the first estimation

of what is now called the Hubble constant, which he published in 1927, two years before Hubble's article. His work was controversial at the time. Albert Einstein, who was committed to the steady state or eternal universe, told Lemaître, "Your calculations are correct, but your physics is atrocious." Once Edwin Hubble's observations confirmed Lemaître's theory, Einstein accepted the new view of the beginning of our universe. As astrophysicists have honed Hubble's Law, a beginning for our universe was dated at about 13.82 billion years ago. Big History begins

with the "primeval atom" (even as we examine theories of the multiverse, cyclical universes, and other hypotheses).

The 1937 Mendel Medal was awarded to Dr. (Rev.) Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, S.J. for his work on key developments from the origin of the universe to the present

and into the future. He argued that the universe had not been created originally as it is now, but that it evolved through stages. Big History investigates the periods of time from which there are transitions from one to the next.

The Mendal Medal was given to Dr. George V. Coyne, S.J. in 2008, when he was the Director of the Vatican Observatory. His lecture at the award ceremony was an account that is familiar to big historians. In 2009, the award went to the evolutionary biologist, Kenneth Miller. Villanova's astronomers and physicists teach and research the origins and evolution of the universe over the past 13.82 billion years. Our earth scientists investigate the history of the earth since its accretion 4.6 billion years ago. Our bio-chemists and evolutionary biologists in Mendel Hall work on the origins and evolution of life over the past 3.8 billion years. Our departments

in the humanities and social sciences pick up the story over the past thousands of years. The contributions to big history of all of these scholars have been of great importance – and make Villanova University a great place to hold the 2018 IBHA conference.



A plenary speaker at the July 2018 IBHA conference will be Brother Guy J. Consolmagno, SJ, who is an American research astronomer, Jesuit religious brother, and Director of the Vatican Observatory. Consolmagno attended the University of Detroit Jesuit High School before he obtained his S.B. (1974) and S.M. (1975) degrees at Massachusetts Institute of Technology and his Ph.D. (1978) at the University of Arizona's Lunar and Planetary Laboratory, all in planetary science. After postdoctoral research and teaching at Harvard College Observatory and MIT. In 1989 he entered the Society of Jesus, and took vows as a brother in 1991. He taught physics in Kenya for two years as a member of the US Peace Corps. He served as curator of the Vatican Meteorite collection until 2015, when Pope Francis named him as director of the Vatican Observatory. His research is centered on the connections between meteorites and asteroids, and the origin and evolution of small bodies in the solar system. In addition to over 40 refereed scientific papers, he has co-authored several books on astronomy for the popular market, which have been translated into multiple languages. During 1996, he took part in the Antarctic Search for Meteorites, ANSMET, where he discovered a number of meteorites on the ice fields of Antarctica.



Our after dinner speaker will be Craig G. Benjamin, who is an Australian-American historian and Professor of History in the Frederik J. Meijer Honors College at Grand Valley State University, where he teaches East Asian civilization, big history, ancient Central Asian history, and world history historiography. Benjamin has presented lectures at conferences throughout the world, and he is the author of several published books, and numerous chapters and essays on the ancient history of Central Asia, Big History and world history. He has recorded lectures for the History Channel and the Discovery Channel, and has been a lecturer for the Big History Project, and on cruises sponsored by both Scientific



American and the New York Times. Benjamin has recorded two courses for the Teaching Company's Great Courses series, the Foundations of Eastern Civilization and the Big History of civilization. Together with David Christian and Cynthia Brown, he is the author of the first Big History textbook, *Big History: Between Nothing and Everything*, which was published by McGraw-Hill in August 2014. Benjamin has been a board member of the International Big History Association since 2011. He served as IBHA Treasurer from 2011 until 2016 and now as Vice-President. He is a consultant for the College Board and current co-Chair of the Test Development Committees of the SAT World History exams. In 2014 and 2015 Benjamin served as President of the World History Association.

Emergent Universe Oratorio

Main Line Symphony Orchestra Directed by Don Liuzzi

Saturday, July 28, 2018, 7:30 pm Villanova University Church 800 Lancaster Avenue, Villanova, PA, 19085 (in front of the bridge across Lancaster Avenue)

Composed by Sam Guarnaccia

From 13.82 billion years ago until today - and into the future

All registered conference participants are invited to attend at no extra charge. Those who are not registered for the conference but still wish to attend the oratorio may purchase oratorio tickets here. We are already grateful to Villanova University and the American Teilhard Association for their generous support of the oratorio. Still, we need to ask you to please consider making a donation in support of the musicians, composer, and other expenses for the oratorio beyond those covered by ticket prices; we would like to recognize you and / or your work place in the concert program.

The *Emergent Universe Oratorio* creatively integrates science with beauty from superb musical direction, choral singers, and orchestral players. Performed by the Main Line Symphony Orchestra (MLSO), now in its 72nd season, the oratorio will be a highlight of the 2018 IBHA conference. The MLSO is directed by Don Liuzzi, who is also a member of the Philadelphia Orchestra.

The Oratorio, by Vermont composer Sam Guarnaccia, gives expression to the awe inspiring narrative of the universe from the big bang to the emergence of humanity's global and universal consciousness. It is a series of alternating intensively scored recitatives with major lyrical choral sections.

The oratorio will be introduced by Ursula Goodenough, Professor Emerita of Biology at Washington University in St. Louis where she has engaged in research on eukaryotic algae. She authored the best-selling book, Sacred Depths of Nature, participated in a Mind and Life dialogue with the Dalai Lama in 2002, has participated in television productions on PBS and The History Channel, and contributed to the NPR blog, 13.7: Cosmos & Culture, from 2009 to 2011. Goodenough was instrumental in the writing of the libretto for the oratorio.

The oratorio will be performed in the beautiful church on the campus of Villanova University, the location for the 2018 conference of the International Big History Association.

Emergence describes the appearance of new properties in the new levels of complexity that have developed over time. The sciences have provided us evidence of a beginning of our universe 13.82 billion years ago. Almost immediately, quarks formed relationships that produced protons and neutrons. Since then, there has been a process of relationships within ever more complex relationships from protons to atoms,

stars, galaxies, chemicals, our solar system, our Earth, tectonic plates, changing oceans and continents, amino acids, cells, multicellular life forms, a stunning variety of plants and animals in the sea and on land, and – some 200,000 years ago – humans. Our human nature emerged from a very long past in which at first there had not been any of those relationships and things mentioned above. But atoms, cells, and much more did develop and eventually came together in us.

Among the relationships within us were the 100 trillion synapses between the 100 billion neurons within each of our brains. Our brains are the most complex relationships of matter in the universe of which we are aware. We are that part of the universe that is able to reflect on itself. The electric and chemical exchanges between our neurons enable our self-consciousness, language, symbolic thinking, memory, imagination, wonder, and creativity.

Could it be said that the self-conscious creativity of humans is an outgrowth of a very long prior history of emergent complexity? Our strength came not from talons, fangs, wings, or shells. Our greatest abilities came from the ability to relate to each other in ever more sophisticated forms. Our ancestors could imagine, plan for, and create ever more complex relationships within kinship groups, villages, cities, nations, empires, and global systems. We intereacted with the environment from which we emerged and have increasingly affected it. We imagined and created tools, agriculture, symphonies, industry, sculpture, and computers.

We also imagined and created weapons and wars. We often despoiled the nature from which we had emerged and which is necessary for our sustanance. Who among us will be creative enough to imagine and produce sustainable relationships among ourselves and with our environment? Who will help create the beauty in human

mountains, and galactic nebulae?
Who will
help create
the beauty
about which
we can say
at the end of
our day, "it is
good?"

relationships that can draw from the beauty given to us in shells,



Cameron Davis' paintings will be exhibited at the IBHA conference in conjunction with the Emergent Universe Oratorio. These paintings explore wholistic aesthetics; art, science and imagination, as contributing to our capacity to create a life affirming future. Her collaboration with the Oratorio continues to evolve: including the original Emergent Universe Oratorio paintings, Endless Spring, the series Airs, Waters, Soils (Places) and her new work exploring the language of plants, mycelium, soils and bedrock across felt & temporal conceptions --- "Deciphering the Lyrics of Lichens," and the "Meter of Eternity" based on the writings of Ursula LeGuin. We need to "learn the languages of mountains... rivers...trees, ... of birds, animals and insects... and the languages of the stars." (EUO, Recitative: Emerging Earth Community).

camersondavisstudio.com







Conference Housing

VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY

Dorm Apartments

Guest Apartments - Air-Conditioned (West Campus) Daily Rates*

Bed Linen*/Towels2 etc. and Private Bath (1.5 or 2 baths per apt) included Includes a Kitchen (w/out cookware) and Living/Dining Room

2- or 4-bdrm apt, shared by 4 guests (quad occupancy) per person \$50.00 2- or 4-bdrm apt, shared by 2 guests (double occupancy) per person \$70.00

2- or 4-bdrm apt, not shared, occupied by 1 guest

(single occupancy) per person \$95.00



You may extend your reservation before or after the conference in order to visit locations in the Philadelphia area. Please contact Donna Tew at tewd@gvsu.edu to reserve a dorm apartment.

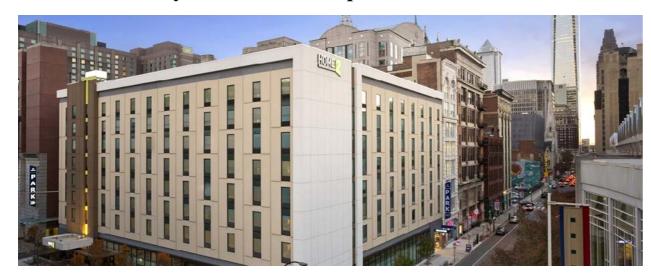








Home2Suites by Hilton Philadelphia Convention Center



\$169 per night plus tax (this rate includes breakfast)

This location will be approximately a half hour train ride to Villanova campus

- Downtown Philadelphia hotel just blocks from Rittenhouse Square
- Two blocks from Jefferson Station and easily accessible to public transportation
- Indoor saline swimming pool

Your HiltonLink is: http://home2suites.hilton.com/en/ht/groups/personalized/P/PHLCCHT-IBH-20180725/index.jhtml

Pre-Conference Tour (Option #1)

If you want to look around Philadelphia after the conference, we'd like to invite you to a couple of events that can offer a little structure to your explorations on Wed., July 25.

The **Barnes Museum**, on the Parkway in Center City Philadelphia, has one of the outstanding collections of Post-Impressionist Art in the world. The collection was the work of Albert C. Barnes, who bought his first paintings in 1911. In 1912, he visited Paris and met Gertrude Stein, Matisse, and Picasso. Today, the collection includes 178 Renoirs, 69 Cezannes, 60 Matisses, and 44 Picassos. The Barnes was located outside the City, in Merion, PA, until 2012, when it moved to its present location, which recreates the initial site's unique presentation.

We plan to take advantage of a self-guided tour the museum offers, with a half-hour introduction. We'll begin with the introduction at 2:00 PM. After that

introduction, you'll have an hour to explore the museum, with the help on an audio tour. This tour costs \$34.50. A similar tour without an introduction, but with the audio guide, is also available for \$23.00.

If you are interested in the tour with an introduction, please let us know as soon as possible. We will cap the group at 60 participants.

Then, on Wed., at 7:00 p.m., we're planning a banquet dinner at the opera-themed **Victor Café** in South Philly, "The Music Lovers Rendezvous". This Italian Restaurant is located in what had been, starting in 1918, an RCA gramophone outlet, quickly becoming a gathering place for audiophiles. In 1933, with the end of Prohibition, owner John Stefano, transformed it into the restaurant, decorating its walls with signed photos of opera composers and stars and other opera memorabilia. Up front is a larger-than-life replica of Nipper the Dog, listening to a gramophone, which was once RCA's icon.

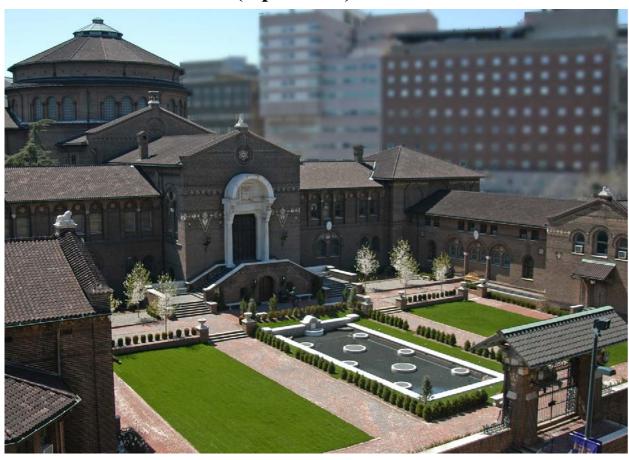
The food is good and sometimes excellent. But the real reason to go is the atmosphere. Not only is the restaurant decorated in an opera theme, but all the waiters and waitresses are opera singers or students. Opera music plays throughout the night, but every once in a while, one of the waiters/waitresses will ring a bell



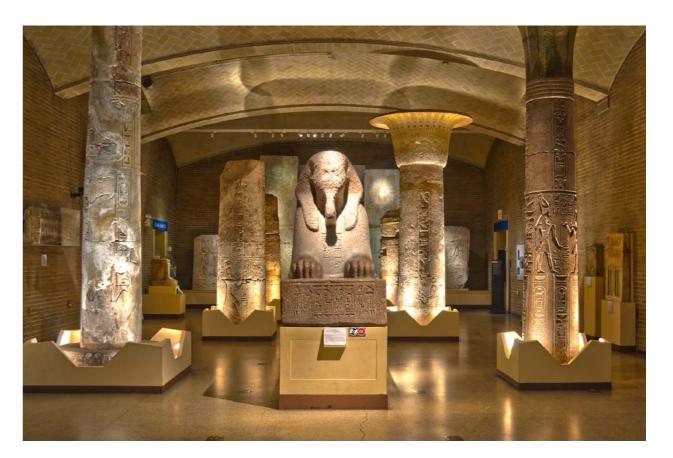
and sing an aria. We've taken several groups and the response has always been positive. The Victor is a unique experience we hope to share with you. Again, please let us know if you plan to join the group as soon as possible.

Looking forward to seeing you in Philly next summer, Please contact Ken Baskin (baskinman47@yahoo.com) to make your reservation!

Post-Conference Tour (Option #2)



Founded in 1887, the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology has always been one of the world's great archaeology and anthropology research museums, and the largest university museum in the United States. With roughly one million objects it encapsulates and illustrates the human story: who we are and where we came from. Your guide will be Dr. Brian Spooner, who is Professor of Anthropology and Museum Curator for Near Eastern Ethnology. He has done ethnographic research in Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan, and has been an IBHA member since 2011. The train leaves right from the campus



of Villanova University. You would transfer at the 30th Street station and get off at University City Station, which is right in front of the museum.

Please contact Dr. Spooner (spooner@sas.upenn.edu) to make your reservation!

Call For Papers

to go to the web form at https://bighistory.org/call-for-papers/that will permit you to propose a paper or other presentation or panel or other group presentation

Please click here

Please plan on participating in the 2018 IBHA conference from July 26 - 29 at Villanova University, near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA.



MAIL-IN REGISTRATION FORM INTERNATIONAL BIG HISTORY ASSOCIATION 4th Conference

"Big History, Big Future: A Cosmic Perspective"
Villanova University | July 26-29, 2018

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	IBHA	Members:					
	Early	\$325 Regular \$355 Late \$385					
	Non-	Members:					
	Early	\$425 Regular \$455 Late \$485					
	IBHA	Full-Time Student Members:					
	Early	\$180 Regular \$210 Late \$240					
	Gues	t Pass: (Evening Social Events only):					
	Early	\$180 Regular \$210 Late \$240					
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joining th	he IBHA	. https://bighistory.org					
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Note: T	he last	day for Conference Fee refund (less \$30 handling	g fee) is JUNE 25TH,	2018			
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Please no	te: retur	ned checks will incur a \$25 fee.	opening & clo				
Please mail registration form to: (or online www.ibhanet.org)				Saturday eve "Emergent Universe			
International Big History Association			Oratorio" tickets are all included in				
Grand V	alley S	tate University	registration co	ost. **C	Guest registration		

Note:

1 Campus Drive, LOH-181 Allendale, MI 49401 USA

Regarding Membership: Although non-presenters do not have to be members of the IBHA to register for the conference, if you are not currently a member and would like to take advantage of the discounted member registration fees, please consider joining the IBHA before completing your conference registration. Please note that **all presenters**, **panel chairs**, and **commentators will need to be members** of the IBHA before we can confirm their participation.

includes evening events only