

3/1/10 — *For immediate release*

Celebrate Jack Kerouac at UNC-Chapel Hill

March 19, 2010

Lecture by Gabriel Anctil: “Kerouac, Quebec, and the French Language”
4 pm, Pleasants Family Assembly Room, Wilson Library

Film: *One Fast Move or I'm Gone: Kerouac's Big Sur* (2008) (<http://www.kerouacfilms.com/onefastmove/>),
presented by director Curt Worden
8 pm, Howell Hall 104

This dual event is unique among celebrations of Jack Kerouac, since it brings together the author's cultural heritage in Quebec and the great appreciation for him among artists, writers, and musicians in the United States. Kerouac is best known as the founder of the Beat Generation, which launched decades of worldwide counterculture and inspired many to travel throughout America as he did. What is much less known outside Quebec is that Kerouac's native language was French and that his travels were heavily influenced by the migration of his people to New England. Recently catalogued in his papers in the Berg Collection of the New York Public Library are several manuscripts in French, which attest to his strong identification with the Franco-Americans of New England and the French speakers of Quebec.

In his lecture, Gabriel Anctil will speak of the great migration from Quebec to New England, which took place between 1840 and 1930, what Kerouac's French manuscripts reveal of his relationship to it, and how this relationship helps understand who the author was.

Curt Worden will present *One Fast Move or I'm Gone*, his 2008 film honoring Kerouac's 1962 novel *Big Sur* and featuring music by Jay Farrar (Son Volt) and Ben Gibbard (Death Cab for Cutie), in addition to appearances by David Amram, Carolyn Cassady, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Joyce Johnson, Michael McClure, Sam Shepard, Patti Smith, and Tom Waits, among many others.

In connection with this event, there will be a one-day exhibit of Kerouac materials from the rich Beat Literature Collection, part of the Rare Book Collection at Wilson Library:
<http://www.lib.unc.edu/blogs/news/index.php/2010/03/kerouac-display/>.

The principal organizer of this event is Hassan Melehy (hmelehy@unc.edu), Associate Professor of French at UNC-Chapel Hill. The co-sponsors are the Department of Romance Languages, the Rare Book Collection at Wilson Library, the Interdisciplinary Program in Cinema, the ScreenArts Media Series, the Student Congress, the Institute for the Arts and Humanities, the Honors Program, the College of Arts and Sciences, and the Program in Comparative Literature, all at UNC-CH; also the Quebec Government Office in Atlanta and the Center for Canadian Studies at Duke University.

Participants:

Gabriel Anctil is a journalist and documentary filmmaker from Montreal. Over the last several years, he has published a series of articles on Jack Kerouac in the Montreal daily *Le Devoir*. These articles, which focus on the French writings and Quebec origins of Kerouac, received worldwide notice. They publicized the existence of two unpublished novels that the author wrote in French. He works for Télé-Québec, a public television network.

Curt Worden is founder of Kerouac Films, a company based in Providence, RI. With over forty years of experience in film and television, he has contributed to ABC News as well as documentaries such as *Virtual JFK: Vietnam if Kennedy Had Lived*. He is also CEO and president of Tango Pix, a film and video production company. Currently he is developing adaptations of Jack Kerouac's novels *Big Sur* and *The Dharma Bums*.

Hassan Melehy teaches in the Department of Romance Languages at UNC-CH. A native of industrial New England, he grew up among many French-Canadians and since the age of twenty has loved Jack Kerouac, about whom he is now writing a book. He has also collaborated with photographer Paul Assimacopoulos on several short films and regularly publishes poetry. He serves on the Carrboro Arts Committee.

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For more information, contact Hassan Melehy: hmelehy@unc.edu.