The Travelogue: From Lantern Slides to High Definition Digital

by Dan Bos, Public Events Committee Board Liaison

As a ten-year-old in 1955 my wife, Esther, remembers the excitement of a family outing from Holland to Grand Rapids’ Civic Auditorium for a Kiwanis sponsored travelogue. Travelogues were a big deal!

Travelogues were a big deal from the very beginning. In 1874, John Stoddard traveled around the world and gave lectures all across North America accompanied by black and white lantern slides printed from photographs. When, in 1904, his successor, Burton Holmes—who coined the term travelogue—replaced the slides with film clips, travelogues became wildly popular. In the 1930’s Hollywood responded to the independent travelogues’ popularity by producing some hybrid films where the landscapes, cultures, and wildlife took precedence over the story line. Since WWII, travelogues have been about 80 minutes long consisting of two reels of 16 mm film with an intermission in the middle to change reels, and the lecturer, usually the filmmaker, was present to narrate the film and meet the audience after the show.

Then, in 1966, the Millbrook Minute Men for Missions—after seeing more than a decade of almost capacity attendance at the Kiwanis travelogues—decided to sponsor their own Passport to Adventure travelogues, also held at the Civic. In 1973, Anna Sietsma became their program chairperson, booking the six-show series for the next thirty-seven years.

Sponsorship

In 1979, Calvin College took over the sponsorship of the Passport to Adventure series, and in 1990 the venue moved to Calvin College’s new 1,000 seat Fine Arts Center. Then in 1997, the newly organized Calvin Academy for Lifelong Learning became the main sponsor of Passport to Adventure through its Public Events Committee, and the proceeds now fund the rest of CALL’s public events, such as the Noontime Series.

Selection and Booking

In those early days, before VHS tapes or DVDs, it was more difficult to preview and book the shows. Anna would travel to see some of them. Then she discovered the Annual Travel Film Festival and attended it every year to preview the films and meet the presenters. Finally, in 2007 and 2012, the Festival was held here at Calvin; Anna hosted the first one and attended the last one after her retirement in 2010. Carol Rienstra then took over booking the shows until Sonja DeJong began to coordinate the work in 2016 with the Public Events Committee.

Picture Quality

Previewing and selection is now done with DVDs—the DVDs travel to the previewer! The Travel Film Festival is no longer needed, and the new high resolution, digital pictures are vivid! High Definition (HD) is now one of our selection preferences. All five shows last season were HD, and in the current season, four of the five are HD.

Narration

Typically, the filmmaker accompanied, introduced, narrated the film. In the past few years, more and more films have included an audio soundtrack for the narration along with music and location sounds—and often with noticeable improvement in sound quality. In the current season, all the films have an audio soundtrack,
and in four of them, the filmmaker will be present only to introduce the film and answer questions. The two motorcyclists in “Tough Rides: India” — the film to be shown on November 10 — will not appear in person. But a local expert on India will provide details to add depth to our viewing.

**Documentary Style**

The documentary style of travel films features a more intimate contact with people, culture, and wildlife. Rather than first outlining a narrative and then going to find people and scenery to illustrate it, a documentary gets close to the land and people with pictures and conversation and then edits and narrates what was found. It is more like an expedition than a journey.

An example of the documentary style — the most popular show last season — was the one by Karin Muller, “Sudan: The Inside Story,” with Sonja doing a skype interview with Ms. Muller before and after the show. We received more positive response to that show than any other. This season, the film on India also has more of the documentary features.

**Filling Seats**

In the last fifteen years, the popularity of traditional travelogues has declined across the country. There are fewer venues, fewer filmmakers, and smaller audiences. The computer generation is more attracted to YouTube, Discovery Channel, Travel Channel, or National Geographic presentations. Will our Passport to Adventure Series die off as our traditional audience dies off?

**Hopeful Signs**

The CALL Passport to Adventure Series has maintained a good record of season tickets sold: 653 in 2014-2015, 582 in 2015-2016, with an uptick to 600 in 2016-2017.

The presenters all tell us that the Calvin College venue is a favorite for audience size and enthusiasm.

The current developments in picture, sound quality and documentary style are improvements that may attract a younger audience and retain our traditional audience. With our continued work on discovering new and innovative films, we hope you’ll join us as at one of largest venues in the country for travelogue films!

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**Passport to Adventure**

by Bob DeBruin - Chair Public Events

**Tough Rides India, Friday, Nov 10, 7:00 pm.**

The second film of the season takes us 54 days around the entire country of India on some of the most dangerous roads in the world with Ryan and Colin Pyle traveling an exhausting 14,000 kilometers by motorcycle. This journey along the Indian coast traverses deserts in almost unbearable heat and mountains during torrential rainstorms. Visiting some remarkable places — the magnificent Golden Temple at Amritsar, the perplexing Karni Mata Temple at Deshnoke and the site of Buddha’s enlightenment at Bodh Gaya — offers some relief from the constant dangers of the road. Inspired by the amazing people they meet along the way, they learn that almost nothing in India is what you expected. Although the brothers will not appear in person, a local expert on India will provide details on the country to add depth to this film viewing.

Parking is easiest in the DeVos parking lot on the east side of the East Beltline and using the overhead crosswalk including an elevator.

The Calvin Box Office is staffed from 10:00 am- 5:00 pm (later on film nights). Either single tickets for $6 or season passes for $25 can be purchased in advance by phone at 526-6282 or in person the night of the film.

For more details, go to our main web page and click on the “Travel Film Series” tab in the left column at [www.calvin.edu/call](http://www.calvin.edu/call). If you have any questions about submitting an order, please feel free to contact the CALL office at 526-8777. We are happy to provide any assistance needed.
The Noontime lectures are scheduled from 12:00 to 1:00 pm in the Calvin Chapel. The Chapel is the second building to your right as you enter the campus from Burton Street. Parking is best in lot 1&2. All lectures are free and open to the community. The next lectures is scheduled on Thursday and the last of the fall series is scheduled on Friday.

October 26: Matthew Daley, *Origin of Detroit’s Urban Crisis*

For many Michiganders, Detroit has always been a city in crisis. The split between city and suburb, metropolitan area and state, has led most residents to view Detroit as a kind of failed state. The appointment of an emergency financial manager, periodic state management of schools, and endless media coverage of crime and violence has only enforced that perception. Yet, these issues did not emerge overnight: Detroit has experienced the worst of what is termed “the urban crisis” of the 20th century. Dr. Daley will examine the key issues that have pushed the city towards crisis including cultural changes, social mobility and policy decisions at the local, state and national level.

**Friday, November 3: (note the special day) Cynthia Slagter, El Camino Trail, Spain**

In the middle ages, people from all over Europe and every social class walked to Santiago de Compostela to complete a religious pilgrimage. Attracted by the legend of Saint James, they walked hundreds of miles to fulfill a vow, to petition the saint, or perhaps just for an adventure. By the twelfth century, a quarter of a million people a year arrived at the cathedral of Santiago. Although pilgrimage in general, and the Way of Santiago in particular, fell out of popularity for many years, it never ceased altogether. Last year, 269,000 pilgrims registered at the church office in Santiago as having completed their pilgrimage. We will examine the legends and traditions of the Camino de Santiago and explore the Camino as it exists in the 21st century.
Announcements
by Sonja DeJong

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The course description reads as follows:
If the news is unsettling and the world seems to be off-kilter, there is good reason for this impression. A world of open markets, democracy, and human rights, which are based on a system of rules and institutions, perhaps now faces greater threats from recent developments than at any time since the rules were set up after WWII. This course will assess just three of these threats—populist nationalism, Russia, and China. However, it begins with an explanation and assessment of the international order.

Session 1: The Significance of the International Order.
Session 2: The Threat of Populist Nationalism.
Session 3: The Russian Challenge.
Session 4: The Rise of China.

Service Grants Approved
Thus far, the CALL Service Grants committee approved three grants to CALL members who applied for funds this fiscal year for specific needs in charities for which they volunteer.

One grant supported the developing of prints and frames for a photo exhibit titled Church Friends from Across Boundaries which promoted cross-cultural friendships. Some friends photographed crossed more than ethnic barriers with the gift of a kidney from a Cleveland Chaplain to a new American.

CALL provides $200 grants to any members who have been in our program for one year or longer towards specific needs of any charity for which they volunteer. A very short form is available on our website for submission with three simple questions: Describe the volunteer project.

How much funding are you requesting and for what purpose?

How will you report to CALL about the project that is being supported by this grant?

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Partnership Discounts
As a reminder, CALL members receive discount pricing at all MVP locations with proof of CALL membership. Additionally, discounts are also available with:

30% for Grand Rapids Opera for shows like I Dream and The Marriage of Figaro. (451-2741) and certain shows and dates with Grand Rapids Broadway including: Les Misérables, Stomp, Beautiful the Carol King Musical, and The King and I. (235-6285)

A new partnership involves benefits for bicyclists. If you haven’t biked in recent years, the idea can be intimidating. Our website has a guide with precise information and counsel about getting back into cycling and where and how to bike safely and enjoyably. Additionally, a 30% discount is available to CALL members interested in purchasing Fuji, Kestrel, or Breezer brand bicycles. See our “Partnership” tab online for further details. Bring a copy of the coupon online and your CALL membership card for retail store purchases or call 1-800-727-BIKE using code 91064008.

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Church of the Servant Photo Exhibit

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Church of the Servant Photo Exhibit
Member Events

by Marjorie Goosen and Amy Shellenbarger, Co-Chairs

January Series Brunch
Wednesday, January 10, 2018
Prince Conference Center
Doors open at 9:30, brunch at 10:00.

John Inazu, Confident Pluralism: Surviving and Thriving through Deep Differences

CALL members and guests are invited to a member event that includes a powerful and timely January Series lecture on Wednesday, January 10, 2018, in the Prince Conference Center with John Inazu discussing the divisity in our country today. Mr. Inazu is the Sally D. Danforth Distinguished Professor of Law and Religion at Washington University in St. Louis. He teaches courses in criminal law, law and religion, and the First Amendment.

Guests will enjoy additional a mini-lecture at our member event that morning which will further enhance the January Series lecture John will give at noon in the Fine Arts Center. Your participation in this event includes busing to and from the Fine Arts Center following our event and much-coveted reserved seating at noon for the main lecture.

The brunch begins at 10:00 with a unique, deep-dish French toast made from sourdough bread baked in cinnamon and brown sugar, served soufflé style with hash browns, crispy bacon, and fresh fruit. Vegan options are available when requested in advance.

In recent years, the United States seems more polarized and divided than ever. We see this in the public debate over LGBTQ rights, in challenges to religious liberty, in clashes over abortion, and in tension between law enforcement and minority communities. With all of this turmoil in law and society and such seemingly irresolvable differences in our beliefs, values, and identities, we are forced to ask—can we really live in peace together?

Confident Pluralism argues that we can and must live together peaceably in spite of deep and sometimes irresolvable differences over politics, religion, sexuality, and other important matters. We can do so in two important ways – by insisting on constitutional commitments that honor and protect difference and by embodying tolerance, humility, and patience in our speech, our collective action (protests, strikes, and boycotts), and our relationships across difference. Confident Pluralism suggests that it is often better to tolerate than to protest, better to project humility than defensiveness, and better to wait patiently for the fruits of persuasion than to force the consequences of coercion. Confident Pluralism will not give us the American Dream. But it might help avoid an American Nightmare.

Read the following book reviews:

"Into this polluted political atmosphere comes a different sort of academic. Inazu is proposing a national cleanup effort to make our public life more pleasant and productive....We should not downplay the stakes. Tolerance, humility and patience are not the ornaments of a democracy, they are its essence". (Washington Post)

"We live in divided times—terrifyingly divided times, it sometimes seems....We’ve just concluded one of the ugliest presidential elections in our country’s history, and in a month or so we’ll begin one of the most controversial presidencies, if not the most. How can we navigate a world like this one? [Inazu] wants to offer us a road map of sorts." (The Christian Humanist)

Applicable and important to us all, join us as this highly engaging and riveting author draws us back to an America that can hold civil conversation with others despite deep differences.

Cost of $17 per person includes brunch, guest lectures, bus service both directions and reserved seating at the January Series lecture.

For any questions, please contact Darlene Meyering at meyrda1@gmail.com.
**Member Events Registration**

**Two ways to register:**

1. Online: [www.calvin.edu/CALL](http://www.calvin.edu/CALL) > Member Events
2. Complete this form (make checks payable to CALL) and send to CALL, Youngsma Center, 3201 Burton St. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546. Event fees are per person. CALL will notify you if an event has filled.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<td>Wednesday, January 10</td>
<td>January Series Brunch</td>
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- Name: ____________________________________________
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- Confirm by email? ☐ Yes ☐ No, I don’t use email

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**Extended Trips**

**by John Apol**

Two extended trips recently concluded in September this year, *In the Footsteps of the Reformers* with Karin Maag and Paul Fields and *American Southwest* with John Apol. Both trips were meticulously planned, expertly completed and extremely well-received.

An October article in the Calvin’s *Chimes* by Religion editor Courtney Zonnefeld had the following review of the Reformation trip: “Open to Calvin alumni and Calvin Academy for Lifelong Learning (CALL) students, as well as members of the wider community, the trip retraced the footsteps of the Reformers through France, Germany and Switzerland. According to Maag, many group members experienced a deep spiritual connection to these places—a sense of pilgrimage often strange or uncomfortable for many Protestants.

*For Protestants, [the Reformers are] not saints. Nobody goes and prays to Luther or Calvin or Zwingli, but they have this sort of special status, Maag said. [Much of our group] felt a connection to these places in terms of the way they understood their faith. And that was really quite powerful.*
By visiting Bern, Strasbourg, Zurich and many other locations, the group placed the Reformers’ teachings within their original contexts. Many Reformers served as civic as well as theological leaders, and the cities still bear reminders of 500 years ago.

These Reformation sites, however, did not serve as the trip’s only theme. In Gruyere, a town best known for its cheese, the group toured a chocolate factory because – as Maag said – Honestly, if you’re in Switzerland and don’t tour a chocolate factory, that would be kind of sad.

Since Johann Sebastian Bach lived and worked in many of the same cities as Martin Luther, the travelers also stopped at many Bach sites, including a museum in his hometown of Eisenach. There, the group enjoyed a performance of the composer’s pieces on a series of old instruments, including a double harpsichord.

The French have a term – lieux de mémoire – places of memory. And I think that’s really the axis of what we were trying to do... to connect people to these places of memory and reflect together about the Reformation’s significance then and now."

The second extended trip for travelers was the American Southwest with leader John Apol. Feedback from these travelers noted an excellent bus driver, well-planned stops, informational guides, and a knowledgeable and humorous leader on the trip. People had time to build friendships along the way as is often the case with trips of this length.

We turn our attention now to an update on the 2018 trips open for registration. Alaska is full except for a single spot, The Netherlands has two seats due to a recent cancellation, Peru continues to accept registrations and Acadia, Maine opens this week for registration.

Peru Highlights include:

- Good Friday and Easter in Arequipa, with solemn and colorful processions and the Easter Fire ceremony
- Colonial downtown tour, cultural show with traditional Peruvian dances and music, plus shopping in Lima
- Flight over famous Nazca lines, dune buggy ride at the Huacachina Oasis and wine tasting in Bodega Tacama
- Colca Canyon, which is twice as deep as the Grand Canyon
- Boat tour of Lake Titicaca and the Floating Islands (Islas Uros)
- Guided tour of Machu Picchu
Experience Acadia

In previous months, we published general information about this hike and bike trip to Maine. The final details are completed for this August 2-8, 2018 trip:

**Highlights**

- Scenic hikes to beautiful locations such as Cadillac Mountain, Acadia Mountain and Jordan Pond
- Trolley tour of Bar Harbor
- Afternoon tea at the Jordan Pond House
- Leisurely bike ride around Eagle Lake
- Lobster-boat tour

**Activity level**

Tour participants must be capable of several hikes of 2–4 miles each and one leisure-pace bike ride of 11 miles (rental bikes included in tour package)

See our website under Extended Trips for more details. If you are interested in receiving a brochure, please call our office.