

## Athenaeum Symposia Named in Honor of Frank Islam

Frank Islam is the chairman and CEO of FI Investment Group LLC (FIG), an investment firm he founded in 2007 after selling his information technology company, QSS Group, for \$300 million. A noted philanthropist, entrepreneur, and author, Islam generously provided a grant to the Montgomery College Foundation to support the Athenaeum Symposia, starting in 2013-2014.

He has authored two books, *Renewing the American Dream* and *Working the Pivot Points: To Make America Work Again*, which will be released in October. He is a regular contributor to the *Huffington Post*, *Indian Express*, *Economics Times*, and *India Abroad*. In addition, he hosts a TV show, "Washington Current Review," on MHz Networks. A well-known philanthropist, Islam and his wife founded the Frank Islam and Debbie Driesman Foundation in 2007 to support educational, cultural, and artistic causes worldwide.

Mr. Islam serves on numerous boards, committees, and panels, including those of educational institutions, such as the University of Maryland's Robert H. Smith School of Business; American University; University of Technology, Malaysia; George Mason University School of Management; and Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies. He also serves on the International Advisory Council of the United States Institute for Peace (USIP); the Department of Commerce Industry Trade Advisory Committee; and the Maryland Governor's International Advisory Committee. He holds a BS and MS in computer science from the University of Colorado. His website is [FrankIslam.com](http://FrankIslam.com).

*"Community colleges are pivotal to the future of America, and Montgomery College, through opportunities like the Athenaeum Symposia, is playing a significant role in creating the next generation of leaders for America. Through our foundation grant, my wife, Debbie Driesman, and I recognize that education happens inside and outside the classroom and that for students to be successful in the workplace and in the competitive global market, they will need to be lifelong learners about international affairs, global peace, social issues, economics, the arts, and politics."*

—Frank Islam

### ATHENAEUM SYMPOSIA SPEAKERS

#### FALL 2011

Ira Berlin—Noted Historian and Author, US Slavery  
Lise Bruneau and Marcus Kyd—Actors, *Hamlet*  
Lilly Ledbetter—Social Justice Activist, Fair Pay Act

#### Spring 2012

Robert Blake, Assistant Secretary of State  
Don Bliss, Mark Twain and US Politics  
Patrick Beldio, Sculptor  
Frank Islam, Entrepreneur of the Year  
Norman Augustine, former CEO Lockheed Martin  
DeRionne Pollard, President of Montgomery College

#### Fall 2012

David Smith, US Institute for Peace  
Ambassador Rao, India  
Jay Wilkinson, Author, *Bud Wilkinson's Letters*  
Peter Edelman, Author, *So Rich, So Poor*  
Fred Fisher, Sarajevo, *The Cellist of Sarajevo*  
Stephen Gladson, Sarajevo, *The Cellist of Sarajevo*  
William Chang, classical pianist

#### Spring 2013

Tony Cohen, Historian, *Recreating American Slavery*  
Vaddey Ratner, Author, *In the Shadow of the Banyan*  
Carolyn Cook, Activist, Equal Rights Amendment  
Ira Shapiro, Author, *The Last Great Senate*  
Lesley Francis, Granddaughter of Robert Frost

#### Fall 2013

Frank Islam, Author, *Renewing the American Dream*  
Vic Fazio, Former California Congressman  
Arun Gandhi, Grandson of Mahatma Gandhi  
Exit 12 Dance Company, Focus on Iraq and Afghanistan  
Maria Massi Dakake, Role of Muslim Women  
William Chang, classical pianist

#### Spring 2014

Bill Press, Columnist, Political Talk-Show Host  
Paul Monteiro, White House Interfaith Initiatives  
Lisa Crooms, Dean, Howard University, Human Rights  
Sheila Kay Adams, Appalachian Ballads, NEA Fellowship  
Manjular Kumar, Director of *Noor*, *Smithsonian*  
Charles Williams, Renowned Singer, *Porgy and Bess*

#### Fall 2014

Hercules Pinkney, Civil Rights Act, Former MC President  
Reyna Grande, Author, *Distance Between Us*  
Ambassador Rasool, South Africa  
Clemantine Wamariya, From Rwandan Genocide to Yale  
Julie-Hera Destefano, filmmaker, *Women of War*

#### Spring 2015

Hedrick Smith, Author, *Who Stole the American Dream?*  
Jennifer Clement, Author, *Prayers for the Stolen*  
Anya Schiffrin, Author, *Global Muckraking: 100 Years of Investigative Reporting From Around the World*  
Jennifer Nordberg, Author, *The Underground Girls of Kabul*  
Ambassador Akbar Ahmed, Author, *ISIS, War on Terror, and Muslim Community*  
Brian McNeill, Renowned Scottish Musician

#### Fall 2015

Richard Reeves, Author, *Infamy: The Shocking Story of the Japanese Internment in World War II*  
Samantha Lakin, Fulbright Scholar, The Holocaust and Rwandan Genocide  
Knight Kiplinger, Economic Journalist  
Jennine Capo Crucet, Author, *Make Your Home Among Strangers*  
Manal Omar, VP, U.S. Institute for Peace  
William Chang, Classical Pianist

# Montgomery College

## THE FRANK ISLAM ATHENAEUM SYMPOSIA

### Spring 2016 Speaker Series



Timely, stimulating topics delivered by today's leading experts in international affairs, the arts, politics, and economics

**Globe Hall, High Tech Building  
Germantown Campus**

*Free and open to the public*



**DR. LUIS BRANCO**  
Co-founder of Zalgan Labs.  
Wednesday, February 3  
1:00 PM Globe Hall—GT

**Ebola, the Zika Virus, and Other  
Pandemic Diseases: Their Economic,  
Social, and Political Impact on West  
African Nations.**

Dr. Branco has extensive experience in research, clinical, and outreach logistics in Nigeria and Sierra Leone, where he has been working since 2008 on viral hemorrhagic fevers, including the recent 2014-2015 Ebola virus outbreak.



**AZAR NAFISI**  
Author  
Tuesday, February 16  
7:00 PM Globe Hall—GT

**Literature's Place in a Free and  
Enlightened Society**

Nafisi is author of *Reading Lolita in Tehran* (117 weeks on the *New York Times* Best Seller List); *Things I've been Silent About* (2008); *The Republic of the Imagination: A Life in Books* (2014)

Nafisi is a fellow at Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies. She is an Iranian writer, a professor of English Literature, has won numerous literary awards, and has taught at Oxford University and universities in Tehran. She has resided in the US since 1997 and became an American citizen in 2008.



**LEONARD PITTS**  
Pulitzer Prize for Commentary  
Columnist for *Miami Herald*  
Wednesday, March 2  
7:00 PM Globe Hall—GT

**Why Black Lives Matter: Race and  
Social Justice**

Pitts is author of *Grant Park* (2015); *Freeman* (2012); *Forward from This Moment* (2009); *Before I Forget* (2009)

"To treat where it hurts, one must first acknowledge that it still hurts...[this acknowledgement] gives the lie to the self-congratulatory balloon juice about how this country has overcome its founding sin." (*Miami Herald*, August 2015)



**DERVISH AND CATHY JORDAN**  
Monday, March 21  
7:00 PM Globe Hall—GT

**Traditional Irish Music—Straight  
from Ireland—featuring Dervish and  
Brilliant Soloist—Cathy Jordan**

Described by BBC Radio as "an icon of Irish music," Dervish is an Irish traditional music group from County Sligo, Ireland. They were formed in 1989 by Liam Kelly, Shane Mitchell, Martin McGinley, Brian McDonagh, and Michael Holmes.

Cathy Jordan has been the front woman and bodhran player with Dervish and has led them through thousands of concerts: playing at the Great Wall of China, the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem, and at Rock in Rio to 250 thousand people.



**JENNIFER LAWLESS**  
Author  
Tuesday, April 5  
11:00AM Globe Hall—GT

***Running From Office: Why Young  
People Are Turned Off to Politics  
(Published 2015)***

Lawless serves as the current director of the Women and Politics Institute and as Professor of Government at American University.

Her research about female candidates and election results has been published in many scholarly journals, including the *Political Research Quarterly*. Her other books include *It Still Takes a Candidate: Why Women Don't Run for Office*.



**VICTORIA CHANG**  
Poet  
Monday, April 25  
11:00AM PM Globe Hall—GT

***Searing Poems: Ranging from  
Infidelity to Global Politics***  
Books of Poetry: *Circles*—2006; *Salvinia Molesta*—2008; *The Boss*—2015.

Chang was the recipient of the 2014 Pen Center Literary Award and 2013 California Book Award. She graduated from Harvard University and Stanford Business School and has an MFA in poetry.

Literary critic James Longenbach writes that Chang's poetry is an "intersection where the personal, the global, the political, and domestic all collide in a shower of sparks. There is brutality, depravity, but there is great beauty as well—the kind that endures and has lasting power."