



Washington Adventist University Honors College

Announcing the Establishment of the David Jones Research Center

1 March 2018

In the summer of 2017 the WAU Honors College received a suggestion from Dr. Michael Allsopp, who had gifted some David Jones materials to the Honors College, to create an academic center for David Jones studies on the WAU campus. Dr. Allsopp said that due to the activities related to Jones studies that had taken place at WAU (such as an international conference in 2012, two exhibitions, and a book launch of Thomas Dilworth's authorized biography in 2017) the university has built a reputation in this area that could be developed into a center for new scholarship and programing.

David Jones (1895-1974) was a British modernist poet and artist of distinction. T. S. Eliot (Jones's publisher at Faber and Faber) considered Jones to be of the same literary generation as himself and other important modernists such as James Joyce, and Ezra Pound. Jones' work engages critically with layers of history, and a desire to preserve cultural heritage rather than see it dissipated. His first book, *In Parenthesis* (1937) is considered a masterpiece of WWI literature, and is often compared for its power and epic sweep to Homer's *Iliad*. The Welsh National Opera created an operatic version of *In Parenthesis* to mark the 100th anniversary of the Great War. Jones's second epic-length poem *The Anathemata* (1952) is considered a masterpiece of mid-20th century literature, one of the few modernist long poems to be aesthetically whole. Jones was also an acknowledged master of watercolor painting and printmaking, and his art is represented in many public and private collections including Tate Britain. In 2015 a major retrospective of his art at Pallant House Gallery along with an accompanying monograph provided an opportunity for a new generation to assess Jones' work. Due to the complexity of his work, Jones has always enjoyed critical appreciation, if not overwhelming popularity. In recent years the David Jones scholarly community has grown as younger scholars are finding the richness and relevancy of Jones's writings, artworks, and cultural theories. Given Jones' interest in multiple aspects of culture and faith, a research center focused on his work is an excellent fit for the interdisciplinary curricular focus of the WAU Honors College.

With all this in mind Professor Bradford Haas, Director of the WAU Honors College, approached the Jones scholar Dr. Kathleen Henderson Staudt who he had collaborated with to organize a 2012 David Jones conference at WAU. They discussed how they might transform her organization, The David Jones Society of North America, into an academic entity housed within the Honors College.

Dr. Staudt agreed to act as Director of the David Jones Research Center working in coordination with Professor Haas in his role as head of the WAU Honors College. The next step was to create an Advisory Board made up of four mid-Atlantic region David Jones scholars who would bring expertise and dedication to this endeavor, namely crafting a deliberate program to ensure the steady production of quality research and continued propagation of the works of David Jones. Given these ideals, parameters, and goals, all four of the scholars approached were supportive, and agreed to join Dr. Staudt and Professor Haas on the Advisory Board:

Dr. Gregory Baker (Catholic University of America)
Dr. Thomas Goldpaugh (Marist University (retired))
Dr. Paul Robichaud (Albertus Magnus University)
Dr. Adam Schwartz (Christendom College)

At a first teleconference meeting in January, 2018 the advisory board confirmed the following as the intended mission of the research center. It will:

- foster original scholarship concerning David Jones and associated subjects
- support emerging scholars in the field
- facilitate focused research seminars to be held once per year with the aim of publication
- depending on interest and resources, organize or support further public lectures, exhibitions, and conferences

As a first step in the programming of the center, a research seminar is planned for June 7-8, 2018 that will both discuss the current state of David Jones studies, and new directions in Jones studies that might inform the direction of the research center.

For more information and to view the Call-for-Papers for the June, 2018 event please visit:
www.wauhonorcollege.org/djcenter/

Or email: honorcollege@wau.edu