



Welcome to the 7th Annual Twain Lecture: An Evening with John Hodgman

THE *Mark* TWAIN

LECTURE SERIES on AMERICAN HUMOR & CULTURE

“Assault of Laughter” Humor Writing Contest Winners

1st Prize:
“A Dedicated Husband,”
Marisa Muldoon '13

2nd Prize:
“TILT,”
Chris Joyce '15

3rd Prize:
“A Semite Studies the Sacraments,”
Ben Israel '14

“Ignorance of Art” Contest Winners

1st Prize:
Untitled,
Breanna Thorne '16

2nd Prize:
“Creative Smoke,”
Shannon Rafferty '14

3rd Prize:
Untitled,
Andrew Kolody '98

See these prize-winning pieces on the Twain website:
www.smcm.edu/twain

John Hodgman

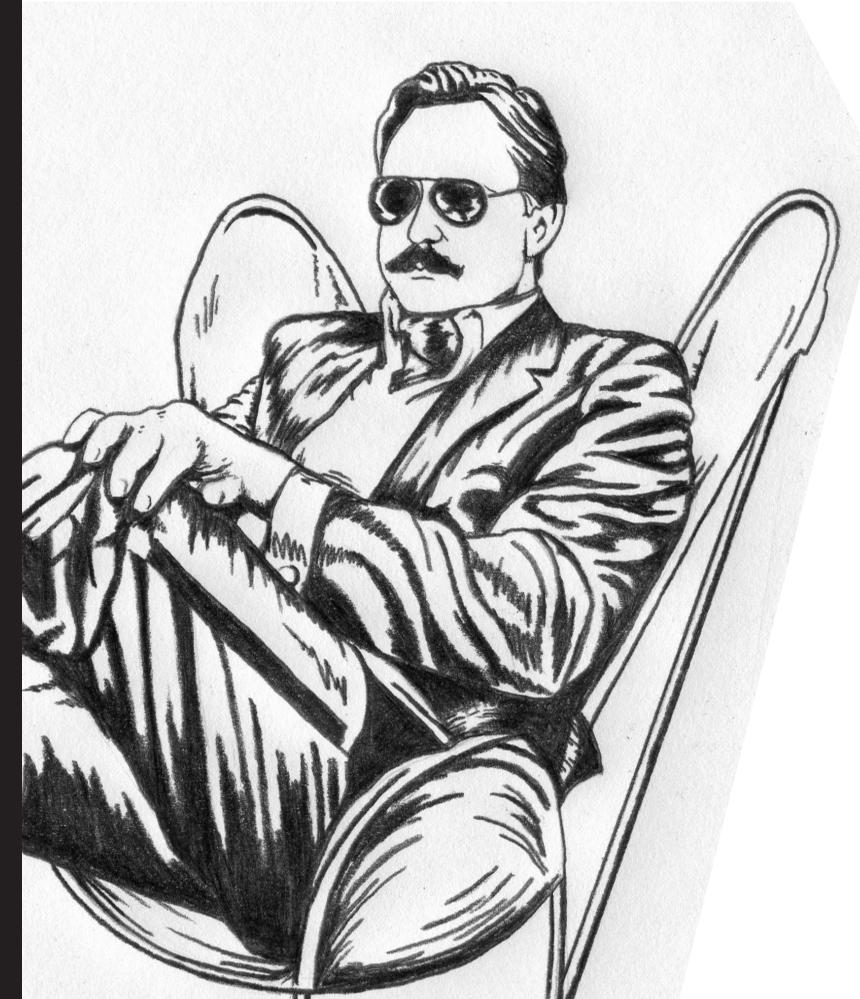
Author, Actor, Humorist and Correspondent on the “Daily Show”

April 20, 2013
7:30 pm

ST. MARY’S COLLEGE OF MARYLAND

Michael P. O’Brien Athletics & Recreation Center

Co-Sponsored By:
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Did You Enjoy Tonight’s Program?

John Hodgman may be deranged, but he’s a millionaire. The Twain Series may also be deranged, but that’s where the similarity ends.

Support the Twain Series at:
www.smcm.edu/twain/fundraising.html



St. Mary’s College of Maryland
at Historic St. Mary’s City

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A Short History of the Twain Lecture Series on American Humor & Culture

On March 2, 2007, Pulitzer Prize- and Emmy award-winning journalist and Twain biographer Ron Powers delivered the first Twain Lecture. His talk, “Mark Twain: Making Him Fresh Again,” received an overwhelming response that signaled one thing: the College and community needed an annual lecture dedicated to humor. English Professor Ben Click, who had brought Powers to campus as part of his course on Twain, began developing the lecture series. The focus would be on American humor and culture; and with no American writer more synonymous with its country’s humor than Twain, the series was thusly named.

On February 7, 2008, Robert Hirst, editor of the Mark Twain Project and curator of the Mark Twain Papers, delivered the second Twain Lecture, “Better Shove This in the Stove: Tales from the Mark Twain Papers.” Hirst, the oracle of all things Twain, as Professor Click refers to him, opened the talk with these words: “What I’d like to do tonight is explain why I have been doing this work for 40 years, and I’m still not done! And I don’t expect to be done until they put me in the pine box—that I have thoughtfully installed in my office.”

On February 13, 2009, best-selling author Firoozeh Dumas offered the third Twain Lecture, “Funny in Farsi,” paralleling her book about growing up Iranian in America. Like Twain, Dumas taps into past experience to generate humor that tells us something about who we are as Americans, as humans. In her own words, Firoozeh Dumas is determined to use humor to illustrate “our shared humanity.” Although often cynical about our humanity, Twain may just have agreed with Ms. Dumas: “Humor? It is nature’s effort to harmonize conditions.”

On April 24, 2010, NPR’s Peter Sagal hosted a panel to discuss “Twain’s Relevance Today: Race, Religion, Politics, and the ‘Damned Human Race’” that included humorist, actor, and writer Mo Rocca, CNN political contributor Amy Holmes, and Twain scholar John Bird (Winthrop University). Their lively discussion to a packed house of more than 1,200 guests highlighted how Twain’s words can still prompt, and even demand, humans to examine the world in which they live. The event kicked off “The Year of Twain,” a year of Twain-related lectures and events at the College, commemorating the 100th anniversary of the author’s death.

On April 29, 2011, Larry Wilmore, Emmy award-winning comedy writer and regular contributor to “The Daily Show” concluded “The Year of Twain.” Opening with a 25-minute set of stand-up comedy, Wilmore demonstrated why The San Francisco Chronicle calls him, “a marvelous talent at interweaving humor with poignant observation relevant to his race and culture at large.” This was followed by an onstage interview by the College President Joe Uργο. Over 1,000 students, faculty and community members turned out for the event.

On April 27, 2012, David Rakoff, winner of the Thurber Prize for Humor (for *Half Empty*) and author of New York Times bestsellers *Fruad* and *Don’t Get Too Comfortable*, made St. Mary’s his last public reading (he died of cancer in August 2012). His writing is included in *The Fifty Funniest American Writers* from Library of America.

John Hodgman

John Hodgman is an American author, actor, and humorist. The release of his latest book, “That Is All” (2012) concludes his trilogy of satiric almanacs of Complete World Knowledge with “The Areas of My Expertise” (2006) and “More Information than You Require” (2009). All three were New York Times bestsellers. His writing has also been published in McSweeney’s Quarterly Concern, the Paris Review, and The New York Times Magazine.

Hodgman is a regular correspondent on Comedy Central’s “The Daily Show with Jon Stewart,” and has made television appearances in HBO’s “Bored to Death,” “Flight of the Conchords,” and G4’s “Attack of the Show.” He has been a guest on National Public Radio’s “This American Life,” “The Sound of Young America,” and “Wait, Wait, Don’t Tell Me!”

Many will recall Hodgman in his role as a PC opposite Justin Long’s Mac in Apple’s award-winning advertising campaign, “Get a Mac,” which ran from 2006-2009.

Hodgman grew up in Brookline, Massachusetts, where he edited his high school’s underground magazine and hosted a weekly radio show. He graduated from Yale University in 1994 with a degree in literature. Hodgman worked as a literary agent for Writer’s House in New York City before gaining fame as a writer.

Tonight’s Program

6:30–7:30 Musical performance by the Rusty Spurs

7:30–7:40 Opening remarks by Ben Click, director of the Twain Lecture Series

7:40–8:20 Performance by John Hodgman

8:20–8:40 Interview of John Hodgman by Ben Click

8:40–8:50 Announcement of contest winners

8:50–9:05 Audience Q&A

9:05–9:10 Closing remarks and transition to book-signing