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## 1999: On The Brink Speakers, Live Performances and Film Festival Planned for May Term

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May 6, 1999

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*1999: On The Brink*

## **Speakers, Live Performances and Film Festival Planned for May Term at IWU**

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.--A full slate of activities has been scheduled for May Term "1999: On The Brink" at Illinois Wesleyan University. Speakers, live performances, and a film festival are planned for the month-long program that will give students an opportunity to study a single course intensively on campus, take a travel course, or have an internship.

All events are open to the public and most are free of charge.

"Illinois Wesleyan University's design for the May Term," said James McGowan, professor of English and director of May Term, "is to provide an intense, focused, high-energy three weeks of study tempered by co-curricular experiences that are themselves artistically or intellectually stimulating. Immersion in learning is the key for on-campus courses as well as the various travel courses offered each May."

"Those students," said McGowan, "who find intellectual effort to be energizing, and achievement satisfying, and who are not afraid of new educational experiences, will find the May Term program of courses and activities much to their liking." A total of 1,476 students have enrolled in May Term '99.

Second City, a national touring company, will have a program on Friday, May 7 at 8 p.m., in the IWU Shirk Center, 302 E. Emerson St., Bloomington. The program will consist of short skits and improvisational comedy that also will involve audience participation.

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Also, several open mic nights have been planned, which will provide students an opportunity to share their talents in a variety of formats--music, poetry and nonfiction readings.

Guest speakers will include lawyer and environmentalist Jan Schlichtmann and ecologist, environmental activist, and poet Sandra Steingraber '81. Steingraber will speak on Tuesday, May 11, at 7:30 p.m. in the Main Lounge of Memorial Student Center, 104 E. University St., Bloomington. The title of her speech is *Living Downstream*, a personal account of the affect of carcinogens in the streams, rivers, and air near Steingraber's hometown of Pekin, Ill.

She also will share with the audience her latest research findings on ecology in relation to pregnancy and childbirth. Steingraber, who was a Writer-in-Residence at IWU last spring, has published numerous poems and has won awards as a poet from Stanford University and Radcliffe. Her first book, *Post-Diagnosis*, is a volume of poetry dealing with her fight against cancer.

On Wednesday, May 12, at 7:30 p.m., also in the Main Lounge of Memorial Student Center, Schlichtmann will speak on *A Civil Action*. Steingraber will introduce Schlichtmann and following his presentation, she will join him in a question and answer session.

Schlichtmann came to national prominence in 1986 when he represented eight families against W.R. Grace and Beatrice Foods for contamination of the water supply in Woburn, Mass. The book, *A Civil Action*, is based on this case and chronicles Schlichtmann's legal battle against the corporation. It was released in 1998 as a movie starring John Travolta as Schlichtmann.

Jan Erkert & Dancers are scheduled for a week-long residency, May 17-21. The dance company, which has devoted 20 years to the voice of the individual, and is recognized for their celebration of human diversity, will work with students in several May Term courses. On May 21, at 7:30 p.m. Jan Erkert & Dancers will present an outdoor concert on the Eckley Quadrangle.

Also scheduled for May Term is composer Lawrence Siegel's "Verbatim," an original piece of music theater on Saturday, May 22 at 7 p.m. in Westbrook Auditorium of Presser Hall and on Sunday, May 23 at 1 p.m. in Westbrook. This will be the third year for Siegel's staging of "Verbatim" that has a text based on the actual language of conversations at IWU. It is set to music and will be performed by students enrolled in Siegel's May Term class.

A key to a verbatim production, Siegel said, is "words can't be altered. They can be edited down, but not changed." Verbatim productions take shape from dialogues as students speak in their own voices about issues and concerns in their lives and the local community

Siegel, from Mendota Heights, Minn., has taught at Brandeis University and Wellesley College in Massachusetts.

On May 17, at 4 p.m., in the Neumeyer Courtyard of Presser Hall, 303 E. University Ave., Bloomington, writers Steve Fay, Steingraber and McGowan will do readings from various written works.

Fay, a naturalist as well as a poet and teacher, is originally from Carthage, Ill., currently lives in Cuba, Ill., and is a Writer-in-Residence at IWU. In 1994, Fay received

an Illinois Arts Council Award for “The Milkweed Parables,” published in *TriQuarterly* and reprinted in Fay’s collection, *What Nature*, published by TriQuarterly Books in 1998.

McGowan is an award-winning poet and translator. He is the author of *Each Other—Where We Are*, one collection of his works. McGowan also is co-editor of the Benchmark anthology of contemporary Illinois Poetry, and editor and translator of *Charles Baudelaire: The Flowers of Evil* in the “Oxford World’s Classics” series of the Oxford University Press.

The schedule for May Term is:

- May 5            Movies on the Eckley Quadrangle, 9 p.m.
- May 7            Second City, 8 p.m., IWU Shirk Center, 302 E. Emerson St., Bloomington  
Dance on the Eckley Quadrangle, 11 p.m.
- May 8            Trip to Starved Rock  
Normal Theatre Film Festival begins (*Modulations*), 7 p.m. and 9:15 p.m.,  
Normal Theater, 209 W. North St., Normal
- May 9            Normal Theater Film Festival (*Contact*), 7 p.m., Normal Theater, 209 W.  
North St., Normal  
Movies on the Eckley Quadrangle, 9 p.m.
- May 10          Open Mic Night, 7:30 p.m., Greenhouse, lower level, Memorial Student  
Center, 104 E. University St., Bloomington
- May 11          Habitat for Humanity Service Project, TBA  
Intramurals, 4:30 p.m., sand volleyball court, Franklin House, 1609 N.  
Franklin Ave., Normal  
Sandra Steingraber, *Living Downstream*, 7:30 p.m., Main Lounge,  
Memorial Student Center, 104 E. University St., Bloomington

- May 12      Rock Climbing, 4 p.m., 7 p.m., Upper Limits Climbing Gym, 1306 W. Washington St., Bloomington
- Jan Schlichtmann, *A Civil Action*, 7:30 p.m., Main Lounge, Memorial Student Center, 104 E. University St., Bloomington; followed by Schlichtmann and Sandra Steingraber question and answer session
- May 13      Intramurals, 4:30 p.m., sand volleyball court, Franklin House, 1609 N. Franklin Ave., Normal
- Normal Theater Film Festival, (*A Civil Action*), 7 p.m., Normal Theater, 209 W. North St., Normal
- May 14      Normal Theater Film Festival, (*Fail-Safe*), 7 p.m., Normal Theater, 209 W. North St., Normal
- May 15      St. Louis Cardinals Baseball Day Trip
- Normal Theater Film Festival, (*Forbidden Planet*), 7 and 9:15 p.m., Normal Theater, 209 W. North St., Normal
- May 16      Quad Games, 1 p.m., Eckley Quadrangle
- Normal Theater Film Festival, (*The Time Machine*), 7 p.m., Normal Theater, 209 W. North St., Normal
- May 17-21    Jan Erkert & Dancers Residency Programs
- Visiting Writers Readings: Steve Fay with James McGowan and Sandra Steingraber, 4 p.m., Presser Hall Courtyard, 303 E. University Ave., Bloomington
- Open Mic Night, 7:30 0 p.m., Greenhouse, lower-level, Memorial Student Center, 104 E. University St., Bloomington
- May 18      Intramurals, 4:30 p.m., sand volleyball court, Franklin House, 1609 N. Franklin Ave., Normal
- Habitat for Humanity Service Project, TBA
- May 19      Rock Climbing, 4 p.m., 7 p.m., Upper Limits Climbing Gym, 1306 W. Washington St., Bloomington
- May 20      Intramurals, 4:30 p.m., sand volleyball court, Franklin House, 1609 N. Franklin Ave., Normal

- May 21 Jan Erkert & Dancers, Outdoor Concert, 7:30 a.m., Eckley Quadrangle
- May 22 Six Flags Day Trip
- Verbatim Music Theatre, Lawrence Siegel and students, 7 p.m.,  
Westbrook Auditorium, Presser Hall, 303 E. University Ave.,  
Bloomington
- May 23 Verbatim Music Theatre, 1 p.m., Westbrook Auditorium, Presser Hall,  
303 E. University Ave., Bloomington
- Movies on the Quad, 9 p.m., Eckley Quadrangle
- May 24 Open Mic Night, 7:30 p.m., Greenhouse, lower-level of Memorial Student  
Center, 104 E. University St., Bloomington

*Editor's Note: This news release is one of a series of stories about  
May Term at Illinois Wesleyan University.*